



Press release
Vienna, May 2026

That Was VieVinum 2026 – A Return to Optimism

Starting during the run-up to the event, VieVinum placed its rubric ‘The Power of Wine’ centre-stage, calling upon attendees to reflect on the positive aspects of wine. Involving some 15,000 visitors and 550 exhibitors, Austria’s international wine fair once more demonstrated its immense drawing power; furthermore, through an extensive programme of master classes, VieVinum explored a multitude of diverse approaches to wine – ranging from the strictly technical to the controversial, and even the humorous.

With a mood barometer pointing clearly upward and a restructuring of the wine market now firmly taking shape, three days of VieVinum served to underscore a key reality: a high degree of individuality in wine styles and origins has become just as much a matter of course as is the openness to innovation. At the same time, the simple enjoyment of wine – along with its social dimension – is once again moving to the forefront. Indeed, for many trade visitors, personal interaction with winegrowers and colleagues – alongside tasting wines and tracking current market trends – was one of the primary motivations for attending the trade fair.

An Imperial Stage

During the opening ceremony, Dr. Johannes Abentung, Secretary General of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry, highlighted the character of wine as a unique, inimitable natural product and underscored its cultural, social and economic significance. In his welcoming address, Austrian Winegrowers’ Association President Johannes Schmuckenschlager drew attention to the honoured status of wine in Austria, with the HOFBURG Palace in Vienna providing an imperial stage – a setting that arguably makes this the loveliest wine fair in the world. Furthermore, the excellent collaboration between teams from the trade fair organizer, M.A.C. Hoffmann, and the Austrian Wine Marketing Board (ÖWM) was acknowledged as instrumental to the success of VieVinum. Approximately one thousand international merchants, restaurateurs, sommeliers and journalists attended VieVinum at the invitation of the ÖWM.



Guest Country Georgia

Wineries from numerous countries around the globe also presented their bottles for tasting at VieVinum, with Georgia standing out prominently as the official guest country. In his welcoming speech, His Excellency Alexander Maisuradze, Ambassador of Georgia, emphasized the role of wine in shaping national identity within his country – a land regarded as the ‘cradle of wine’ for its great and ancient tradition: 8,000 years of viticulture.

Controversies and the Power of Sport

The programme offered by the School of Wine provided fitting insight into the new diversity regarding approaches to wine. The spectrum of topics ranged from detailed technical subjects and monumental anniversary tastings to controversial discussions on wine styles and viticultural perspectives – and even extended to entertaining and satirical presentations round about wine. For one example, football (soccer) legend Herbert Prohaska, along with sports commentator Rainer Pariasek and Annemarie Foidl, President of the Sommelier Union Austria, took the stage as a panel of commentators for an international match between Niederösterreich and Italy. An analogy to football was also drawn by the now-traditional Riesling ‘International’ between Austria and Germany – complete with a tongue-in-cheek dream of repeating the legendary 1978 World Cup ‘Cordoba’ victory. Under the leadership of captains Walter Kutscher (Vienna Sommelier Association, representing Austria) and Harald Scholl (Editor-in-Chief of VINUM Germany), two national oenological teams faced off on the theme of ‘Riesling 2022.’ After the first half, Germany appeared to be on the path to victory, only for Austria to narrowly clinch the win.

A Commitment to Youth

Since 2022, the Gerd A. Hoffmann Academy – a cross-mentoring programme for young winegrowers – has formed an integral feature of VieVinum’s youth development initiatives. In 2026, 13 young talents from the Austrian viticultural community qualified for the programme, where they were paired with prominent figures from the worlds of business and society to serve as their mentors. For the first time, mentees were supported by graduates from previous cohorts acting as ‘buddies’, while they gained additional opportunities to showcase both themselves and their wines through networking partnerships with various hospitality industry establishments serving as ‘home bases’.



New Tasting Zone & Zone Zero

Complementing the School of Wine, VieVinum offered numerous special programmes, such as the Tasting Zone located in the so-called 'Orchestergang.' Here, the Sommelier Union Austria guided visitors through a tasting circuit highlighting personal taste preferences; Wein Steiermark presented wines awarded the 'Best of Sauvignon Blanc' distinction – including a guided tasting led by VINUM Editor-in-Chief Harald Scholl – and Wein Burgenland presented twelve young winegrowers from its new youth initiative under the banner 'Junges Burgenland – Next Generation.'

Going Bold in Zone Zero

The major trend 'Alcohol-Free Alternatives' was also given a prominent stage, where some 80 no-alcohol products were available for tasting. Furthermore, a series of high-calibre talks and discussions – covering production, sustainability, and economic viability – highlighted the dynamic nature of this beverage category. This presentation culminated in the awarding of the Austrian Zero Award 2026 tasted by Del Fabro Kolarik & Partner.

Quotes from Exhibitors & Visitors

· Hans Bergmann, Head of SPAR Wine Category Management & INTERSPAR Wine Expert
'The atmosphere was exceptionally positive, characterized by lively exchanges and encounters that – at their very best – give rise to partnerships rooted in friendship. VieVinum – the loveliest wine fair in the world – offered all of this and much more.'

· Waltraud Scharnagl, SPAR Wine Category Manager & INTERSPAR Wine Expert
'I experienced VieVinum as a grand family reunion, featuring an expansive audience of young people who were deeply interested in wine.'

· Christiane Mösl, Managing Director, ARGE Heumilch
'For us, VieVinum serves as an excellent platform for engaging with an audience that appreciates fine food and drink – people who are genuinely interested in the story behind our hay-milk products.'



· Lisa Masser, Weingut Masser

‘We enjoyed memorable interactions with both trade professionals and private visitors, as well as with many of our industry colleagues. It was also particularly gratifying to have an importer from the USA express such enthusiasm for our wines, strongly encouraging us to persist with our efforts in that market.’

· Helga Schröder, MS and Brand Ambassador, Weingut Bernhard Ott

‘An extremely high-calibre trade fair with a high quality-standard among visitors; we were kept fully busy throughout all three days.’

· Paul Schabl, Weingut Schabl

‘A wonderful venue for meeting both existing and new customers. We had a terrific audience.’

· Irene Wurm, Weingut Geschwister Wurm

‘This was our second time here. It was wonderful to see that the trade audience was specifically seeking out wines from the Bergland region.’

· Peter Lamprecht, L. Derksen & Co.

‘We are very satisfied. The audience quickly realised that we had brought along only the top bottles from our portfolio – something that subsequently spread by word of mouth.’

· Christopher Gampe, Head of KASTNER AllesWein

‘Great organisation; everything was well-structured, and there were no long wait times at the booths. The winegrowers were all in high spirits – and it showed. A fantastic trade fair for a discerning audience.’

· Hannes Tschida, Restaurateur, ‘Zum fröhlichen Arbeiter’

‘A very pleasant tasting environment and a ripping-good selection – including the ‘zero-alcohol’ products.’

· Franz Dafner, Restaurateur, Gasthof Dafner

‘Excellent organisation. All the relevant Austrian wine estates were represented here.’

· Aleksandre Gogiasvilli, Wine Alphabet, Georgia

‘We received extremely valuable feedback from both the trade audience and fellow winegrowers; many visitors were already very knowledgeable about wines from Georgia.’

· Claudia Geyer, Chief Technology Officer, Solos

‘A terrific platform to showcase our technology and demonstrate that we can capture and convey the unique signature of a winegrower.’



· Wolfgang Loitsch, Beyond Veltliner Wines

‘A wonderful event. The way Austria presents itself here is truly unique on a global scale. The master classes as well were superbly organized!’

· Klaus Postmann, Senior Category Manager, Wine, Sekt & Spirits; Co-organizer, Zone Zero

‘Interest was immense – particularly among young people and international guests. We observed that the active involvement of young winegrowers inspired the younger audience to experiment. It was especially exciting that our master classes allowed us to cover the entire spectrum of topics, ranging from production right through to marketing.’

· Matthias Reckendorfer, Weingut Reckendorfer

‘For me, this was the best VieVinum yet. Though I did put in some effort to make it so!’

· Gerhard Retter, star sommelier, Germany

‘As always, everything was organized to perfection. The sheer diversity of wines gathered here brings together such a wide array of styles. What truly matters is the dialogue between people – and the shared joy of wine.’

· Herbert Zillinger, Weingut Herbert Zillinger

‘The atmosphere was superb – I found it to be almost euphoric, a stark contrast to the mood currently prevailing in the wider market. Many restaurateurs, too, remarked on how much they appreciated the fantastic atmosphere at VieVinum.’

Vienna’s Hofburg Palace will once again host VieVinum, 13–15 May 2028

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