

# 7th UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism

La Rioja, Spain

**Inclusive, sustainable and  
digital wine tourism: building  
stronger territorial cohesion**



UN Tourism



La Rioja



GOBIERNO  
DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO  
DE INDUSTRIA, COMERCIO  
Y TURISMO

UE  
23



# **Conclusions of the 7th UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism**



# Table of Contents



## Thursday 23 November 2023

- **Introduction** ..... 03
- **Opening Ceremony** ..... 04
- **In Conversation with** ..... 06  
Joe Fattorini, Wine expert and radio and TV presenter (United Kingdom)
- **Session 1** ..... 07  
Training, a catalyst for a highly competitive wine tourism
- **New Trends in Wine Tourism** ..... 11  
Keynote by Diana Isac, CEO and Founder, Winerist (United Kingdom)
- **Session 2** ..... 13  
Unlocking the benefits of digitalization

## Friday 24 September 2023

- **Our differences unite us** ..... 16  
Keynote by Virginia Borges, Director General of Tourism of La Rioja
- **Session 3** ..... 18  
Understanding Wine Tourism: A future of better data
- **Session 4** ..... 21  
National and Regional Strategies for Wine Tourism
- **Session 5**..... 25  
Building a Sustainable Future for Wine Tourism: Get Inspired!
- **Key takeaways** ..... 27  
The Future of Wine Tourism
- **Closing Ceremony**..... 29







# Introduction

The UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism convened in Spain for the first time for its 7th edition, that took place in Logroño, La Rioja on 22-24 November 2023. Held every year, the event aims to address current industry challenges and prospects by bringing together wine tourism stakeholders with a shared commitment to shaping a sustainable and competitive future.

The 2023 edition centered on the theme 'Inclusive, sustainable, and digital wine tourism: Building stronger territorial cohesion.' Participants delved into the intricacies of fostering inclusion, ensuring sustainability, and leveraging digital advancements in wine tourism.

The emphasis on building stronger territorial cohesion underscored the interconnectedness of these elements and their collective impact on the overall development and success of wine tourism initiatives. The conference served as a platform for robust conversations and insights aimed at shaping a future where wine tourism thrives economically, while also fostering social inclusion and environmental sustainability.





# Opening ceremony

The Mayor of Logroño, Conrado Escobar La Heras, Felix de Paz, Deputy Director General of the State Secretariat for Tourism of Spain, Sandra Carvão, Director of the Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Gonzalo Capellán de Miguel, President of La Rioja opened the event.

Conrado Escobar addressed the future of tourism with a focus on sustainability and emphasized its crucial role for the city of Logroño. He highlighted the impact of the territory, its culture and geography, resulting in the region's leadership as a hub for wine making and wine tourism. The integration of experiences, tourism, culture, gastronomy, and sustainability is a key aspect of Logroño's agenda, creating a comprehensive framework to improve conditions for both locals and visitors.

Felix de Paz highlighted the uniqueness of the Rioja region and its significance for tourism in Spain. He highlighted the urgent need to identify tourism demand and supply and to create structured plans with the participation of the entire sector. He also stressed the need to attract international tourists while maintaining authenticity in rural areas.

Félix de Paz closed his speech by emphasizing the value of developing digital strategies to define and enhance the value of Spain's tourism brand.

Sandra Carvão highlighted La Rioja's extraordinary cultural heritage and ability to blend tradition with technology. She stressed that this year's discussions at the Conference would continue focusing on key issues for advancing territorial cohesion through wine tourism. These issues include skills and education, data and knowledge, governance, collaboration and sustainability.





Bringing tourism to rural areas creates opportunities throughout the value chain, addressing economic and social challenges and fostering synergies at all levels.

Gonzalo Capellán highlighted the significance of the sustainable development of both society and tourism. La Rioja, known for its hospitality, is poised to embrace innovative technologies for a forward-thinking future. Gathering data is instrumental in creating extraordinary and unforgettable experiences and fostering collective growth. Mr. Capellán expressed his wish that the Conference would be a showcase of La Rioja's dedication to preserving its exceptional cultural and natural heritage, and of the crucial connection between the people and wine, key to the region's identity.

***«The unique fusion between wine and tourism not only enriches our traditions, but also fosters our local economies and promotes cultural exchange.»***

Gonzalo Capellán, President of La Rioja



# In Conversation with ...

**Joe Fattorini, wine expert, radio and TV presenter (United Kingdom).**

In this conversation, Ms. Carvão and Mr. Fattorini explored effective strategies to reach a broader audience. A key recommendation was the need to **prioritize the audience** by emphasizing the use of “you” over “I” or “we” – ensuring that the “you” appears three to five times more frequently in the communication than the “me”. This shift in language transforms engagement with the public.

**Creating a good story** is also crucial, and Mr. Fattorini suggested to follow a simple arch structure and include three main elements: first, ask an interesting **question to engage the audience**; second, include two numbers to **provide a sense of scale and significance** to the narrative. Lastly, include a powerful **visual image** that captivates the audience's imagination, sparking a desire to explore a destination or winery.



Embracing diversity and **celebrating differences** have a significant impact, especially in the context of wine tourism. The **creation of captivating stories** becomes instrumental in fostering a desire to explore, travel, and set expectations. It is essential to reach a broad audience and create stories that connect with people. Asking the question “What do I have that connects me to other people?” is fundamental for effective communication.

To keep growing, **attracting young talent** is essential. By cultivating a narrative that emphasizes the opportunities in the industry, wine tourism can effectively attract and retain the next generation of professionals, thereby ensuring continued development and success of the sector.

**«Nothing beats the power of a really good idea that is important to you».**

In the digital world, being creative is key to get people's attention. Working with brands and individuals helps **make each brand unique and shape their identity**. Not all connections are the same: statistics reveal that 26% of people take recommendations from the press while nearly half of the audience values recommendations from friends and family. Hence, it is crucial to **segment the audience and establish connections** with diverse audience segments.

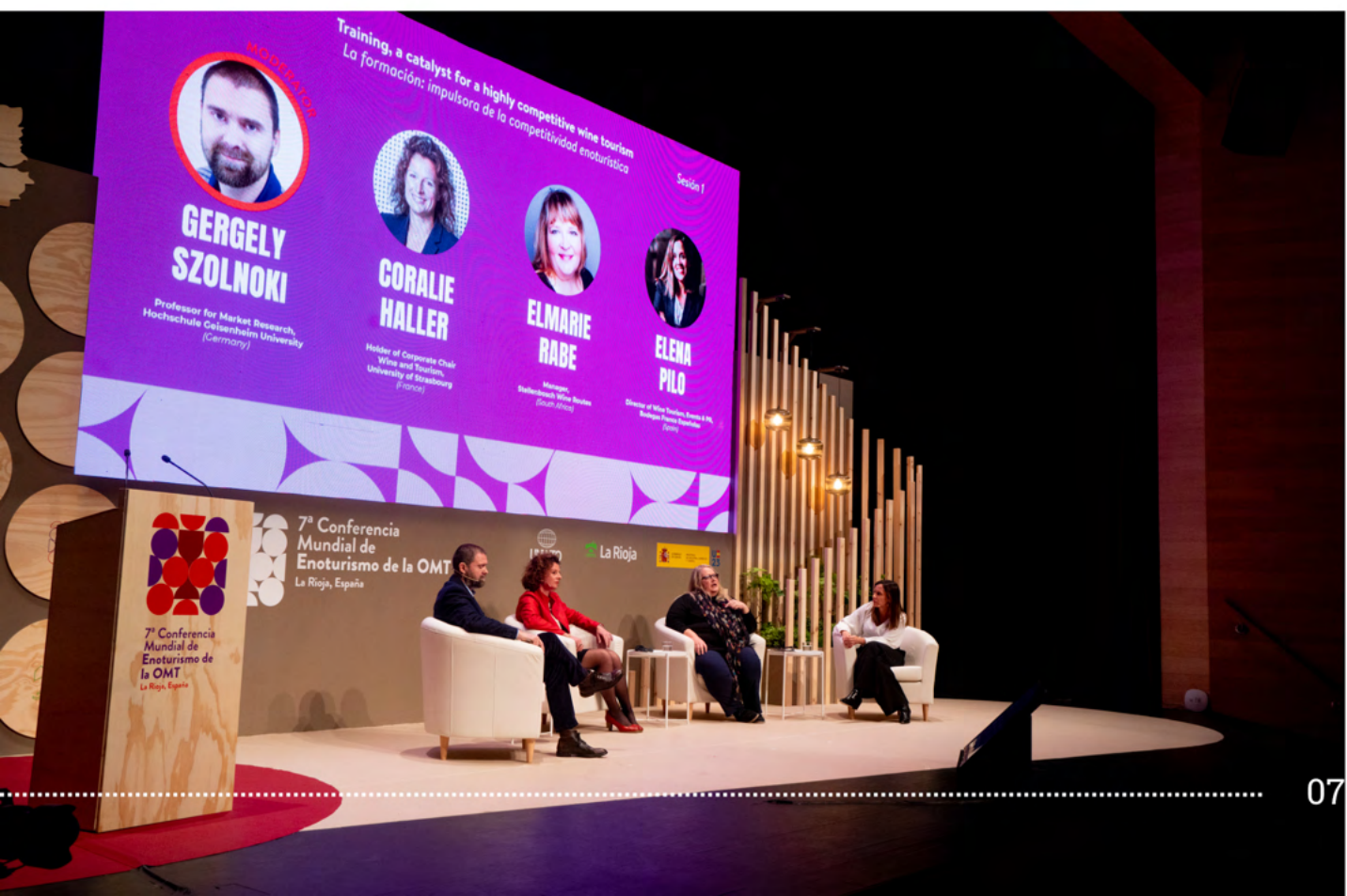


# Session I – Training, a catalyst for a highly competitive Wine Tourism

**Moderated by Gergely Szolnoki**, Professor of Market Research at the Hochschule Geisenheim University (Germany)

**Speakers: Coralie Haller**, Holder of Corporate Chair Wine and Tourism at the University of Strasbourg and Head of the Master of International Wine Management and Tourism at École de Management Strasbourg Business School (France); **Elmarie Rabe**, Manager at Stellenbosch Wine Routes (South Africa); and **Elena Pilo**, Director of Wine Tourism, Events & PR at Bodegas Franco Españolas (Spain).

Session I underscored the crucial need for comprehensive training in both academic and professional dimensions within the wine tourism sector. This encompasses not only shorter executive education programmes and bachelor experiences, but also an inclusive approach covering every aspect of wine tourism, ranging from wine tastings to customer service, language proficiency and marketing skills.





Conducting an audit across all processes played a pivotal role in assessing the overall skill levels of employees. This analysis was essential to **develop a skills list**, starting from entry-level positions and working them up to management positions. The emphasis on **developing skills from the ground up** reflects a commitment to achieving economic and social sustainability, providing opportunities for everyone.

Ms. Rabe highlighted key skills required in the industry, placing **customer service** at the forefront, followed by **proficiency in wine knowledge, wine making** or even table setting. Notably, she emphasized the importance of face-to-face education for more **interactive and trackable learning**. While remote learning can be more productive, being physically present is best for acquiring practical skills. Acknowledging the value of learning management systems, Ms. Rabe underscored their role in developing professionals. Additionally, investing in the personal development of employees will ensure growth and success within the industry.

Historically, education in the wine sector has been overlooked. However, it has a significant effect on the success and the development of wine tourism offerings and experiences. Given the diverse backgrounds prevalent in the industry, spanning enology, gastronomy, tourism, marketing, and viticulture, it becomes essential to align and integrate the varied skills needed for success. Further, emphasizing the significance of lifelong learning is essential for adapting to the evolving market dynamics.

In **South Africa**, wine tourism stands as one of the biggest employers and its significant contribution to the national economy underscores the critical need for employees to be equipped with the right skills set. Recognizing this, a meticulous approach was adopted to track jobs and identify the specific skills required for each role in the value chain.



Elena Pilo suggested taking a broad view that considers both the tourism and wine industries together. She believes it is essential to **understand the global picture** of both sectors. Ms. Pilo emphasized the need for experts to not just know the theory, but also be skilled in practical aspects such as winemaking.

Additionally, she stressed the importance of connecting tourism skills with qualities such as **good communication** and customer service for professionals to develop a comprehensive set of skills. She encourages developing professionals who understand both the wine and tourism markets rather than focusing on just one. **Understanding customers**, working on **soft skills**, kindness and **team management** are crucial for the industry to grow. In her view, training teams comprehensively and fostering growth within the private sector is key to ensure that teams can transform businesses and achieve success.



**«Education needs to broaden up: we're not just marketing wine or promoting tourism; we're showcasing an entire destination and a complete experience».**

Coralie Haller



Coralie Haller, founder and head of the first Chair in Wine Tourism at Strasbourg University, mentioned that training specific talents, skills and competences poses a challenge due to the uncertainty of future job requirements. She emphasized the importance of cultivating a **comprehensive set of skills** that merge wine and tourism industries. The missing link is the connection and unification of competences.

In the industry, Haller advocates for a **collaborative mindset, global thinking**, and intense **engagement with customers**. Knowing many **different languages** is also key to making experiences more personalized and unique. Enhancing soft skills is essential for public interaction, leading groups and engaging with diverse audiences. We need also to encourage small and medium size wineries to hire students in wine tourism.





For a **continuous** and **lifelong** education, **executive education** is key. This includes shorter programmes tailored for experienced professionals, featuring immersive experiences that facilitate interaction with sector peers. The **integration of the metaverse and AI** elevates these experiences, underscoring the importance of bridging the gap between digitalization and real-world applications. The industry is fast-moving: we need to have a “phygital” approach, a **mix of both physical and digital training**.

To improve education, it is vital to take a **broad approach** that considers different professional profiles. Additionally, sharing data management practices is crucial for advancing the industry, fostering collaboration and driving progress. **Governance** and documentation are also key in understanding global dynamics, trends, movements, and the sector’s overall growth.

In conclusion, training and education are key in the industry’s development. While good initiatives are underway, there is a need to elevate them to professional and international standards. Skill development in **viticulture, enology, management, languages, customer service** is crucial for bridging the worlds of wine and tourism.

Motivation by the **private sector** is essential to encourage employees to participate in seminars, trainings sessions and educational programmes, as self-motivation may not be sufficient. **Collaboration** is essential not only at **regional** and **national** levels but also requires a forward-looking approach for **international cooperation** to strengthen the sector in the future.

# New Trends in Wine Tourism

## Keynote by Diana Isac, CEO and Founder of Winerist

Diana's journey in wine tourism began over a decade ago with the creation of Winerist, an independent founder-owned business focusing on providing a 360-degree approach to wine tourism.

Winerist.com serves as a platform for wine travel, allowing users to easily book wine experiences. Complementing this, Winerist GO! is a technology app providing a booking calendar tailored for wineries, wine tour operators and hotels venturing into online bookings. The third component of the business is a marketing agency offering consultancy and digital marketing services, including social media, SEO and assistance in building platforms and websites, emphasizing the role of digitalization in enhancing social media and SEO across various channels.

Wine tourism is on the rise, driven by a surge in wine education and experiential learning. This trend began to expand after the pandemic, with people increasingly interested in culinary and wine experiences, leading to a growing interest in visiting wineries and understanding the industry. Sustainability and environmental awareness are also key trends.

The majority of wine tourism customers are now in the 25-40 age range, signaling a shift in consumption patterns. The market is globally dominated by group tours, offering potential for growth, especially as this age group might be looking for more accessible pricing in their getaways. Major activities include winery visits and tastings, wine trails and routes, wine festivals and events, and wine education and workshops.



**«Understanding both internal and external stakeholders is crucial. We need to remain loyal to our goals and ideals, and be accountable not just to our customers, but also to our team».**

# 1 Content creation

Engaging content on social media is crucial for building customer loyalty and business growth. There are three key aspects that must be considered when creating content: accessibility, simplicity and education through humor.

# 2 Intelligent marketing

Wineries must avoid focusing on a single platform and, to achieve progress, they must follow these key steps:

- **SEO positioning**
- **Social media management**
- **Email marketing**
- **Examining customer's reviews and testimonials**
- **Implementing referral systems**
- **Consistent customers follow-up and introducing new products**
- **Avoiding spam**

# 3 Leverage technology

Use **digital tools to improve real-world wine tourism experiences**. By incorporating digital solutions into daily tasks, businesses can grow and increase customer engagement and satisfaction. This, in turn, increases the chances of customers coming back and having more options when booking visits or buying experiences. Key aspects include:

- **online bookings**
- **safe payments**
- **integrating with aggregators**
- **capturing data for follow-up**

# 4 Product development

When reinventing products and creating innovative products, the industry must look at the following key recommendations:

- **Keep experiences clean and simple**
- **Set yourself apart from others**
- **Reinvent yourself, and**
- **Avoid overwhelming customers with too many choices**

# 5 Sustainability

Customers are increasingly looking for more sustainable experiences or wineries with sustainable certifications. It is vital to **responsibly label** products, **embrace organic and biodynamic practices** and implement sustainable practices not only in **wineries** but also in **hotels** and **transportation** services. The well-being of communities and ecosystems must be prioritized. Support your claims by seeking certifications and effectively communicate your efforts to your customers will ensure they are aware and appreciate your commitment to environmentally friendly practices.

# 6 People

Hiring the **right staff** is key, as well as keeping them **motivated**, ensuring their **retention** and fostering an environment where they feel **valued**. Identifying the **strengths** of each team member and aligning their roles with their skills is key. Thinking about people is crucial in this industry: **human touch is vital**, particularly in wine tourism. Hence, putting together the right team is essential for success.

# Session 2 – Unlocking the benefits of digitalization

Moderated by **David Mora**, Coordinator of the Master's Degree in Gastronomy Tourism at Basque Culinary Center (Spain)

**Speakers: Florencia Dibattista**, Content Creator and Owner of Flor de Bodegas (Argentina)

**Javier Gurría**, Founder and Project Director at JIG Group (Spain)

The session highlighted critical insights into the industry's evolution, placing a significant spotlight on the transformative influence of digitalization. With an acute awareness of the changing landscape, speakers championed the need for a comprehensive communication strategy. Storytelling emerged as a potent tool, recognized for its ability to forge profound connections with diverse audiences.

A pivotal aspect underscored was the strategic gathering of data, with a particular emphasis on the collection of information that creates meaningful customer engagement. Amidst the dynamic nature of the field, the session emphasized the proactive adoption of current trends and the direct confrontation of challenges as indispensable steps to effectively achieve objectives.





Starting the panel, Javier Gurria emphasized the importance of keeping **clear objectives** when starting a process of digitalization, chose the **right tools** that need improvement to best serve customer satisfaction. Gurria also highlighted the trial-and-error nature of digitalization, emphasizing that each business is unique.

Florencia Dibattista highlighted how digitalization transforms businesses by making **hard-to-reach places accessible** through technology. She stressed that digitalization is now crucial for businesses.

She suggested keeping **regular and engaging content on social media** to enhance interactions. **Paid advertising** on these platforms also provides a great opportunity to reach a broader audience and potential clients. Acknowledging the importance of social media in customer engagement she concluded that active participation on these platforms is essential in the current business landscape.

In this tech-dominated era, the speakers underscored the delicate balance between harnessing digital tools and **preserving the human touch** throughout the wine tourism experience.

They advocated for **post-experience technology** utilization, emphasizing its role in enhancing rather than overshadowing the interpersonal relationships that define the essence of wine tourism.



This holistic approach aims to integrate digital advancements seamlessly, ensuring they **complement rather than compromise** the authentic, personalized connections that elevate wine tourism experiences to enduring, cherished memories.

Speakers unveiled a roadmap for navigating the digital landscape, emphasizing the symbiosis between technological innovation and human interactions in the realm of wine tourism:

**1**

**Define clear objectives:**

- Establish specific goals for enhancing wine tourism through digitalization.
- Identify specific aspects, processes of your operations or services that can benefit from digital tools, such as booking systems, virtual tours, or customer engagement platforms.

**3**

**Target audience:**

- Identify the target audience for your digitalization efforts, whether it is customers, internal staff, or both.
- Adapt digitalization efforts to make your team's workflow more efficient and effective.

**5**

**Storytelling for empathy**

- Leverage storytelling to communicate the essence of your wine tourism experience.
- Capitalize on the potential of AI to craft compelling and empathetic narratives that resonate with your audience, fostering connection.

**2**

**Invest wisely:**

- Recognize that free tools may not always serve the purpose effectively.
- Assess and invest in tools that align with the unique needs of your wine tourism business and adapted to the specific aspects you want to digitalize.

**4**

**Client-centric approach:**

- Recognize that free tools may not always serve the purpose effectively.
- Assess and invest in tools that align with the unique needs of your wine tourism business and adapted to the specific aspects you want to digitalize.



# Our differences unite us

## Keynote by Virginia Borges, General Director for Tourism of La Rioja

In this Keynote, Ms. Borges gave a tour of La Rioja region. The General Director for Tourism stressed the importance of **strengthening the wine sector through cooperation and alliances**. Putting the spotlight on La Rioja, one of Spain's tiniest regions and a land which his synonymous with wine, she underscored its **global recognition** and celebration. Borges described La Rioja's wine culture, celebrating both the territory and tradition. The region features **over 500 wineries committed** to agreed wine tourism standards and forming a unique combination of centennial wineries with modern projects.

At the heart of the region's identity lies Spanish gastronomy, where the primary sector plays a pivotal role, further contributing to the richness of La Rioja. The singularity of La Rioja's wines, shaped by diverse factors, forms the foundation of wine tourism in the region that traces back to the 1960s and 1970s.

*«Many times, we are the ones creating barriers in our evolution. We need to grow and adapt into the best possible version of ourselves».*





**«Training locals with the skills for sharing their love for their land and wines with visitors will help foster a stronger bond between residents and tourists».**

Addressing industry challenges in La Rioja, Borges focused on the need to **train and find skilled staff**, with the ongoing transformation serving as motivation to actively involve young people in the sector. She stressed that the **inclusion of the younger generation** would propel the wine tourism sector to new heights, fostering innovation.

Encouraging locals to acquire competencies and skills to **interact effectively with visitors** was emphasized. Additionally, a call was made for all companies to embrace digitalization, forming interconnected villages. The challenge lies in **implementing the right digitalization strategy**, avoiding unnecessary complexities, and focusing on useful approaches to **connect remote places** with an expanding audience, thereby facilitating sectoral growth.

The importance of **identifying needs, challenges, and expectations** throughout the entire value chain was underscored. Finally, she emphasized the **recognition of differences** and **collaborative construction** of a sustainable future.

To conclude, Ms. Borges invited citizens and public administrations to work together and highlighted the fundamental role of **building a shared future**. Encouraging unity in social, economic, and environmental sustainability goals, she called for the **creation of policies** benefiting locals.



**«Like in every relationship, we should be aware of our differences – the ones that can unite us to achieve a common goal. Only then can we create a sustainable tourism model and benefit from it.»**



# Session 3 – Understanding Wine Tourism: A future of better data

**Moderated** by Giorgio Delgrosso, Head of Statistics & Chief Digital Transformation Officer at OIV  
**Speakers:** **Rodrigo Lemos**, Wine Tourism Coordinator at COVIAR (Argentina), **Claudio Cilveti**, President of Enoturismo Chile (Chile), **Enrique Martínez**, President of SEGITTUR (Spain) and **Rosa Melchor**, President of ACEVIN (Spain).

Session 3 focused on the significance of **public-private** and **local, regional, and national cooperation** to facilitate **data collection**, a crucial step towards establishing a common framework for **measuring wine tourism**.

Giorgio Delgrosso took the stage to share the progress of the **joint project by OIV and UNWTO on wine tourism measurement**. Recognizing the critical role of data in shaping the trajectory of the wine tourism sector, the project identified the lack of standardized, comparable data as a significant challenge. Existing data, when available, presents disparities due to variations in collection methods across countries. To address this issue, this joint initiative aims to **establish a common framework and guidelines for collecting data on wine tourism** allowing to create in the future a global and comparable assessment of the wine tourism landscape.



The **collaboration between OIV and UNWTO** represents a **significant milestone** in the advancement of wine tourism measurement. By **tackling data challenges** and promoting standardization, this joint project paves the way for comprehensive and meaningful insights into the global wine tourism landscape.

The commitment to **establishing a common framework**, conducting surveys, defining KPIs, and **promote the implementation of national-level data collection systems** reflects the dedication of both organizations to fostering a data-driven approach in **understanding and advancing wine tourism on a global scale**.

As this joint effort progresses, it aims to provide valuable tools and benchmarks for industry stakeholders, policymakers, and researchers to navigate and contribute to the sustainable growth of wine tourism worldwide. As part of the project, which includes a working group of experts and national organizations, a survey was conducted among countries to assess the status of this issue among main destinations and a working paper is being finalized for publication early 2024.



## Argentina



Rodrigo Lemos then presented the **Argentinian Wine Corporation (COVIAR)**, a public-private organization that oversees and coordinates the wineries' financial contributions to fund the actions outlined in Argentina's national Strategic Winegrowing Plan (PEVI 2030). Ranked as the 7th largest global wine producer, Argentina's diverse and complex wine sector motivates collaboration between COVIAR and the Argentine government to **decentralize the management of data and reach a broader audience**, emphasizing the need for data sharing. COVIAR measures wine tourism using indicators such as income, employment, sustainable activities, and provides both quantitative and qualitative data to address consumer tendencies.

Wine tourism in **Chile**, a country ranking as the 8th largest wine producer following Argentina, serves as a tool to empower business, especially small wineries. Enoturismo Chile, a public-private institution, encompasses **18 institutions across various economic sectors** and fosters development in Chile. Claudio Cilveti informed that measurement initiatives began in 2012, with the creation of a wine observatory in collaboration with the University of Talca. The introduction of **Enoticket** in 2019 marked a significant step, providing **real-time data collection**, fostering relationships between wineries and customers, and revealing trends in duration of the visits, pricing, and visitor numbers.

## Chile



## Spain



The Spanish Secretary of State for Tourism, through SEGITTUR, leads the **Smart Tourist Destinations project**, a pioneer at the international level, which aims to **implement a new model for improving competitiveness** and tourism development based on governance and co-responsibility. The platform enhances destination management and facilitates data collection. SEGITTUR's President, Enrique Martínez, emphasized the importance of standardized data collection and measurement models. Key challenges in terms of wine tourism to be addressed with this tool involve promoting an advanced governance model at the country level to boost demand, enhance value, diversify offerings, and **unite the entire wine tourism value chain**.

The initiative aims to improve the tourist experience, foster talent in destinations and sector companies, promote sector digitization, and enhance market knowledge. To achieve these goals, the project outlines specific objectives, including **identifying essential information sources and data** for defining, designing, and developing an **impact measurement model for wine tourism destinations**.

Spain's ACEVIN originated from the desire to understand visitors' experiences and identify potential areas for improvement. The **Wine Observatory** collects comprehensive data from both wineries and visitors, encompassing **supply and demand** aspects such as the number of visitors, income, demographics, spending patterns, and feedback. The data, grouped into 36 sections through digitalization, is instrumental in analyzing the wine tourist profile and needs across the diverse wine routes.



In conclusion, measuring Wine Tourism proves to be a complex task requiring **collaboration at regional, national, and international levels**. Representatives from Argentina, Chile, and Spain underscored the significance of having a **common framework for data** to address the challenges associated with diverse and dynamic wine tourism landscapes. A **unified approach to measurement** is essential for advancing the understanding and sustainable development of the global wine tourism industry.

# Session 4 – National & Regional Strategies for Wine Tourism

**Moderated by Ainhoa Mouriz**, Responsible for Wine Tourism, ARAEX Grands Spanish Fine Wines Foundation (Spain)

**Speakers: Sergio Castro**, Director of Planning and Development of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports (Argentina), **Zaruhi Muradyan**, Executive Director of Vine and Wine Foundation of Armenia, **Lucie Lefèvre**, Responsible of Wine Tourism Animation and Development at Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce and Local Coordinator at Great Wine Capitals (France), and **Lidia Monteiro**, Member of the Board, Turismo de Portugal.

Ainhoa Mouriz, from the **ARAEX Foundation**, opened the discussion by making a key observation: politicians may change, but the land and its people stay. Hence, robust policies and governance systems rooted in the land are crucial for the effective management of wine tourism, ensuring the ongoing development of wine tourism destinations and their communities.

Recognizing tourism as an essential tool for the sustainable development of destinations, especially in rural areas, the discussions delved into the **diverse strategies** implemented at the **national, regional and local levels** by different countries.

**«Politicians may change, but the land and its people stay. Hence, we need robust policies and governance systems rooted in the land to manage wine tourism effectively»**

Ainhoa Mouriz





In **Argentina**, wine tourism emerged as a strong means to generate employment in rural areas, especially in the post-pandemic context, creating new job opportunities and fostering community development.

Public policies are **strategically crafted from the grassroots to the top** in collaboration with local stakeholders, but also **horizontally**, recognizing the diverse contributors to the wine tourism industry, including entities such as the agricultural Secretariat and the transportation or energy authorities. Designing effective policies that embrace Argentina's diverse cultural and natural landscape poses a significant challenge, with 17 out of 21 provinces engaged in wine production and given that 80% of Argentina's territory is rural. With a growing number of participants in wine tourism, Argentina aims to enhance opportunities for the younger generation to remain in their regions.

**Armenia**, with its millennia-old wine culture, faced challenges during the Soviet era, especially during the anti-alcohol campaign when alcohol production was prohibited. Post-Soviet period saw the resurgence of wine production with new investments, positioning the country as a wine-making nation. The publicly founded **Foundation for Armenia's Vine and Wine** involves both private and public stakeholders to shape policies designed to professionalize the nation's young wine tourism sector.

Providing **training to wineries and tour operators**, including foreign languages and tools to provide the best possible services, the Foundation has helped **create a network** of open-minded professionals interested in learning from each other and creating new synergies. Additionally, the Foundation **develops regional products** to attract visitors, supporting accommodation, food services, and showcasing various aspects of Armenian culture, including art and architecture.





**Lucie Lefèvre** highlighted that although wineries in certain parts of Bordeaux's wine-making region historically offered accommodations and food services, officials realized twenty years ago that wine tourism lagged behind new-world wine-making regions like Napa Valley or Australia, where it was already well established. To address this, **best practices were identified**, and the **Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce** successfully brought together diverse stakeholders to formulate an effective strategy.

Atout France, the country's National Tourism Board, introduced the "**Vignobles et Découverte**" label, facilitating customer identification of quality wineries and accommodations while also providing training to wine tourism professionals. Acknowledging the importance of showcasing small wineries, strategies were implemented to train professionals and **balance touristic flows at the regional level**.

Wine tourism in Bordeaux is evolving into an **ambassadorial role**, offering convivial experiences that appeal to a broader and younger audience. Bordeaux focuses on making wine more inclusive, emphasizing the importance of **engaging with the local community, sustainability, educational initiatives, and job creation**.





Lídia Monteiro explained that Portugal, with its rich history of wine and culture, aims to position itself as an internationally recognized and sustainable wine tourism destination.

**Turismo de Portugal**, the National Tourism Administration (NTA), launched a wine tourism **Programme with a 360-vision** encompassing four dimensions: **place, people, promotion, and profit**. Leveraging dialogue and collaboration among all stakeholders in the wine and tourism sectors, at both national and regional levels, this Programme not only outlines a common strategy but also allocates resources for its implementation. It aims to promote wine territories, provide training for wine tourism professionals in both wine knowledge and tourism skills, and enhance the visibility of territories and companies with promotional campaigns.

The strategy emphasizes a **horizontal approach** for a **comprehensive understanding** of the country and **regional cooperation**. The approach involves a learning curve for continuous improvement, aligning tourism as a sustainable and diverse activity.



In summary, the speakers underscored the importance of **governance systems firmly grounded in the local landscape** and the **creation of robust wine tourism policies that prioritize inclusivity** through participatory efforts **involving all stakeholders**.



There is a challenge in crafting policies that truly **embrace the diversity of wine tourism destinations** and **adapt to local nuances** while **fostering regional cooperation**.



Additionally, the spotlight was on the **professionalization** of wine tourism through **collaborative efforts, training initiatives,** and networking among industry professionals.



In essence, an effective governance model should employ **horizontal strategies**, encouraging a comprehensive understanding of the industry and **leveraging collaboration among diverse stakeholders** for continuous improvement and development.

# Session 5 – Building a Sustainable Future for Wine Tourism: Get Inspired!

**Introduction and moderation:** Paul Wagner, Marketing and Wine Tourism Specialist (USA)

**Speakers:** Rowald Hepp, Advisor and Former Director of the Schloss Vollrads GmbH & Co (Germany), João Barroso, Sustainability Manager of the Alentejo Regional Wine Growing Commission (Portugal) and Raquel Rupérez Santos, Responsible for Wine Tourism and Public Relations of Bodegas Beronia (Spain).



Paul Wagner introduced the panel session on "Building a Sustainable Future for Wine Tourism: Get Inspired!", where speakers highlighted three key sustainability practices: **reducing plastic waste**, **integrating human interaction with digitalized experiences**, and **developing routes that engage with local communities**.

Bodegas Beronia in Spain exemplifies this commitment through **sustainable agriculture practices**, including using satellite imagery for efficient irrigation.

Notably, Bodegas Beronia achieved a level 4 sustainable building certification, the first in the world for a winery, focusing on **energy efficiency** and **sustainable design**. Bodegas Beronia prioritizes the **environment**, incorporating open-air experiences and **social activities**. The winery emphasizes the importance of discussing and embodying sustainability, not just as a concept but as a true commitment. She underscored the significance of educating tourists, respecting the host and building the brand of Rioja and Spain.





**Rowald Hepp**, former director of **Schloss Vollrads** vineyards emphasized the essential need to find **year-round solutions for wine tourism** that also support **continuous employment**. He recognized the importance of having the best staff as the soul of one's business, acknowledging that **employees are crucial problem solvers and play a key role in customer engagement**. The future challenge lies in maintaining a socially sustainable relationship with staff, requiring adjustments and adaptations. Staff members must be skilled, well-trained, attentive, focused, and flexible to ensure the success of a socially sustainable model.

As the leading region in Portugal for domestic wine sales, Alentejo introduced the **Wines of Alentejo Sustainability Programme (WASP)** in 2015. Involving a **self-evaluation system** with 18 areas of evaluation and 171 criteria for assessment, the Programme started with 91 members and has notably expanded to include 632 members by 2023. Offering **free consultancy** on sustainability, this project emphasizes **community well-being, engagement of all wine tourism stakeholders, flexibility, and adaptability**. Alentejo's approach considers end users as active participants, integrating third-party certification, self-evaluation, and accountability.



In conclusion, the session demonstrated inspiring practices in **reducing environmental impact, fostering community engagement, and ensuring environmental and social sustainability in wine tourism**.

These case studies provided valuable insights into the diverse strategies adopted by different regions and wineries, offering examples on how to build a sustainable future in the dynamic landscape of wine tourism.







# Key Takeaways

Sandra Carvão, Director of Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness, UNWTO

## 1 Customer-centric approach

Place the **focus on the customer**, creating a comprehensive communication strategy that incorporates storytelling. **Understanding and prioritizing the needs of the customer** is key. Stay informed about trends, avoid irrelevant data, and recognize that, in a tech-driven world, the human relationship remains essential during the overall experience.

## 2 National and regional strategies

Develop **comprehensive strategies** focused on the territory, the people – with **effective training and skills development**, profit – by constantly innovating and improving infrastructures, promotion, and strong communication strategies. Implementing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), gathering relevant data, and establishing a timeline and a governance structure for effective implementation are crucial for assessing progress and identifying areas of improvement.

## 3 New governance models

Embrace governance models that are organized, transparent, and structured with **clear common objectives, aligned resources, and management structures**. Extend the model across the entire value chain, including local communities, fostering collaboration and effectiveness ensuring the success of national and regional strategies in the dynamic landscape of wine tourism.

## 4 Data harmonization

Address the lack of harmonized data, definitions, indicators, and methodologies within wine tourism. Build harmonized frameworks, define relevant data, and invest in digital tools. Foster collaboration at different levels, acknowledging the complexity of the task.

## 5 Sustainability

Distinguish between sustainability in winemaking and sustainability in wine tourism. Understand the **associated resources** and costs involved in implementing sustainable practices, recognizing the importance of aligning both aspects.



## 6 Digitalization opportunities

Embrace digitalization to **unlock new opportunities**, reach new audiences, and adapt communication channels. Cultivate **digital intelligence**, **invest in skills development for younger generations**, and integrate digital elements into both pre- and post-experience phases, all while maintaining the focus on the human experience of the “during”.

## 7 Territorial impact

Recognize wine tourism as a powerful tool for rural development and territorial cohesion. Understand its regenerative impact and build on its power to **encourage job creation**, **foster businesses**, and **generate opportunities for local communities**.

## 8 Holistic approach to the future

Envision a comprehensive future, by **involving people within and beyond the wine tourism ecosystem**. Prioritize sustainability, harness data and market intelligence for targeted marketing, integrate technology and ensure accountability.

## 9 Talent and skills development

Elevate training in both **academic and professional education**, offering **comprehensive programmes** covering various aspects of wine tourism, from tasting to customer service, languages, and marketing. Make the sector attractive, particularly to younger generations.

## 10 Listening and generosity

Emphasize the importance of **listening** and being **generous**. Actively listen to stakeholders, customers, and communities while fostering a **culture of generosity** within the industry.

*«Being generous with your knowledge is the only way we can make the wine tourism patchwork thrive».*



# Closing Ceremony

## 7th UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism

The closing ceremony unfolded with **Mr. Pérez Pastor, Regional Minister of Culture, Tourism, Sports and Youth of La Rioja** conveying his heartfelt appreciation to the attendees, calling them ambassadors of La Rioja and entrusting them with promoting its distinctive culture globally.

**Sandra Carvão, Director of Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness at UNWTO** expressed her appreciation for the warm hospitality of the hosts, the collaborative efforts of the Secretary of State of Spain and the active engagement of the event attendees.

To conclude the closing ceremony, **Armenia was announced as the 2024 host of the UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism**. The representative **Arevik Sogbatyan** from Armenia joined Ms. Carvão and Mr. Pérez Pastor on stage for the symbolic moment of the amphora passing, marking the transition of responsibilities, emphasizing the continuity of shared efforts in advancing wine tourism on a global scale. **The ceremony served as a testament to the unity, collaboration, and collective commitment among nations in fostering the growth and sustainability of wine tourism worldwide.**











Copyright © 2024, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

**Conclusions of the 7th UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism  
Inclusive, sustainable and digital wine tourism: building stronger territorial cohesion  
22-24 November, Logroño (La Rioja), Spain**

ISBN, printed version: 978-92-844-2531-0

ISBN, electronic version: 978-92-844-2532-7

DOI: 10.18111/9789284425327

Published by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Madrid, Spain.

First published: 2024

All rights reserved.

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Poeta Joan Maragall, 42

28020 Madrid

Spain

Tel.: (+34) 915 67 81 00

Fax: (+34) 915 71 37 33

Website: [www.unwto.org](http://www.unwto.org)

E-mail: [info@unwto.org](mailto:info@unwto.org)

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinions whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and presenters, and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Citation: World Tourism Organization (2024), Conclusions of the 7th UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism – Inclusive, sustainable and digital wine tourism: building stronger territorial cohesion; 22-24 November 2024, Logroño (La Rioja), Spain, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284425327>.

All UNWTO publications are protected by copyright. Therefore, and unless otherwise specified, no part of a UNWTO publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, microfilm, scanning, without prior permission in writing. UNWTO encourages dissemination of its work and is pleased to consider permissions, licensing, and translation requests related to UNWTO publications.

Permission to photocopy UNWTO material in Spain must be obtained through:

Centro Español de Derechos Reprográficos (CEDRO)

Calle Alcalá, 21, 2º der.

28014 Madrid

Spain

Tel.: (+34) 913 08 63 30

Fax: (+34) 913 08 63 27

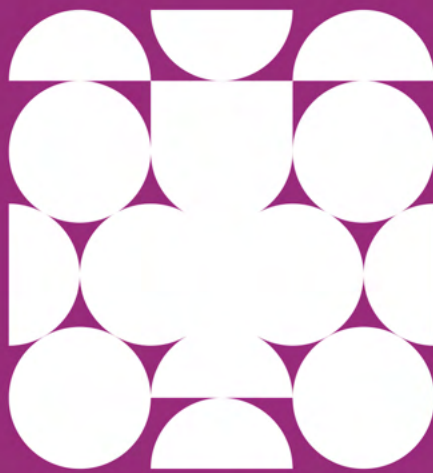
Website: [www.cedro.org](http://www.cedro.org)

E-mail: [cedro@cedro.org](mailto:cedro@cedro.org)

For authorization of the reproduction of UNWTO works outside of Spain, please contact one of CEDRO's partner organizations, with which bilateral agreements are in place (see: [www.cedro.org/english?lng=en](http://www.cedro.org/english?lng=en)).

For all remaining countries as well as for other permissions, requests should be addressed directly to the World Tourism Organization. For applications see: [www.unwto.org/unwto-publications](http://www.unwto.org/unwto-publications).





**7th UNWTO  
Global Conference  
on Wine Tourism**  
La Rioja, Spain



**UN Tourism**



**La Rioja**



GOBIERNO  
DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO  
DE INDUSTRIA, COMERCIO  
Y TURISMO

**U  
E  
23**