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IWINETC Showcases Sustainable Wine Tourism & Digital Marketing Strategies

WINETC 2024 Unites Cultures and Fuels Business in Bulgaria

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Nestled in the historic heart of Plovdiv, Bulgaria, the 15th annual International Wine Tourism Conference (IWINETC) unfolded over two eventful days, April 9th and 10th, 2024. Plovdiv, with its storied past and vibrant cultural tapestry, proved a perfect backdrop for an event that married the old with the new, intertwining the rich traditions of wine with the dynamic future of wine tourism.

Starting with a Splash

Before the conference formally kicked off, Plovdiv's municipality ensured attendees got a true taste of the city's charm. A walking tour whisked participants through cobbled streets, past ancient Roman ruins, and into the heart of the city's bustling cafes and galleries. This immersive introduction set the stage for what was to come: a meeting of minds in settings that spanned centuries.

The welcome reception itself was a scene right out of a travelogue, held amid the sprawling ruins of the Early Christian Basilica. Here, Deputy Mayor Mr. Plamen Panov painted a vivid picture of Plovdiv as a city where history meets modern-day tourism hustle. His words, echoed by other dignitaries like Mr. Anthony Swift, Director of IWINETC, set a tone of enthusiasm and anticipation.

A Confluence of Cultures and Ideas

As the main event unfolded, it was clear that this was no ordinary gathering. The conference room buzzed with languages from 45 different countries, each delegate bringing a unique perspective to the robust discussions. The panels featured luminaries like Peter Syme and Tanisha Townsend, who delved into everything from sustainable travel practices to the intricacies of digital marketing in wine tourism.

The highlight for many was the B2B Wine Tourism Workshop, a hive of activity where over 500 pre-scheduled meetings took place. Imagine a room where a handshake could spark a new festival in the Nordic countries or a wine trail through the Italian countryside. The energy was palpable as each participant networked, negotiated, and collaborated on potential ventures.



Wine Flows and Business Grows

Of course, no wine conference would be complete without ample opportunities to sample the goods. Networking events were cleverly interspersed with tastings, allowing delegates to savor the renowned Bulgarian wines. Venues like Villa Yustina and Zagreus Winery not only showcased their best vintages but also their ability to host world-class events—a key aspect of wine tourism.

The local support was significant, too, with entities like the Bulgarian Ministry of Tourism and the Bulgarian Association of Wine Professionals playing crucial roles in the conference's success. Sponsorships from Katerzyna Estate and South Moravia underscored the international collaboration that the IWINETC strives to foster.

Looking Forward

As the conference wrapped up, the excitement was already building for next year's event in South Moravia, Czech Republic. The announcement was met with cheers and clinking glasses, a fitting end to a gathering that was as much a celebration of current successes as a toast to future endeavors.

In sum, IWINETC 2024 was more than just a conference. It was a vibrant festival of ideas, a bazaar of business opportunities, and a grand tasting of cultures and wines. As attendees dispersed, they carried with them not just business cards and brochures, but stories, inspirations, and perhaps a new favorite wine or two. Looking ahead, the future of wine tourism is as bright as a well-aged Chardonnay, promising continued growth and exciting new horizons.