Press Release

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Hopscotch Sopexa Presents the Results of the 10th Edition of the Wine Trade Monitor: Who Wins in Tomorrow's Wine Market?

Hopscotch Sopexa, an international marketing and communications consulting agency specializing in Food, Beverage & Lifestyle, presents the findings of the Wine Trade Monitor 2024. This forward-looking survey provides an unmatched insight into B2B trends in the international wine market, according to a panel of decision-makers and key industry players worldwide.

February 6, 2024 – Calling on its international network of over 30 offices worldwide, Hopscotch Sopexa carries out a biennial prospective study of B2B trends in key wine consumption and import markets.

The agency's approach is one of a kind: to interview wine trade operators around the world – those who are the intermediaries between international brands and local consumers – and gather their perceptions of wine market evolutions. Over the past 15 years, this methodology has proven sound in previewing forecasts that have ultimately come true, providing valuable lessons in understanding and anticipating the trends impacting international wines sales.

Between September and November 2023, 957 professionals working with an assortment of international wines, including importers, wholesalers, supermarket distributors, wine merchants, and online sales specialists, took part in the survey and gave their forecasts for the next two years. The 10th edition of the Wine Trade Monitor surveyed 9 markets: Germany, Belgium, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, the United States, Canada, China, Japan, and South Korea.

Integrated Hopscotch Groupe + Hopscotch Sopexa Network

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Wine Market Evolution Forecast: Hopscotch Sopexa's 8 Key Findings

1. **Wines From Europe Are the Most Referenced**

On average, the professionals surveyed listed wines from 8 countries in their portfolios. Wines from Europe remain dominant: almost 9 out of 10 operators list French wines (88%), ahead of Italian (77%) and Spanish (72%) wines. In addition to the European top 3, Belgium, for example, has a thirst for new sources: more than 1 in 2 Belgian operators list Argentinean wines, while Chilean and Greek wines are up by more than 15 points.

2. **Quality, Price, Innovation: Wine Perception Determined by its Origin**

For over half of professionals surveyed, wine of French origin performs best in terms of image, all things considered. It is synonymous with "wine for special occasions", prized for its "consistent quality of taste" and its "CSR approach". Spain and Chile are strongest in terms of "price appeal", while Italy stands out for "innovation" and its ability to "appeal to the younger generation". American wines are particularly well received in South Korea, a highly dynamic market analyzed for the 1st time in the Wine Trade Monitor.

3. **A Rather Pessimistic View of the Evolution of the Wine Market, but Confidence in Individual Sales**

Half of professionals expect the wine market to stagnate over the next few months. Despite this gloomy context, the smaller the operator, the more optimistic they are (28% of operators buying less than 10,000 bottles expect sales to grow). Online sales are becoming increasingly common, particularly in South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States, even in a context of post-Covid standardization, raising new questions in terms of regulations.

4. **Three Trends are Boosting Sales: Naturalness, Price Segmentation, and a New Offer Including Light Wines**

How natural a wine is perceived is the 1ST key trend (natural wines or wines produced using organic or CSR methods). Reducing the carbon footprint is the most commonly shared CSR dimension, but sensitivity varies from one market to another: the United States places more importance on inclusivity, Belgium on biodiversity, while it has little or no impact in Asia.

The 2ND trend identified is more pronounced price segmentation: wine offerings are becoming more premium in China and South Korea, while entry-level products are gaining ground in Germany and Canada, for example.

The 3RD most-cited trend is the emergence of new wine offerings, notably light-alcohol wines, which are making strong inroads in Germany and Anglo-Saxon countries (Canada, United Kingdom, United States)

5. **Wine Authenticity Influences Sales**

Wine authenticity is a selling point for more than 8 out of 10 professionals surveyed. However, what this means varies geographically: Belgians and Germans will be more sensitive to the winemaker's approach, whereas authenticity is more synonymous with "terroir" in Asia or "craft production" in the United States. Authenticity is a dimension to which wine merchants are more sensitive (90% of independents vs. 75% of large-scale distributors).

6. **French Appellations Remain the Leaders by Color**

In terms of sales momentum, four French regions are the neck-and-neck leaders for red wines: Languedoc, Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Rhône Valley. Leading the way in white wines is the Loire Valley, closely followed by Languedoc, Burgundy, and Marlborough in New Zealand, which largely dominates this category in China and South Korea. As for rosés, the race is open after Provence, between Languedoc, Italian, and Spanish rosés. Regarding sparkling wines, Cava and Crémant are the most eagerly sought after, ahead of Champagne. Prosecco moves down to 4th position, from 2nd in 2021.
Depending on the markets studied, certain regions or vineyards stand out, such as Portuguese wines in the United States: Vinho Verde in white and Douro in red are the two appellations for which American professionals anticipate the greatest sales growth.

7. Three Major international Grape Varieties Top the Ranking, Followed by Rapidly Growing Secondary Varieties

The major international grape varieties remain the most popular, but with very marked fluctuations depending on the country: Chardonnay (growth anticipated in Belgium, but much more limited in the USA), Cabernet Sauvignon (increase in Asia, but little in Germany), Pinot Noir (strong in South Korea and without respondents in the Netherlands). The popularity of Chenin Blanc, Cabernet Franc, and Grüner Veltliner is growing rapidly: producing fresh, lower-alcohol wines, these grape varieties are particularly well-suited to today's consumer preferences.

8. The Bottle is Evolving, While the Can Falls Out of Favor

The bottle remains the format that is likely to see the biggest increase in sales over the next 24 months. While the classic 75cL bottle remains very popular in China (90%), the lightweight glass bottle is very popular in Canada and the United Kingdom. The study anticipates an increase in the share of screw caps (61%) and reveals the decline of the can format in Anglo-Saxon markets compared to 2021 (United States -18 points, Canada -19 points, United Kingdom -24 points).

This study, aligned with the DNA of Hopscotch Sopexa agency, draws on its international network and knowledge of the wine world to design marketing and communications campaigns at the heart of the challenges facing wine-producing regions.

Join us at Wine Paris, on February 13, 2024 at 1:00 pm CET in Room 5, for a conference dedicated to the study: Wine Trade Monitor : Who Wins in Tomorrow's Wine Market? .

For the results of the Wine Trade Monitor 2024 edition: download the infographic on our website.

About Hopscotch Sopexa

Hopscotch Sopexa is an international marketing and communications consultancy agency whose multicultural teams have been specialists and enthusiasts of Food, Beverage, Lifestyle for over 60 years.

Hopscotch Sopexa is member agency of the HOPSCOTCH Groupe. Together, they form an integrated international network of 800 talents and more than 30 offices worldwide, with a reach in all countries in EMEA, the Americas and Asia.

On a daily basis, Hopscotch Sopexa's experts put together their know-how and relational network to develop and execute creative campaigns and high-impact solutions that appeal to consumers all around the world. An expert in integrated campaigns, Hopscotch Sopexa unique value proposition encompasses the full communications suite, from advising, designing and deploying media, PR, influencer, digital, event and trade marketing campaigns tailored to each market. The agency is also a leader in campaigns co-financed by Europe, with over 400 projects carried out since 2012.

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