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Wine Tourism Surges Across Europe as Young Travelers Drive Demand for New Experiences

France, Italy, and Spain top new index while wineries diversify offerings to attract broader audiences and boost sustainability efforts

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Wine tourism in Europe is experiencing significant growth, with new research showing that more than 91% of travelers, particularly those between 18 and 44 years old, are interested in wine and food travel experiences. This data comes from TUI Musement, a tour and activity provider that recently launched the first European Wine Tourism Index. The index ranks the continent's most attractive countries for wine lovers, placing France, Italy, and Spain at the top.

The increase in wine-related travel is not limited to mainland Europe. In the United Kingdom, WineGB has reported a 55% rise in wine tourism since 2022. Globally, other studies have identified Portugal, Spain, and South Africa as offering the best value for wine tourists in 2025. Tour operators are also pointing to regions such as Piedmont in Italy, Rioja in Spain, and Stellenbosch in South Africa as essential destinations for wine enthusiasts this year.

France leads the European Wine Tourism Index with a score of 85.3 out of 100. The country stands out for its high number of international wine awards and its long-standing reputation for quality. Italy and Spain follow closely behind, both recognized for their extensive vineyard areas and diverse wine offerings. Portugal and Greece complete the top five, reflecting both traditional strengths and growing interest from international visitors.

The rest of the top ten includes Hungary, Germany, Romania, Austria, and Bulgaria. These countries represent a mix of established and emerging wine destinations. Germany is gaining attention for its Rieslings, while Romania's Dealu Mare region is becoming more prominent among wine travelers. Hungary's Tokaj region is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site with centuries-old winemaking traditions. Austria has over 46,000 hectares of vineyards dedicated to protected designation of origin (PDO) or protected geographical indication (PGI) wines. Bulgaria rounds out the list with winemaking roots that date back to ancient Thrace.

The European Wine Tourism Index was developed using a data-driven approach that considered several factors: total vineyard surface area, vineyard area dedicated to PDO/PGI wines, number of registered PDO/PGI wines, wine production volume, and international awards received. Data sources included Eurostat, the International

Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), official EU registries, and results from the Decanter World Wine Awards 2025. Only EU member states with at least 500 hectares of vineyards were included in the study.

As interest in wine tourism grows, many estates are adapting their offerings to attract a broader audience. The traditional model of simple tastings is evolving as wineries introduce new experiences. James Osborn, managing director of Hambledon Wine Estate in Hampshire, England, described this shift as necessary diversification. He explained that hospitality now plays a central role at his estate, with food-led occasions such as lunches, dinners, and private dining events becoming more common.

In Spain’s Rioja region, Ramón Bilbao winery has expanded its calendar to include painting workshops, music events, and even circus performances alongside traditional tastings. Gastronomy remains central to these experiences, with local food pairings designed to highlight regional wines.

Industry leaders believe that wine tourism will continue to play an important role in attracting new audiences and building customer loyalty. There is also a growing focus on sustainability and regenerative tourism practices within the sector. As more travelers seek immersive food and wine experiences across Europe’s diverse regions, both classic destinations and emerging areas are adapting to meet changing expectations.