



**Great Wine Capitals**  
GLOBAL NETWORK | A WORLD OF EXCELLENCE



## **GWC ACTIVITIES REPORT**

**HAWKE'S BAY  
2025**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Great Wine Capitals is a regional investment in brand positioning and one that is ours to lose. There can only be one Great Wine Capital per country and acceptance criteria into this exclusive network is stringent.

There are explicit benefits for industry, trade and tourism that being a member of Great Wine Capitals Global Network offers, such as:

- International recognition as a preeminent wine region positioned up with the world's best.
- Marketing of the cities and region by the GWC network to its audience reach
- Global network of resources and experts to consult on industry issues e.g., employment, technical, biosecurity issues
- Sharing of skilled worker & internship opportunities.
- Invaluable local collaboration to strengthen commitment to sector growth.
- Provide a Hawke's Bay narrative that is totally unique within a New Zealand context
- Cement Hawke's Bay's positioning as New Zealand's Food and Wine Country
- Generate significant PR value for the region, both domestically and internationally



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report highlights activities over the last year that reinforce the value and benefits gained from our membership, including:

- Securing the GWC International Annual Conference to be held in Hawke's Bay in 2026 for over 80 international delegates with NZD\$26k of international funding support plus NZD\$15k Tourism NZ funding support towards the programme
- Numerous knowledge exchange opportunities via inbound and outbound scholarships, international webinars highlighting Hawke's Bay, and representation on a global stage at the International Annual Conference through our delegate relationships, conference speakers and wines.
- Promotion of Hawke's Bay and our wine and tourism offerings via more than eight local and international event activations and over 12 media pieces, as well as social media via GWC channels to an audience of nearly 160,000.

For more information, please reach out to Hamish Saxton  
([Hamish@hawkesbaytourism.co.nz](mailto:Hamish@hawkesbaytourism.co.nz)) or Rachel Campbell  
([rachelc@hawkesbaytourism.co.nz](mailto:rachelc@hawkesbaytourism.co.nz))

# INTRODUCTION

Great Wine Capitals is a global network of prestigious wine regions, established in 1999 in Bordeaux, France. The network was developed to encourage travel, education, and business exchanges between premium wine regions, and promote the wine regions and innovative wine and tourism experiences within each region.

The Great Wine Capitals Global Network (GWCGN) only considers applications from internationally renowned cities linked with wine regions recognised for their excellence in the wine sector.

The eleven cities and associated wine regions currently in the exclusive network are shown on this map:



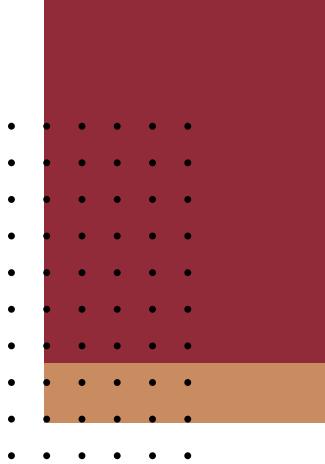
# INTRODUCTION

There are valuable benefits for members of the GWCGN. The network facilitates the sharing of knowledge, ideas and experiences, stimulates business, innovation, and friendships, and provides the means to collaborate on challenges and opportunities.

In addition, there are a number of programmes that benefit members. For example, the Best Of Wine Tourism awards (BOWT) provide the opportunity to showcase a wine region's best wine tourism experiences to a domestic and global audience, while benchmarking those experiences with other GWCGN members.

Hawke's Bay was announced as a Great Wine Capital in May 2023. The accolade has generated significant domestic and international PR value for the region, has sparked international partnerships and knowledge exchange opportunities, greater collaboration across industries locally and domestically and has inspired the creation of new event activations. The 2026 Annual Activities Report outlines the benefits seen by the region from its membership in the GWCGN.

# TABLE OF CONTENT



**Chapter I Activities of the Network**

**Chapter II Promotion of GWC**

**Chapter III Hawke's Bay in other GWC initiatives**

**Chapter IV Finance & Human Resources**



**Great Wine Capitals**  
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# Chapter I

## Activities of the Network

03



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*Activities and Partnership Working Group in Bordeaux*

## **HAWKE'S BAY ROLES IN GWC WORKING GROUPS**

Hawke's Bay is represented in each of the three working groups that met a total of 24 times in 2025:



**Sally Duncan**  
Chair of Brand & Comms  
Working Group



**Alwyn Corban**  
Membership Working  
Group



**Chandre Honeth**  
Activities & Partnership  
Working Group –  
International Research  
Grant



**Rachel Campbell**  
Activities &  
Partnerships Working  
Group – Best Of Wine  
Tourism awards and  
Events calendar

# GWC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**BORDEAUX, 2–6 NOVEMBER 2025**

The Great Wine Capitals Global Network held its 25th Annual Conference in Bordeaux, its founding city, under the theme “Genesis”, marking both a symbolic homecoming and a strategic milestone for the Network.



## PARTICIPATION AND SCALE

- Over 120 international delegates from the 11 GWC member capitals
- 300 regional wine and tourism professionals
- 26 châteaux and wineries visited in Bordeaux and Cognac
- 15 international hosted buyers
- 360 pre-arranged B2B meetings, setting a new record for professional exchanges

## KEY OUTCOMES

### STRATEGIC DIALOGUE & GOVERNANCE

- General Assembly and committee meetings strengthened interregional cooperation and set priorities for the Network's future.
- Jo Collins (Adelaide, South Australia) was elected President of the Great Wine Capitals Global Network for a two-year term, with Paolo Arena (Verona) appointed Vice-President.
- Yantai (China) was officially welcomed as the first Observer Member, expanding the Network's global reach and opening new perspectives with emerging wine regions.
- Announcement of Hawke's Bay, New Zealand as host of the 2026 Annual Conference.



### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & MARKET ACCESS

- A full B2B Marketplace Day enabled direct commercial meetings between:
  - International buyers
  - Bordeaux and Cognac wine producers
  - Wine tourism operators and institutions
- These exchanges reinforced export opportunities, wine tourism partnerships and cross-regional cooperation.



## GREAT WINE CAPITALS

### KNOWLEDGE SHARING & CAPACITY BUILDING

- Knowledge Day at La Cité du Vin featured the international conference: *“Navigating the Future of Wine Tourism: Industry Challenges, Innovations and Global Opportunities”*.
- Topics addressed included:
  - Emerging wine tourism trends
  - Changing consumer behaviours
  - Health and sustainability considerations
  - Innovation as a driver for market diversification
- The session provided strategic insights for destinations to build resilient and future-ready wine tourism ecosystems.



### TECHNICAL VISITS & BEST PRACTICES

- Delegates participated in technical visits across Médoc, Saint-Émilion, Sauternes, Entre-Deux-Mers and Cognac, including estates such as Rémy Martin, Château de Cérons or Château La Croizille.
- These visits showcased:
  - Heritage preservation
  - Sustainable practices
  - Innovation in visitor experience
  - Integration of culture, wine and tourism

### VISIBILITY, NETWORKING & CULTURAL PROMOTION

- The International Wine Tasting at Les Bassins des Lumières highlighted wines from all 11 GWC regions in a high-profile immersive setting.
- The Best Of Wine Tourism Global Awards Ceremony at the Palais de la Bourse recognised excellence in wine tourism, innovation, sustainability, architecture, art and culture.
- 11 Global Best Of Wine Tourism Awards were announced out of the 75 regional winners, reinforcing international visibility for local stakeholders.



### STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

- Signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between Bordeaux and Fliggy (Alibaba Group) to strengthen the Network's visibility and engagement with Chinese travel markets, offering long-term opportunities for GWC destinations and operators to promote their wine tourism offer.



# HAWKE'S BAY AT THE AGM

**Review of 2025 GWC activities** – further highlights of the year included representation of the network at 8 International Conferences and one trade fair in Portugal with 62 buyers representing 24 countries, plus the launch of a new media partnership with Vinexposium and the signing of Yantai as the first Observer Member. See opening ceremony [presentation](#) for further 2025 results.

**Key AGM meeting outcomes** (3 days of Executive Committee and Working Group meetings):

- Work to commence on review of Strategy 2030 – Hawke's Bay has a real voice in the global marketing campaigns of the GWC regions and a direct link to shaping the future of global wine tourism
- GWC members data report to be released and promoted globally
- Focus from A&P WG on international sponsorship and income generation from the BOWT programme
- 8K Euro budget allocated to establishing the B2B event within the GWC AGM HB 2026
- Redesign of consumer newsletter to improve readership
- Two new taskforces established to review the annual conference format and the concept of an annual wine auction
- Decision made regarding future expansion of network - work on value proposition of GWC and let interested capitals approach the network



*Hawke's Bay was represented by a delegation of five:*  
*Hamish Saxton – Hawke's Bay Tourism*  
*Rachel Campbell – Hawke's Bay Tourism*  
*Kim Thorp – GWC Ambassador/ Black Barn Vineyards*  
*Sally Duncan – Hawke's Bay Winegrowers*  
*Toby Buck - Te Mata Estate Winery*

# HAWKE'S BAY AT THE AGM

Conference day learnings (with Kim Thorp as a panelist)

- The Global Wine Tourism 2025 research that GWC contributed to (alongside OIV) reinforced the importance of wine tourism with two thirds of wineries reporting wine tourism as profitable accounting for on average 25% of revenue, - and even higher for smaller wineries and those outside of Europe
- Younger travelers (25-44) gaining significance
- Emphasis on importance of food and wine pairings, nature-based offerings and use of social media
- No longer enough to offer just a wine tasting- need innovation and personalisation, e.g., blind tasting, nature trails, escape games
- Need experiences for the sober visitor
- Wine clubs are growing in importance

Wine tasting

- International Wine Tasting for 220 delegates and Bordeaux guests, showcasing 6 Hawke's Bay Wines

Best Of Wine Tourism global awards:

- Church Road announced as Hawke's Bay global winner for 2026.
- International and local press releases and social media coverage
- These awards set the bar of what can be achieved locally and globally

The 5-day conference provides an excellent opportunity to forge connections and learn from other wine regions about wine tourism and marketing to wine making as well as policy and trade.

*GWC Ambassador Kim Thorp presenting the global award to Hamish Saxton on behalf of Church Road Winery*



# GWC MIDTERM MEETING

PORTO, 17 FEBRUARY 2025

The 2025 Mid-Term Meeting took place in February, rather than mid-year, and was hosted in Porto in conjunction with the Porto Wine & Travel Week. The meeting brought together GWC delegates, who were also invited to take part in the wider Porto Wine & Travel Week programme, including the opening ceremony, technical visits to the Port wine houses in Vila Nova de Gaia, B2B meetings focused on promoting wine tourism, and the gala dinner of the Best of Wine Tourism Awards.

## PARTICIPATION AND SCALE

- 8 GWC PARTICIPATED IN THE MEETING IN-PERSON
- 4 GWC participated in the meeting remotely
- Hamish Saxton represented Hawke's Bay (funded by Porto Chamber of Commerce)

## GWC MEETINGS

<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</b>	<b>LOCAL COORDINATORS</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>BRAND &amp; COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP WORKING GROUP</b>
<i>+2 Experts' Panel Meetings</i>	
<b>14</b>	
<b>ACTIVITIES &amp; PARTNERSHIPS WORKING GROUP</b>	
<i>SubCommittees:</i> 2 Best Of Wine Tourism 1 International Research Grant 6 Webinars 2 Partnerships & Monetization	



© Revista de Vinhos

## GWC EXPERTS' PANEL UPDATE

The GWC Expert Panel is an independent body of internationally-recognised wine and travel experts that assesses applications for membership to the Network and provides professional recommendations to the Executive Committee.



*Dr. Diego Navarro-Drazich: researcher at the Argentine Council of Scientific Research (CONICET) and Director of the Institute of Social, Commercial and Technological Research (IISCOT) at the Universidad del Aconcagua.*

*Professor C. Michael Hall is Dean's Chair in Marketing, Sustainability and Society at Massey University Business School in New Zealand.*



# BEST OF WINE TOURISM AWARDS

## Applicants and Winners

The Global Best Of Wine Tourism Awards Ceremony was held on 6 November 2025 at the Palais de la Bourse in Bordeaux, concluding the 25th Annual Great Wine Capitals Conference. Hosting this milestone edition in Bordeaux, a founding city of the Network, carried strong symbolic value and reinforced the city's long-standing leadership within the Great Wine Capitals Global Network.



During 2025, each of the 11 Great Wine Capitals organised its regional competition, resulting in 75 regional winners eligible for the global selection. The 2026 cycle recorded a historic 623 applications worldwide, reflecting the growing dynamism and professionalisation of the global wine tourism sector. One Global Best Of Wine Tourism Award was attributed to each Capital, recognising outstanding properties and experiences that exemplify quality, authenticity, sustainability and visitor engagement. The Global Award winners were:

ADELAIDE | SOUTH AUSTRALIA: MAXWELL WINES  
 BILBAO | RIOJA: BODEGAS FAUSTINO LEGACY  
 BORDEAUX: LA MAISON CARDINALE  
 HAWKE'S BAY: CHURCH ROAD WINERY  
 LAUSANNE: DOMAINE DU MONT D'OR  
 MAINZ | RHEINHESSEN: VÖLKER RESTAURANT & EVENTS  
 MENDOZA: VIÑA DOÑA PAULA  
 PORTO: VENTOZELO HOTEL&QUINTA  
 SAN FRANCISCO | NAPA VALLEY: STERLING VINEYARDS  
 VALPARAÍSO | CASABLANCA VALLEY: BOTÁNICO BY CASAS DEL BOSQUE  
 VERONA: RAMBALDI APARTMENTS



The People's Choice Awards complemented the jury-based process by engaging the global public. A total of 2,563 votes were cast across the 11 Capitals. Bilbao | Rioja received six of the seven awards, demonstrating strong public resonance and regional mobilisation. These awards reinforce the importance of visitor perception and public engagement in shaping future wine tourism strategies.

# HAWKE'S BAY BEST OF WINE TOURISM AWARDS

The Best Of Wine Tourism awards recognise excellence in wine tourism with one regional winner representing New Zealand on an international stage as a Global Winner. All winners set a benchmark of excellence and innovation for other wineries to aspire to.

Hawke's Bay ran the second year of the Best Of Wine Tourism awards in 2025. With 25 applications received this year, entries were double 2024 applications.

The three judges (Anna Neilson – GM Destination Wairarapa, Anna King Shahab – Travel writer, Lee Brown – Hospitality NZ Operations Manager) visited Hawke's Bay for a weekend in August and were incredibly impressed with the overall quality of the offerings.

An awards evening was held at Foodeast Haumako in Hastings in September to present the seven regional award winners.

The winners have since come together to discuss a joint media famili to encourage further coverage of the winners and the region and will mark the beginning of a Best Of Club in Hawke's Bay.

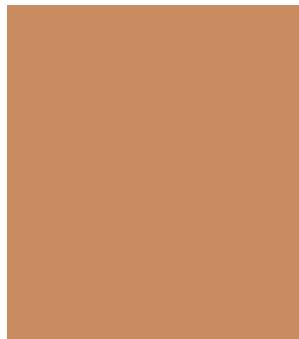


# 2026 BEST OF WINE TOURISM AWARDS HAWKE'S BAY WINNERS

The 2026 Global Best Of Wine Tourism award for Hawke's Bay went to Church Road Winery



Wine Tourism Services - Church Road Winery



Architecture & Landscape - Craggy Range Winery



Innovative Wine Tourism Experiences – Smith & Sheth



Sustainable Wine Tourism - Hawke's Bay Experiences



Culinary Experiences – Wallingford



Accommodation – Porters Boutique Hotel



Art & Culture – Black Barn Vineyards



# INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH GRANT

## Presentation of the 2024-2025 Winners in Bordeaux

As part of the International Conference, Magalie Dubois, PhD, Assistant Professor at Burgundy School of Business and recipient of the GWC International Research Grant, presented the outcomes of her study entitled *"The Effect of 'Pay as You Want on Wine Valuations"* during the Annual Conference in Bordeaux. Drawing on her academic expertise in wine economics and her professional experience in export management, Dr Dubois explored how flexible pricing mechanisms influence visitors' perceptions of wine value, offering practical insights for wine tourism operators.



[READ THE REPORT](#)



## NEW INTAKE: WINNERS OF 2025-2026 ANNOUNCED

In September 2025, the Great Wine Capitals Global Network awarded its 2025/2026 International Research Grants following a competitive international selection process. The programme supports applied academic research that contributes to wine tourism strategy, destination development and knowledge sharing across GWC regions.



### MS CHIA CHIA KOAY

*University of Verona, Italy*

Ms Koay's research focuses on the impact of wine tourism awards on visitor experience, winery reputation and willingness to pay. Based on surveys conducted in France, Italy and the United Kingdom, the project will provide wineries in Bordeaux and Verona with insights into the strategic use of awards and experience design.

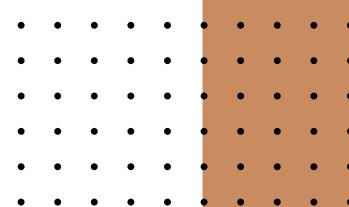
### DR INHAENG JUNG

*Sonoma State University, USA*

Dr Jung's project examines cultural intelligence and consumer segmentation in wine tourism, with a focus on emerging markets in China, South Korea and India. The research will support wineries and destination organisations in developing culturally adapted, innovative and competitive wine tourism experiences.



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# KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

The second year of the Hawke's Bay GWC Outbound Knowledge Exchange programme was launched in January 2025. This year the budget was increased by \$2,000 so that we were able to offer one bursary of \$5,000 and two bursaries of \$3,000.

The bursaries were received by:

**Rachel Garnham** (EIT lecturer)- to go to the Australian Wine Industry Technical Conference in Adelaide to bring back knowledge on customers, products and technical innovation.

**Chelsea Abramoff** (ex Church Road Winery cellar door) to discover the wine tourism experience at cellar doors in Valparaiso and Mendoza and what we can incorporate in Hawke's Bay

**Amy Girven Russell and Amy Hopkinson Styles** (winemakers) - to study how Napa has embedded story telling into the visitor experience and sustainability frameworks at the RISE Napa Valley conference.

Reports can be found [here](#)



*Chelsea Abramoff with Roberto Meiss from Chile*



# BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS & CONFERENCES

## Porto Wine & Travel Week 18-20 February 2025

GWC participated in and supported the organisation of a partner-led professional B2B event in Porto, Portugal, featuring one and a half days of meetings. The event brought together 62 hosted buyers from 24 countries, 82 exhibitors from 5 countries, and 9 international journalists, strengthening international visibility and business connections for participating regions. A partnership contribution of €2,920 was secured with the host destination.



## #FINE Wine Tourism Marketplace 28–29 October 2025

Thanks to Verona, GWC participated as an official media partner of the FINE Wine Tourism Marketplace in Trentino, Italy, contributing to speaker coordination and media visibility. GWC was represented by Isabell Kottmann (Geisenheim University), bringing an international academic perspective to the programme. A media sponsorship of €8,000 was secured in partnership with Riva del Garda Fierecongressi.

## UN Tourism Conference on Wine Tourism 6–7 October 2025

GWC took part in the UN Tourism Wine Tourism Conference in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, under the theme *"The Art of Wine Tourism,"* with a dedicated GWC roundtable moderated by Porto. Speakers from Bilbao | Rioja, Mendoza, and Mainz shared expertise on destination development and wine tourism excellence.



## IWINETC MIKULOV 25-26 March 2025

Catherine Leparmentier represented the Great Wine Capitals Global Network at IWINETC 2025 in Mikulov, South Moravia (Czechia), presenting GWC to an international wine tourism audience. She contributed to the panel discussion on immersive and memorable wine tourism experiences, addressing storytelling, sustainability, cultural integration, and innovation.



## WEBINARS

**640**

**314**

**505**

**819**

REGISTRATIONS

LIVE PARTICIPANTS

YOUTUBE VIEWS

TOTAL REACH

### Is Wine Tourism Creating Value for Wineries?

March 25, 2025

The webinar focused on the impact of wine tourism on the management of independent wine estates. The session featured research insights from Claire Lamoureux, doctoral candidate at KEDGE Business School and recipient of a GWC International Research Grant, developed in collaboration with Hochschule Geisenheim University, as well as practical contributions from wine tourism professionals based in the Bordeaux (Château Mauvinon) and Mainz (Weingut Braunewell).



### Entertainment-Driven Wine Tourism in the New World

June 18, 2025

The webinar showcased how immersive, culture- and entertainment-led experiences are reshaping cellar doors and expanding wine tourism audiences in South Australia and **Hawke's Bay**. Hosted by Dr Armando Corsi (University of Adelaide), the session featured strategic insights from Robin Shaw (Wine Tourism Australia and Vintuition), alongside case studies presented by Chester d'Arenberg Osborn (d'Arenberg Wines, BOWT 2021) and **Francis de Jager (Black Barn Vineyard, BOWT 2025)**. Francis spoke about how music, art and comedy are blended with their wine experiences to broaden their appeal to a wider audience.



### Wine Tourism & Heritage

December 8, 2025

Exploring how heritage acts as a driver of authenticity, innovation and value creation in wine tourism across member regions, the session featured contributions from Doris Sommer (Clos des Abbayes, Lausanne), Rafael Vivanco (Vivanco Museum of Wine Culture, Bilbao | Rioja) and Patricia Freuler de Ortiz (Club Tapiz, Mendoza), who shared diverse perspectives on integrating history, architecture, art and culture into visitor experiences.

### WINE TOURISM & HERITAGE

How history and legacy shape the visitor experience

Live Webinar

08 DEC | 05.00 PM  
2025 | UTC+1

REGISTER NOW!



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# WINE TOURISM DATA

### International Wine Tourism Observatory

Published in October 2025, the Global Wine Tourism Report 2025 is a major international reference based on contributions from over 1,300 wineries across 47 countries. Developed by Hochschule Geisenheim University with UN Tourism, the OIV, GWC, and WineTourism.com, the report provides evidence-based insights into wine tourism trends and future directions. It was presented at the UN Tourism Wine Tourism Conference and the GWC Annual Conference in Bordeaux, with a public webinar in 26 January 2026.



### GWC Members Data

The Members Data Report provides a comprehensive overview of the wine and tourism landscape across the Great Wine Capitals, offering key data to support analysis, benchmarking, and strategic decision-making within the Network.

The report compiles and compares national and regional data across GWC member cities, covering population figures, vineyard surface area, wine production, and the number of growers and wineries. It also presents insights into wine tourism, including visitor numbers, annual trends, and evolving patterns across the GWC regions. A dedicated section profiles each of the 11 Great Wine Capitals individually, allowing for a clear understanding of both global dynamics and local specificities within the Network.



# MISSION TO CHINA

# GWC Delegation Visit to Yantai

July 2025

In July 2025, a GWC delegation led by Secretary General Catherine Leparmentier conducted a mission visit to Yantai, China, to assess the region's wine tourism potential and alignment with GWC values. The programme included visits to leading estates such as Mystic Island Winery, Long Dai, Runaway Cow Winery, and Longting Vineyard, highlighting Yantai's advances in sustainability, hospitality, and cultural integration. The delegation also met with representatives from the Yantai Wine Bureau, Changyu Group, and Yantai Institute of Technology and Science, underscoring the region's strong commitment to education, research, and the development of sustainable wine tourism.



# FIRST GWC OBSERVER MEMBER

November, 2025

Following the successful July 2025 mission, GWC formally admitted Yantai as its first Observer Member, recognising the region's long-standing winemaking heritage, dynamic wine tourism offerings, and strong alignment with GWC's values. As an Observer Member, Yantai will participate in selected GWC events, access knowledge-sharing platforms, and engage in international collaboration. This milestone strengthens GWC's presence in Asia and was officially celebrated during the GWC Annual General Meeting in Bordeaux, where the signing ceremony took place.



# Chapter II

## Promotion of GWC

08



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# GWC GLOBAL PROMOTIONS

## GWC Media Campaigns

As part of its planned media campaign, Great Wine Capitals achieved broad international exposure through features in leading lifestyle and travel publications, including Taste of France, Matador Travel Network, Outlook Travel, and Lifestyle Magazine Portugal. The campaign delivered a strong return on investment, achieving an estimated ROI of 1:28, and enhanced GWC's visibility among international audiences.

### SOCIAL MEDIA METRICS

**159,891**

**TOTAL AUDIENCE**

+10,567 to 2024

**9,39M**

**IMPRESSIONS**

-48% to 2024

**1,95M**

**ENGAGEMENTS**

+93% to 2024

**1,46M**

**VIDEOS VIEWS**

+76% to 2024

## Beau Monde Traveller

GWC was featured in BeauMonde Traveller (*issue 4/2025*), a British luxury travel magazine with over one million readers, through a six-page editorial in the wine edition, complemented by a two-page advertisement in the ski edition. The publication strengthened GWC's visibility among a high-end international audience within the luxury travel and wine tourism sectors.

### FOLLOWERS



**143,769**

+7,898 to 2024



**9,523**

+1,172 to 2024



**522**

+100 to 2024



**6,600**

+1,497 to 2024



## Publishing Partnership with Vinexposium

GWC signed an annual partnership with Vinexposium to become their contributor for the Wine Tourism section of their newly-launched magazine 'Voice of the Industry'.

- This was a great opportunity to showcase GWC's expertise in wine tourism to a professional public and motivate wineries to consider wine tourism programmes as a part of their business model.
- Printed magazines were distributed at the Wine Paris and Vinexpo Singapore events (February and May). All 4 editions were also available in a digital format (February, May, August, and November).



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# GWC GLOBAL PROMOTIONS

## Newsletter

Twelve newsletters were sent out in 2025 to a database of 3,700 with an article in each on Hawke's Bay and eight major press releases on the GWC network.

Average engagement time on the website sits above industry benchmarks for B2B and tourism sectors. LinkedIn engagement rates were also well above industry benchmarks.

More information can be found in this [presentation](#).

## GWC Communication



153,537  
FOLLOWERS  
1,010,432  
ENGAGEMENTS

159,891  
FOLLOWERS  
1,950,255  
ENGAGEMENTS

**12** Thematic Newsletters

**8** Major Press Releases

**1** ANNUAL GLOBAL WINE TOURISM REPORT 2025

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A Perfect 3 Days: Explore, Stay, and Savour the Great Wine Capitals

ADELAIDE | SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PERFECT 3 DAYS IN THE ADELAIDE HILLS

South Australia's Adelaide Hills is a cool climate haven of rolling vineyards, artisan producers, and breathtaking landscapes.

READ MORE >

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# GWC PROMOTION IN NZ MEDIA

Hawke's Bay, as a Great Wine Capital, secured media coverage across NZ in print, digital and radio interviews in prominent publications including, Kia Ora, Viva and Stuff.

Topics featured included our BOWT winners, Kim Thorp's announcement as GWC Ambassador, Hawke's Bay to host GWC AGM in 2026. Below are some examples:

- <https://www.theshout.co.nz/hawkes-bay-venues-recognised-in-the-2026-gwc-best-of-wine-tourism-awards/>
- <https://www.stuff.co.nz/travel/360878154/where-drink-new-zealands-great-wine-capital>
- <https://matadornetwork.com/read/hawkes-bay-wine-region/>
- <https://www.c-mw.net/hawkes-bay-nz-to-host-wine-tourism-conference-in-2026/>
- <https://www.ttgmice.com/2025/11/12/hawkes-bay-sets-grape-expectations-with-recent-conference-win/>
- <https://www.theshout.co.nz/kim-thorp-named-great-wine-capitals-ambassador-for-hawkes-bay/>
- <https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2025/03/hawkes-bay-rebounds-with-exceptional-vintage-after-cyclone-gabrielle/>
- <https://www.tourismticker.com/2025/10/22/global-wine-tourism-spotlight-to-fall-on-hawkes-bay-and-nz-in-2026/>
- <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/viva/fashion/the-best-places-to-eat-drink-in-hawkes-bay/premium/3DQH4HVXW5CB3AXKFHOMBSIQSU/>

# GWC PROMOTION IN NZ MEDIA

Travel Hawke's Bay

## Taste the terroir

An indulgent vinous escape to our Great Wine Capital.

STORY ANNA KING SHAHAB



RUBBING SHOULDERS WITH fellow lumineers including Bordeaux, Napa Valley and Biltz Rhône, Hawke's Bay is one of just 11 members of the Great Wine Capitals of the World network. Admitted in 2023, it's the most recent addition to the tightly held cohort that recognises destinations, which not only produce fantastic wine, but also offer world-class experiences for visitors keen to learn, taste, see and stay in ways that connect them with the local wine culture.

Hawke's Bay is an infant on the global winemaking scene, with the first vines planted in 1851, but it's vine-osity full of life: 38 varieties are grown on 25 different soil types across more than 200 vineyards, 70-plus wineries open-to-the-public, and there are more than 30 cellar doors to choose from.

Travel Hawke's Bay



a breathtaking view or a bite to eat. Esk Valley is handy if taking the Napier-Taradale

Sip on Gimblett Gravels' famously complex reds, or a lush chardonnay at



sommelier and story-teller" guide you through a sensory journey culminating in tasting the upcoming vintage barrels that infuse the room with the aroma of oak and grape.

The taste from a barrel magic trick is also on the cards when you book in for the Craggy Range Giant's Estate Experience. In a private room, you're guided through a series of flights including rare vintages, with very fancy snacks served with each flight, then you head down to the cellar for a (literally) cool taste of what's soon to be bottled.

### CALLED TO THE BARS

Smith & Sheth (Oneiroe (state-of-the-art) and nestbox (in-Hawke's Bay Wine Studio)) is akin to a wine library. If it's a wine you covet for tasting experience, with a bottle shop and a wine lounge that gets nice and lively on a Friday evening, in the increasingly handsome heart of Hastings, Cellar 495 has become a fast favourite with discerning locals. It's also more than a wine bar; head chef Caitlin Campbell somehow cooks and serves a tightly curated menu (do not



T. Baked chocolate ganache, fig and port compote and salted caramel macarons, Cellar 495, Master of Wine Michael Henning Cellar 495, 9, 10, Smith & Sheth. TL, executive chef Regnar Christensen, Black Barn Bistro 12, 13, Craggy Range culinary and kitchen garden, 14, Takaro Trail Cycle Tours.



64 Kia Ora



The view beyond the rim of your glass is classic Hawke's Bay.

The shiny new cellar door at Paki opened last year, with a handsome fit-out by local interior designers Little & Fox, and Decibel Wines is another tasting spot handy to the city of Hastings. On the way out to the coast, take of a sticky must call into Askane – said to make the largest range of single-estate dessert wines, including a very good noble, in the country. At Te Awanga's Elephant Hill and Clever Estate, the view beyond the rim of your glass is classic Hawke's Bay – vines stretch into an aztec ocean met by chalky cliffs.

### CELLAR SELECTION

There are several bucket-list Hawke's Bay cellar-door experiences – the kind you book ahead for. At Church Road, holding rare older status with a birthdate of 1897, the Tui Experience whisks you below ground to a cozy nook in the winery's history-shaped subterranean museum. You'll taste current and back vintage Tui wines, made only during outstanding vintages, with savoury snacks served alongside.

Tucked away in the centre of Havelock North village, Horetaanga Wine Studio is an urban cellar door for three wineries: Smith & Sheth, Pyramid Valley and Lowburn.



skip the potato doughnuts (topped with Gruyère anchovies and chervil) from a kitchen the size of a pantry. At the bar, customers are charmed by tales and sage advice on what to drink from Michael Hanley, the world's 495th Master of Wine.

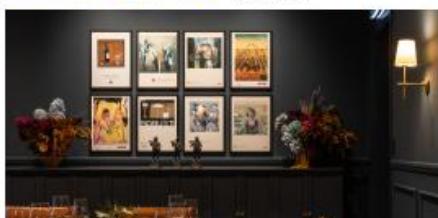
### VINEYARD RESTAURANTS

It's great to be good when it's packed with locals, as is often the case at Black Barn Bistro. Full of natural light, with walls adorned with pieces from the co-owner Kim Thompson's art collection and vineyard views to boot, the bistro mama wholeheartedly celebrates local produce. Much of it is given the distinct tick of the flame (legendary burnt carrots, we're looking at you!) thanks to executive chef Regnar Christensen's bespoke open

woodfire grill taking centre stage in the kitchen. The wine list reads like a dream



1. Elephant Hill. 2, 3. Church Road Tasting room. 4, 5. Craggy Range. 6. Paki private Declaration room.



In the country. Whether you opt for a la carte or the chef's tasting menu, make sure you give your mitts on the famous potato focaccia with camembert butter (laced with honey with extra umami) – it's so good you might shed a tear. Part of the charm is chef Casey McDonald's habit of serving a dish or two to each table and hanging around for a chat.

Wine knowledge among staff is rightly unparalleled at Craggy Range; diners investing a decent amount on a bottle can rest assured they're in good hands. The menu lists all the local produce being used, including that from the extensive garden – take a wander through it with a glass of wine in hand before or after your meal.

### GRAND TOUR

Electric Executive Tours and Transfers offers a range of tailor-made, luxury-level Great Wine Capital tours in its all-electric fleet of vehicles. If touring on two wheels is more your thing, Tokerau can send you off on your very self-guided way to visit a string of cellar doors along the coast, on a standard or electric bike. [hawkesbaynz.com](http://hawkesbaynz.com)



### Getting there

**AIR NEW ZEALAND**  
Air New Zealand operates non-stop flights to Napier from Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, with connections across the domestic network.

AIR NEW ZEALAND

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October 2025 65



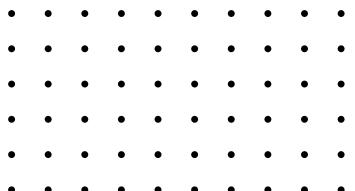
# GWC PROMOTION IN LOCAL NETWORKS



## Horse of the Year

This annual event attracts an audience of 11,500 from around New Zealand and abroad. This year, Great Wine Capitals was promoted via a cellar door pop-up that was manned by a different winery for each of the 5 days of the event.

The pop-up was branded with a new Great Wine Capitals media wall and tear drop banners and participating cellar doors promoted the virtues of the international network as well as their own wines.



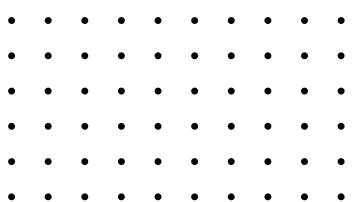
# GWC PROMOTION IN LOCAL NETWORKS



## F.A.W.C! – Mendoza Showcase

A showcase of the Great Wine Capital of Mendoza, Argentina at Black Barn's Olive Shed for 60 guests. With Argentinian chefs Corradino Anselmi and Florencia Menehem serving up dishes like gazpacho, beef carpaccio, empanadas, short rib and delicious dulce de leche, while Master of Wine Simon Nash spoke about three specially matched wines from Mendoza.

The purpose of the event was to bring awareness to Great Wine Capitals and the great company we keep as part of the network.



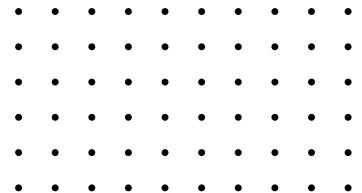
# GWC PROMOTION IN LOCAL NETWORKS



## F.A.W.C! – Blended Havelock North Art and Wine event

A wine tasting was carried out at this day- long event, pairing three Hawke's Bay wines versus three wines from the Great Wine Capital regions of Mendoza, South Australia and Bordeaux.

The event was attended by one thousand people with the aim to ensure our communities are reminded of our position within the global network.



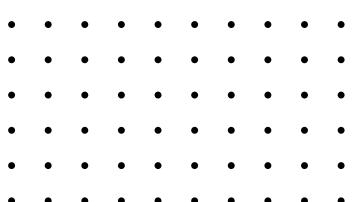
# GWC PROMOTION IN LOCAL NETWORKS



## Hawke's Bay Marathon

As a partner for the Hawke's Bay Marathon which drew over 8,000 runners plus their supporters to the region, Hawke's Bay Tourism again showcased Great Wine Capitals with signage and an expo booth at the registration day held at the Napier War Memorial Centre. The marathon finishes at Elephant Hill Winery in Te Awanga.

This is another opportunity to reinforce the messaging that Hawke's Bay is one of the Great Wine Capitals of the world to a large national audience.



# GWC PROMOTION IN LOCAL NETWORKS



## Hawke's Bay Wine Experience

The Hawke's Bay Wine Experience is the only regional pop-up wine tasting opportunity offered to cruise ships at any port in New Zealand. Over the eleven events, 20 wineries from across Hawke's Bay presented their wines to more than 4,500 passengers, who went on to purchase more than 1,500 bottles of wine. Visitors to the Hawke's Bay Wine Experience are predominantly North American.

The Hawke's Bay Wine Experience gives visitors insight into Hawke's Bay as a Great Wine Capital, with the status promoted via branded banners, glasses, flyers and hosts generating a lot of interest.

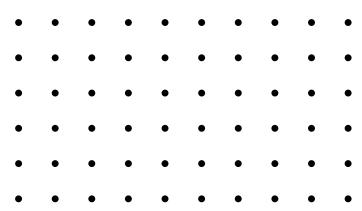
# GWC PROMOTION IN LOCAL NETWORKS



## **Hawke's Bay Wine Auction**

Great Wine Capitals was again represented at this year's Hawke's Bay Wine Auction providing another opportunity to raise awareness of the international network and its members.

The lot made up of wines from each of the GWC's of the world, some of which was donated by our partner regions, raised an incredible \$6,000 to add to the total of \$370,000 for Cranford Hospice as well as providing excellent promotion of Great Wine Capitals via the extensive wine enthusiast database of Hawke's Bay Wine Auction, media articles and airport digital advertising. There were also two opportunities to do pre-auction wine tastings of the international wines.



# Chapter III

## Other GWC Initiatives



# International Event Collaborations

## Adelaide/ South Australia

Wine writer Katie Spain, Serena from Sidewood Estate and Alexandra from Dandelion Vineyards took 50 special guests on a global wine tasting journey at Tasting Australia's Drinks Academy in Victoria Square – from Adelaide to Bordeaux and Hawke's Bay.



# International Event Collaborations

## La Cité du Vin

In July 2024, 288 bottles of Hawke's Bay wine were sent to la Cité du Vin for tasting in their Belvédère tasting room and in workshops and afterwork tasting events. La Cité du Vin was visited by 415,300 visitors (2024) from around the world predominantly France, Spain, Great Britain and the US.

Hawke's Bay wines were featured in 15 tasting workshops, 4 'Afterwork' sessions and 2 weeks in the Belvedere tasting room that is visited as part of the museum exhibition. Craggy Range Aroha was also selected to be poured at the annual La Cité du Vin gala dinner.

On top of this, the evening after the GWC AGM in Bordeaux, Hawke's Bay and South Australia hosted a wine tasting evening for 140 highly engaged wine lovers at La Cité du Vin. The evening showcased the wine story of our regions with three representative wines tasted from Hawke's Bay.

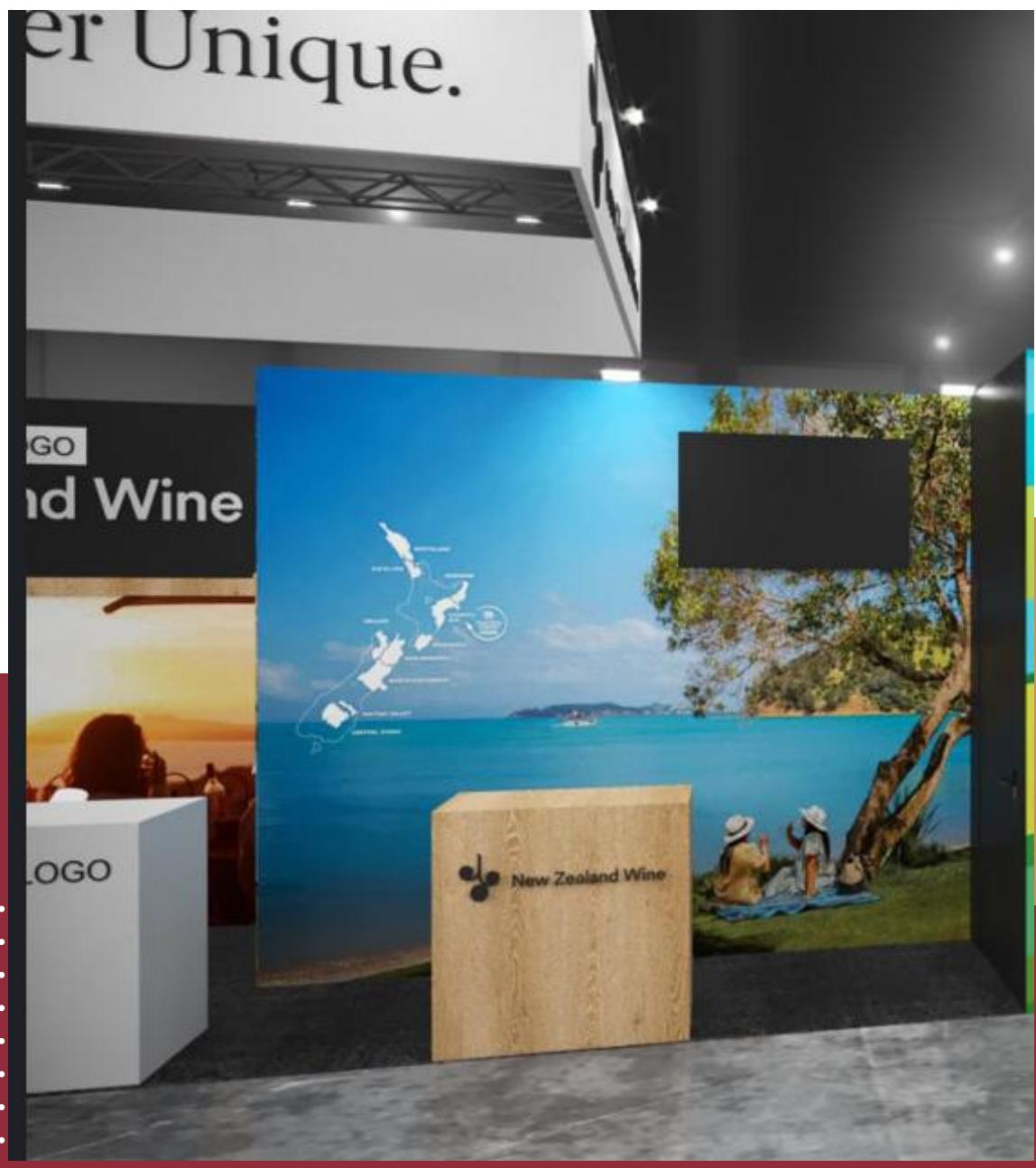


# International Event Collaborations

## NZ Wine Promotion at International Trade Shows

NZ Wine frequent international trade shows such as Vinexpo and Wine Paris. They have created a map of New Zealand media wall that includes the Great Wine Capitals logo linked to Hawke's Bay on the map.

This is an opportunity to educate and promote Hawke's Bay and Great Wine Capitals in a B2B setting.



# Chapter IV

## Finance & Human Resources

24



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# COMPOSITION OF THE HAWKE'S BAY GWC STEERING COMMITTEE

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## **Hawke's Bay Tourism**

Represented by Hamish Saxton, CE

## **Hawke's Bay Tourism**

Represented by Rachel Campbell, Local Manager for GWC

## **Hawke's Bay Winegrowers**

Represented by Sally Duncan, Chair

## **Hastings District Council and Napier City Council**

Represented by Alwyn Corban, Councillor

## **Hastings District Council**

Represented by Vicky Roebuck, Marketing/Events

## **Hawke's Bay Airport**

Represented by Judi Godbold, Business Development

## **Eastern Institute of Technology**

Represented by Sue Blackmore, Head of Viticulture

## **Hawke's Bay Regional Economic Development Agency**

Represented by John Loughlin, Director of HBREDA and Askerne Winery Owner (took over from Alasdair MacLeod in October 2025)



HAWKE'S BAY WINE  
NEW ZEALAND



HERETAUNGA  
HASTINGS



NAPIER  
CITY COUNCIL  
Te Rauhīhī a Ahuriri



## LOCAL BUDGET STRUCTURE

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Nine people from seven organisations involved in the steering group and/ or working groups**

- Hawke's Bay Tourism
- Hawke's Bay Winegrowers
- Hastings District Council
- Napier City Council
- Hawke's Bay Airport Ltd
- Eastern Institute of Technology
- Hawke's Bay Regional Economic Development Agency

Local Coordinator - 20 hours a week

### **FINANCING OF THE GWC ANNUAL FEE AND OTHER PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- Hawke's Bay Tourism: 12.5k €
- Hawke's Bay Winegrowers: 12.5k €
- Hastings District Council: 12.5k €
- Napier City Council: 12.5k €
- Hawke's Bay Airport Ltd: 5k €

### **GREAT WINE CAPITAL ACTIVITY EXPENSES**

- Annual fee: 19k €
- AGM travel /accommodation/delegate fees: 14k €
- Local Coordinator: 16k € (subsidy towards HBT staff member)
- BOWT: 5k €
- Knowledge Exchange Programme: 5k €
- (shortfall made up by rollover of 2023 BOWT budget unused)

26



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# Great Wine Capitals

**GLOBAL NETWORK**

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<https://www.greatwinecapitals.com/>