

2022: trade fairs make a comeback

After two years marked by the huge impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, 2022 could almost be considered a normal year again. One particularly pleasing aspect was the return of the major wine fairs, which also became the key focus of the Austrian Wine Marketing Board's annual programme of events. However, the Austrian Wine Marketing Board (Austrian Wine) also put a host of other initiatives into place to promote the sale of the country's wines and drive added value for Austrian winegrowers. Exports in 2022 could even beat the record year of 2021!

Austrian Wine's recently released annual report provides a detailed insight into the strategic considerations and initiatives that shaped 2022.

Presentation of 3,470 wines from 622 different wineries

When plans were being put in place for 2022, it was clear that a "normal" year was not going to be a "return to 2019". Austrian Wine decided to continue with initiatives that had been put in place during the "coronavirus years", such as the different styles of events (on-site, online or a mixture of the two), which they could choose from depending on the type of market and the context. Last year, Austrian Wine organised 102 events around the world, at which they presented 3,470 Austrian wines from 622 different wineries (a selection can be found [here](#)).

The VieVinum was a roaring success

Much to the delight of the entire industry, it soon became clear that the major wine fairs were going to take place again in 2022. ProWein Düsseldorf was rescheduled at short notice to the weekend just before the VieVinum, which proved to be a huge challenge for everyone involved. Nevertheless, Austrian Wine was still able to host [over 1,000 wine industry professionals from around the world at the VieVinum](#) in May. After an imposed four-year break, the fair – which is held in Vienna's Hofburg – welcomed 500 exhibiting wineries and left a great impression on both visitors and exhibitors alike.

The highest average price since exports began could be achieved

This enthusiasm was also reflected in the global demand for Austrian wine. After the record year of 2021, with the all-time highest export growth, export figures continued to climb in 2022. By September, exports had grown 7.5% to €175.3 million. Although there was a 4.4% decrease in the volume of wine exported, this caused the average price to increase to €3.44 per litre. If this trend continues, Austria's total annual figures for 2022 could confirm the country's highest average price in its export history.

Wines from Austria presented in all four corners of the world

The rising trend in export figures can partly be explained by Austrian Wine's promotional activities in the international markets. The year kicked off with Austrian Wine supporting a large number of wineries at the [Millésime Bio](#) and the [Vinexpo Paris](#).

In May, just before the VieVinum, Austrian Wine, together with 300 Austrian winegrowers, participated in the [ProWein fair in Düsseldorf](#).

Between May and June, Austrian Wine ran a major retail campaign in the USA called "[It's Austrian Wine Time!](#)". More than 100 wine retailers and on-trade businesses participated in the campaign.

However, Austrian Wine also focused on Canada in 2022, which has shown very promising performance as an export market over recent years. Examples include the [Austrian Tasting in Montreal](#) and the [RAW WINE fairs](#) in both Toronto and Montreal. Austrian Wine also gave exports a strong boost in Switzerland with a [flight tasting in Zurich](#), as well as in Scandinavia with private tastings in [Stockholm](#) and [Oslo](#). In Asia, they hosted for example the [Austrian Tasting in Japan](#) and took part in the [Chinese competition "Wine100"](#).

Wine sales recovered in the Austrian on-trade

The fact that Austria's on-trade could stay open again in 2022 after two years of lockdowns did not go unnoticed. Sales of Austrian wine in the off-trade, which had increased significantly during 2020 and 2021, dropped off slightly (-5.5% revenue, Q1–Q3 2022). On the other hand, revenue in the on-trade rose sharply (+37.5% in the on-trade wholesale channel, Q1–Q3 2022). This is a particularly important aspect for Austrian winegrowers because they can sell their high-quality wines in the on-trade and achieve higher added value.

Austrian winegrowers also affected by the inflation crisis

2022 was overshadowed by the war in Ukraine and the inflation crisis that ensued. Austria's wine producers are feeling the pinch of increased costs in many key areas, including materials, fuel and wages. As Chris Yorke, CEO of Austrian Wine, explains: "It is vital that Austrian wine can be sold at higher prices. This is the only way that our winegrowers can cope with the current increase in costs."

One of Austrian Wine's primary objectives in 2023, therefore, will be the continued efforts to drive greater added value for Austrian winegrowers.

25 January 2023

AUSTRIAN WINE 

Press information, January 2023

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