

WINE LISTER LEAGUES 2025: QUARTER-CENTURY SPECIAL EDITION

wineLISTER

Wine Lister's 2025 Wine Leagues: Quarter-Century Special Edition has now been published. Informed by our in-depth survey of 57 leading industry figures, this study also shines a light on the regions gaining momentum, opportunities producers can seize in 2026, and the oenotourism experiences that should be on every wine enthusiast's radar next year.

WINE PERSONALITY OF THE CENTURY

With 13 mentions, Robert Parker has been voted the 'wine personality of the century', followed by Aubert de Villaine in second place, and Neal Martin and Émile Peynaud sharing third. Aubert de Villaine (six mentions), Neal Martin, and Émile Peynaud (two mentions, respectively).

"He has changed the overall quality level of wines."

- Top-tier Europe merchant

"His scores determined the price like no-one else."

- Top-tier UK merchant

"His scoring system, newsletter, and role in increasing the influence of critics' reviews is still being felt today."

- Specialist Europe merchant

OENOTOURISM IN 2026

Bordeaux has been named as the top oenotourism destination, while Champagne Taittinger earns the status as the must-visit winery in 2026. Domaine Carneros (Taittinger's Napa estate) was also cited. See the top-five cited regions below:



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCERS

The trade recommends that producers focus on the style of their wine, including the creation of fresher, more "drinkable" wines, approachable in their youth, to maximise growth in the coming year.

"Work on the wine style (more digestible, accessible in their youth without losing ageing potential)."

- Top-tier UK merchant

Separately but related, lower alcohol was mentioned seven times.

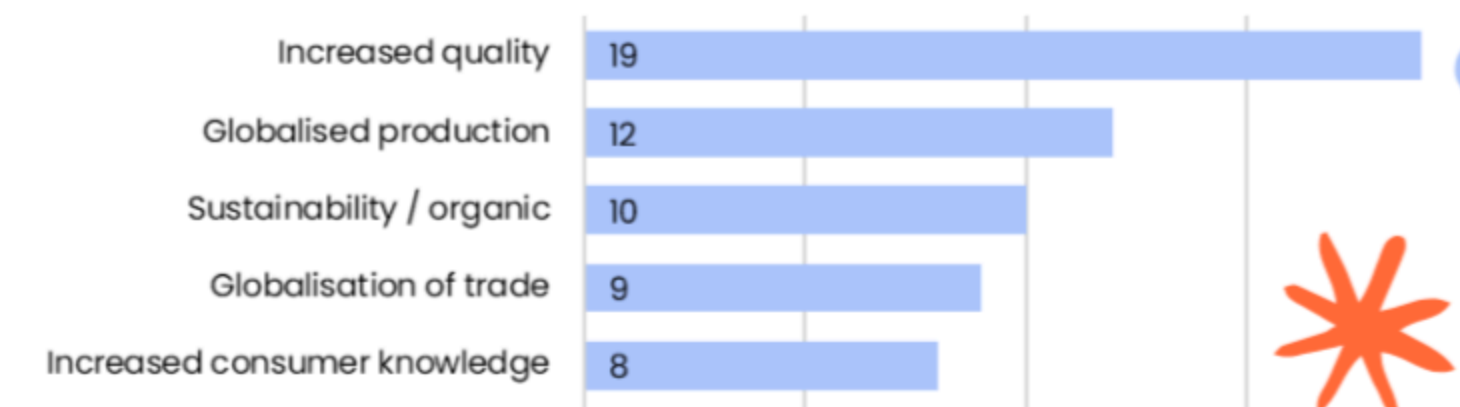
"Lower alcohols via vineyard management rather than scientific manipulation."

- Top-tier UK merchant



POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

Respondents highlight the increased quality of wine as the most significant positive development in the industry over the past 25 years, with 19 mentions. Globalised production and sustainability / organic follow in second and third place. See the top-five responses below:



A CAREER IN WINE

Nearly all respondents cite their enjoyment of drinking and tasting as their primary motivation for being in the wine industry. Technical or scientific motivations are cited least often, suggesting that the emotional, cultural, and human dimensions of wine are far more influential. See the top-five cited reasons below:

