



UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism highlights value of Culture

Plovdiv, Bulgaria, 9 October 2025 – The UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism took place in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, on 6–7 October 2025. Under the theme “The Art of Wine Tourism”, the event explored the synergies between wine tourism, art, and culture, showcasing its role as a catalyst for innovation, job creation, and regional development.

Set against the backdrop of historic Plovdiv, one of the world’s oldest continuously inhabited cities and European Capital of Culture in 2019, the Conference bridged innovation and tradition. With thousands of years of winemaking roots and a dynamic contemporary scene, Bulgaria provided a fitting example of how wine tourism can unite heritage and modernity to inspire professionals and visitors alike.

UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said: “Taste, culture, and place come together in wine tourism. And now, we see innovation and creativity shaping the sector. By bringing together policy makers and industry leaders, we make wine tourism as a driver of economic growth, cultural preservation, and opportunity for all, especially those in winemaking communities.”

Minister of Tourism of Bulgaria Miroslav Borshosh said: “For Bulgaria, this conference is not just a recognition of what has been achieved, but also an inspiration for further sustainable development. Wine is culture, history, and identity – a living connection between the land and the people. Its combination with tourism gives us the opportunity to tell the story of Bulgaria in a new, modern, and exciting way.”

Wine Tourism as a Driver of Sustainable Development

Bringing together more than 300 participants from 27 countries, the Conference featured high-level panels, masterclasses, and immersive site visits. It offered a platform for destinations, academics, entrepreneurs, wineries, and tourism professionals to exchange knowledge and good practices in wine tourism with a focus on the areas of policy, product development, communication and talent.

A high-level policy session brought together representatives from the Ministries of Tourism of Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro, as well as from the Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA) and the UNESCO Regional Office in Sofia, to foster regional development. Coordinated policy approaches were underlined as essential to strengthen infrastructure, diversify products, and improve marketing, ensuring that wine tourism effectively advances the goals of sustainable tourism development.

Global Wine Tourism Report: A New Reference for the Sector

A key milestone of this year's edition was the launch of the first Global Wine Tourism Report, developed by Geisenheim University in collaboration with UN Tourism, the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), Great Wine Capitals, and WineTourism.com.

Drawing on the findings of the first-ever global survey on wine tourism, the Report provides valuable insights into emerging trends and market dynamics. While global wine consumption shows signs of decline, the results confirm that wine tourism is growing, offering destinations new opportunities to build meaningful, long-term connections with visitors. The study also underscores the importance of sustainability, storytelling, and digital engagement as foundations for future growth.

People at the Heart of Wine Tourism

Recognizing that people are the cornerstone of wine tourism, the Conference dedicated a session to education and training as drivers of inclusion and quality. With contributions from local universities, international academic institutions and operators, discussions emphasized the importance of investing in continuous talent development and capacity-building highlighting the need for soft skills, stimulating entrepreneurship and essentials such as languages.

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