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## Business Development Competences (BDS) for entrepreneurs and professionals

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## Summary

Developed by the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (IPVC) within the scope of the EU-funded Gastrotour project, this report presents a comparative analysis of hospitality, wine, and culinary tourism across five countries—Georgia, South Africa, Portugal, Spain, and Czechia. These countries were selected for their distinctive approaches to agritourism and their strategic relevance in the evolving landscape of rural tourism. Each represents a unique intersection of cultural heritage, agricultural tradition, and tourism innovation. Georgia, often referred to as the cradle of wine, offers millennia-old enological practices such as qvevri winemaking, deeply embedded in its national identity and increasingly leveraged for international branding. South Africa stands out for its dual model of high-end wine estates and township-based hospitality initiatives, where agritourism serves both economic empowerment and cultural preservation. Portugal, with its rich maritime and agricultural legacy, integrates wine tourism into regional development strategies, combining heritage conservation with circular economy practices. Spain, a global leader in wine production, exemplifies the fusion of gastronomy, architecture, and sustainability, positioning enogastronomic tourism as a pillar of territorial cohesion. Czechia, traditionally known for beer, is experiencing a renaissance in wine tourism, particularly in South Moravia, where agritourism is revitalizing rural economies through cellar tours, folklore, and precision agriculture.

Together, these countries offer diverse yet complementary models of how hospitality, wine, and culinary tourism can drive inclusive growth, ecological stewardship, and cultural diplomacy, making them ideal case studies for comparative analysis within the Gastrotour framework.

The report explores how the sectors of hospitality, wine, and culinary tourism—traditionally anchored in cultural heritage—are being strategically reimagined as dynamic engines of rural revitalization, sustainable development, and global engagement. No longer confined to their conventional roles as leisure industries, these sectors are now positioned as multidimensional platforms capable of fostering inclusive economic growth, ecological stewardship, and intercultural dialogue.

Structured into eight comprehensive chapters, the report traces the evolution of traditions, business models, regulatory frameworks, and digital strategies that shape contemporary tourism ecosystems. It opens with an exploration of the cultural foundations that underpin hospitality and wine practices, followed by an analysis of their economic significance and strategic potential in regional development. Subsequent chapters delve into innovative business models in both hospitality and winery contexts, highlighting hybrid formats that seamlessly integrate lodging, gastronomy, and educational experiences. The legal and policy frameworks governing wine tourism are critically examined, with emphasis on national strategies and ESG-aligned regulations that support sustainability and quality assurance. The report also investigates the role of digitalization and internationalization, showcasing the adoption of smart tourism tools, sustainability certifications, and transnational cooperation initiatives that enhance competitiveness and global visibility.

To equip professionals for leadership in this evolving landscape, the report proposes four foundational competencies:

1. **Wine and Food Tourism Business Development and Entrepreneurship**, which focuses on designing resilient, locally embedded business models that integrate tradition, innovation, and cross-sector collaboration.



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2. **Digital Transition in Wine and Food Tourism: Neuro-Gastronomy**, centered on sensory innovation, immersive technologies, and data-driven personalization to enrich visitor engagement and experience design.
3. **Wine/Food Tourism Sustainability and Local Development**, emphasizing the implementation of ESG strategies, circular economy practices, adaptive reuse of heritage assets, and climate-resilient territorial planning.
4. **Wine and Food Tourism Marketing and Expansion**, dedicated to destination storytelling, premium positioning, and international outreach through digital content, protected origin schemes, and mobility programs.

Case studies from each country illustrate how immersive storytelling, ecological innovation, and digital infrastructure are being leveraged to elevate visitor experiences while safeguarding local identity. From Georgia's UNESCO-recognized qvevri winemaking tradition to Spain's solar-powered tasting rooms and Czechia's aquaponic cellars, the fusion of ancestral knowledge and technological advancement emerges as a defining characteristic of contemporary wine and hospitality tourism.

In conclusion, the report positions these sectors not merely as cultural expressions, but as strategic levers for regenerative development. By embedding business innovation within frameworks of sustainability, digital transformation, and heritage valorization, hospitality and wine tourism are actively reshaping rural economies and contributing to a more inclusive, resilient, and future-oriented global tourism landscape.



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## Introduction

In recent years, hospitality, wine, and gastronomic tourism have emerged as dynamic sectors with growing significance in rural development, cultural preservation, and global sustainability efforts. Far beyond traditional notions of leisure, these sectors now serve as platforms for economic innovation, ecological stewardship, and intercultural exchange. Grounded in heritage and elevated by technological and policy advancements, they are reshaping tourism ecosystems across Europe and beyond.

This report—developed by the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (IPVC) within the scope of the European Gastrotour project—offers a comparative analysis of five countries: Georgia, South Africa, Portugal, Spain, and Czechia. It investigates how each integrates tradition, innovation, and strategic planning to elevate the hospitality and wine industries into cornerstones of territorial resilience and global engagement.

Gastronomy tourism is increasingly recognized by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as a driver of rural employment, cultural preservation, and inclusive development. According to the 2nd UNWTO Report on Gastronomy Tourism, this segment “offers enormous potential in stimulating local, regional and national economies and enhancing sustainability and inclusion”. The UNWTO further emphasizes that gastronomy tourism “adds vitality to rural communities, supports small, local food producers and strengthens their position in the market”. It is also seen as a tool to “promote understanding among different cultures, and bring people and traditions closer together”.

In parallel, the OECD’s post-COVID tourism recovery framework positions wine and food tourism as strategic levers for inclusive regional development. Their report *Managing Tourism Development for Sustainable and Inclusive Recovery* highlights the need for “place-based policies” that promote sustainability, digital transformation, and resilience in rural economies. The OECD calls for integrated approaches that link tourism with agriculture, innovation, and local entrepreneurship to ensure long-term territorial cohesion.

To explore this evolution in depth, the report is organized into eight chapters:

**Hospitality, Wine and Culinary Traditions**– Highlights the historical and cultural foundations that shape local identities and tourism experiences.

**Hospitality as a Strategic Asset + Wine Traditions and Economic Impact**– Examines how these sectors drive regional economies, job creation, and international positioning.

**Hospitality Business Models**– Explores the diversification of rural lodging, culinary storytelling, and experience-based services.

**Winery Business Models**– Details innovative practices in wine production, branding, and distribution.

**Winery hospitality Business Models**– Analyzes hybrid models where wineries integrate lodging, tasting events, and educational activities.



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**National Legislative Frameworks**– Outlines policies and regulations shaping agritourism and sustainable development.

**Digitalization and Internationalization**– Showcases grassroots innovation, digital tools, and transnational cooperation initiatives.

**Conclusion and proposing business development competencies**– Summarizes insights and offers strategic guidance for future development, including digital inclusion, sustainability alignment, and cross-border mobility programs.

By bridging research and practice, this report provides a roadmap for decision-makers, educators, and entrepreneurs seeking to navigate and shape the evolving landscape of wine, hospitality, and experiential tourism, anchored in global frameworks and responsive to local realities.

## Developing Business Competencies in Hospitality, Wine, and Culinary Tourism

### Comparative Analysis: Georgia, South Africa, Portugal, Spain, Czechia

## 1. Hospitality, Wine and Culinary Traditions

Cultural tradition is not merely ornamental in the hospitality, wine, and gastronomy sectors — it is structural. The sensory experience of food and wine forms an emotional architecture where taste, ritual, and story coalesce to offer immersive connections with place and people. These experiences are not just pleasurable; they are pedagogical, political, and deeply symbolic (UNESCO, 2013; Siddiqui, 2025). Across Georgia, South Africa, Portugal, Spain, and Czechia, these traditions shape the personality of each nation's hospitality offer — providing a lexicon through which regional identity, historic legacy, and contemporary reinvention are expressed.

In this context, cultural consumption becomes a form of embodied learning, where guests engage with heritage not only through narrative but through multisensory immersion. A growing body of research shows that flavour perception is not isolated to taste alone; it is systematically shaped by visual, auditory, and tactile cues (Spence, 2019; Shepherd, 2012). This has profound implications for experience design in wineries and restaurants, where lighting, soundscapes, textures, and even the shape of glassware can modulate emotional and cognitive responses. Such insights offer a rigorous foundation for curating gastronomic environments that are not only memorable but also culturally resonant and pedagogically rich. By integrating sensory science with local tradition, hospitality professionals can craft experiences that reinforce territorial identity while appealing to global audiences seeking authenticity and depth.

In **Georgia**, hospitality is sacred — a moral imperative embedded in collective identity. The *supra*, a formalized banquet led by a *tamada* (toastmaster), transforms dinner into ritualistic storytelling. These feasts are stages for polyphonic singing, historical remembrance, and philosophical reflection (UNESCO,



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2013). Food staples like *lobio* (bean stew), *badrijani nigvzit* (eggplant with walnut paste), and *khachapuri* (cheese-filled bread) communicate abundance and seasonality.

Winemaking in Georgia predates written history, with archaeological evidence of grape fermentation dating back over 8,000 years. Qvevri — large earthenware vessels buried underground for wine fermentation — are more than technique; they symbolize continuity, purity, and spiritual grounding. They were recognized in 2013 by UNESCO as intangible heritage. Today, qvevri wines are at the heart of Georgia's cultural branding, promoted globally for their authenticity and artisanal depth.

Hospitality here is also pedagogical: guests are inducted into Georgian identity through the rhythms of toast, melody, and meal. Culinary schools are increasingly incorporating supra traditions into curriculum, merging performative hosting with vocational skill.

Hospitality in **South Africa** is guided by *ubuntu*, a philosophy of shared humanity — “I am because we are.” It frames hosting as collective care, whether in family homes, township eateries, or vineyard dining halls. Food reflects a convergence of indigenous, colonial, and diasporic influences: *bobotie* (curried meat custard), *chakalaka* (spicy relish), and *biltong* (cured meat) each tell a story of adaptation and endurance (Vinpro, 2024).

Wine routes such as Stellenbosch, Paarl, and Franschhoek form corridors of sensory and architectural storytelling — Dutch manor houses, vineyards framed by fynbos, and tasting rooms adorned with local crafts. These regions offer not just products but cultural scripts, blending viticulture with art, language, and landscape interpretation.

South Africa's culinary tourism initiatives actively include township-led enterprises and rural cooperatives, reshaping perceptions of luxury to include dignity, history, and empowerment. Programs like the Cape Wine Academy and youth culinary incubators in Soweto encourage inclusive skills development rooted in local foodways and storytelling.

**Portuguese** gastronomy is marked by simplicity that conceals sophistication. The cultural tradition of *petiscos* — small, shared plates — encourages dialogue, pacing, and intimacy. Dishes like *bacalhau à lagareiro* (roasted cod), *caldo verde* (green soup), and *cataplana de marisco* (seafood stew) map culinary identity across Portugal's maritime and agricultural regions (Street Buddha, 2023). Wine traditions span 14 demarcated regions. Port wine, aged in centuries-old cellars in Vila Nova de Gaia, carries global prestige, while *Vinho Verde* from the north — bright, youthful, and mineral-rich — offers accessible complexity and local freshness. In Alentejo, robust reds reflect sun-baked terrain and cork-lined vineyards.

Hospitality is layered: traditional *tascas* offer rustic sincerity, while wine lodges in the Douro and Alentejo combine enology, architecture and wellness. The heritage of *pousadas* — historical buildings converted into boutique hotels — embeds gastronomy into Portugal's architectural preservation strategy. Culinary training is increasingly emphasizing regional diversity, sustainability, and service warmth — Portugal's intangible strength.

**Spain** is a mosaic of micro-cultures, and this decentralization is reflected in its gastronomy. In Galicia, octopus is boiled and served over olive oil and paprika (*pulpo a feira*), while Andalusia favors chilled soups



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(*salmorejo*) and fried fish. Catalonia embraces smoky vegetable dishes like *escalivada* and cured meats served with tomato-rubbed bread.

Wine tradition is abundant — *Tempranillo*, *Verdejo*, *Albariño*, and *Cava* offer diverse terroir expressions. Wine is not just consumed, but choreographed: *maridaje*, the pairing of food and wine, is a national art form. Sommeliers and chefs co-design menus that harmonize texture, acidity, and emotional impact (Ribera y Rueda, 2025).

Spain's tapas culture reshapes hospitality into an ongoing conversation. Sharing becomes performance — a rhythm of order, taste, and toast. Culinary schools here train not only in techniques but in philosophy: that hosting is narrative, pairing is dialogue, and eating is cultural transmission.

**Czech** gastronomy is grounded in rural comfort and celebration. Dishes like *svíčková* (marinated beef in creamy root sauce), *guláš*, and *bramboráky* (potato pancakes) are served with dense gravies and pickled vegetables — emphasizing satiation and familiarity. Communal eating, especially in countryside inns, reinforces social cohesion and seasonal ritual.

Wine, once overshadowed by beer, is now in ascent. South Moravia's vineyards produce expressive white varieties like *Riesling*, *Grüner Veltliner* and *Pálava*. Cellar tours and village wine festivals have become symbols of regional revitalization and pride (Wine Sip Club, 2024).

Czech hospitality leans toward sincerity over sophistication, yet new culinary movements in Brno and Prague are weaving gastronomic experimentation into tradition — pairing smoked cheeses with natural wines and integrating folklore with farm-to-table menus.

## Conclusion

Hospitality, wine and culinary traditions in these five countries function as multilayered cultural assets. They are living archives — shaped by history, adapted through innovation, and expressed in the shared moment of hosting. These traditions create intimacy and immersion, serving as strategic differentiators in global hospitality. Far from being frozen heritage, they are generative frameworks for training, branding, diplomacy, and transformation.

- **Cultural Immersion as Value Proposition:** Hospitality is increasingly performative, symbolic, and pedagogical. Experiences are designed not merely to entertain, but to transmit identity, values, and heritage — laying the foundation for business models that integrate storytelling with strategic entrepreneurship.
- **Experience Design Rooted in Identity:** Food, wine, and setting are curated to evoke emotional and sensory resonance. This trend reflects the rise of neuro-gastronomy and digital personalization, where immersive technologies and sensory science elevate guest engagement and brand differentiation.
- **Inclusive and Localized Entrepreneurship:** Community-driven hospitality models are redefining the contours of luxury and expertise by placing cultural relevance, equity, and local agency at the heart of the experience. These initiatives embed sustainability, circular economy principles, and territorial cohesion into their operational strategies—fostering regenerative development that is



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both economically viable and socially embedded. By aligning with ESG standards—meaning they actively incorporate environmental responsibility (such as carbon reduction and biodiversity protection), social equity (including fair labor practices and community inclusion), and ethical governance (through transparency, accountability, and certification)—these models demonstrate how hospitality can evolve into a strategic vehicle for empowerment, resilience, and inclusive growth. When rooted in place-based innovation, they not only preserve local identity but also respond to global challenges, positioning tourism as a catalyst for sustainable transformation.

- **Education as Strategic Infrastructure:** In the context of wine tourism, education is emerging as a foundational pillar for innovation, territorial development, and global competitiveness. Training programs increasingly integrate heritage interpretation, sustainability principles, and experiential design—not only to enhance visitor engagement, but to equip professionals with the skills needed to build resilient and future-ready enotourism ecosystems. This educational shift supports the development of integrated business models rooted in local identity, the adoption of digital and sensory technologies that elevate the wine experience, and the implementation of regenerative practices aligned with environmental and community goals. It also fosters strategic communication and destination branding, enabling professionals to expand market reach while preserving authenticity. In this way, education becomes not just a support mechanism, but a strategic infrastructure for cultivating globally oriented, locally grounded leadership in wine tourism.

## 2. Hospitality and Wine as Strategic Assets

Wine and hospitality have become pivotal components of national development strategies across several countries, not only as expressions of cultural identity but as dynamic economic engines that contribute directly to GDP, territorial cohesion, employment, and international branding. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2024), agritourism, enology, and hospitality services are increasingly integrated into spatial planning policies and rural revitalization initiatives. These sectors are no longer peripheral; they are instrumental in shaping diversified ecosystems that link tradition to innovation.

Wine and hospitality have evolved into strategic pillars of national development across multiple countries, serving not only as cultural expressions but as robust economic drivers. These sectors contribute significantly to GDP, foster territorial cohesion, generate employment, and enhance international branding. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2024), agritourism, enology, and hospitality services are increasingly embedded in spatial planning and rural revitalization policies. Far from being peripheral, they now play a central role in shaping diversified ecosystems that connect heritage with innovation.

Global benchmarks reinforce this trajectory. Napa Valley, for instance, generated over US\$2.5 billion in 2023 from 3.7 million visitors, demonstrating the high per-capita economic impact of wine tourism and the strategic value of destination stewardship. Napa Valley's business model is built on a multi-stakeholder approach that integrates premium viticulture, immersive tourism, and sustainability. Operating under the American Viticultural Area (AVA) designation, the region ensures quality and regulatory integrity, while many wineries embrace biodynamic and environmentally conscious practices. The local tourism authority, Visit Napa Valley, is actively implementing a Sustainable Tourism Strategic Plan aimed at long-term viability, community involvement, and balanced visitor flows.



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This integrated strategy encompasses high-value experiences such as curated tastings, vineyard tours, gastronomic pairings, and luxury accommodations. Napa's branding positions it as a global symbol of wine excellence, supported by rich storytelling and cultural heritage. Public-private collaboration among wineries, hospitality providers, local governments, and cultural institutions enables the co-creation of infrastructure and events. Spatial diversification, exemplified by emerging areas like the Makers District, fosters new retail and cultural hubs.

These examples underscore how thoughtfully curated wine and hospitality experiences, when aligned with regional planning and supported by infrastructure, education, and strategic branding, can act as catalysts for inclusive economic growth. They also highlight the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration among agriculture, tourism, education, and cultural heritage to ensure long-term sustainability and global competitiveness.

In **Georgia**, wine holds symbolic and economic importance. Between 2022 and 2023, wine exports increased by more than 15%, reaching 1.9 million hectoliters, with revenue exceeding USD \$276 million (National Wine Agency, 2023). This growth was driven by expanding global demand and strengthened distribution channels.

Georgia's winemaking heritage is anchored in micro-zones, specific, geographically defined areas recognized for their distinct terroir, grape varieties, and wine styles. There are 30 registered Protected Designations of Origin (PDOs) in Georgia. These PDOs not only reinforce Georgia's identity as the cradle of wine, but also highlight its diverse tapestry of flavors and traditions.

The country is home to 526 indigenous grape varieties, around 40 of which are commercially cultivated today. Notable examples include Rkatsiteli, Saperavi, Mtsvane (Kakhuri Mtsvane), Goruli Mtsvane, Kisi, Khikhvi, Chinuri, Tsolikouri, Tsitska, and others" (<https://wine.gov.ge/En/>)

The Kakheti region, known for its ancient qvevri winemaking technique recognized by UNESCO, has developed structured wine trails that serve not only as tourist attractions but as platforms for diaspora engagement and regional branding. These trails promote territorial cohesion by connecting rural producers with urban consumers and international visitors, consolidating Georgia's reputation as a cradle of viticulture.

The Georgian Wine Route is a national destination wine tourism product developed by the Georgian National Tourism Administration (GNTA). It is designed to showcase Georgia's 8,000-year-old winemaking tradition and to offer visitors a unique journey through the country's diverse wine regions.

The Georgian Wine Route connects wineries, wine cellars, family vineyards, wine museums, and local cultural sites, creating an immersive travel experience that blends wine, gastronomy, and heritage. It supports sustainable tourism development and helps promote regional economies by bringing visibility to small and medium-sized wine producers throughout the country.



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**South Africa's** wine and hospitality sectors are similarly impactful. With over 600 operational wineries, the country generated €600 million in wine export revenue in 2024 (Vinpro, 2024). Regions such as Stellenbosch and Franschhoek have become synonymous with integrated wine tourism, blending landscape aesthetics, local heritage, and premium enological experiences. Importantly, hospitality initiatives are aligned with socio-economic objectives: programs supported by Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA) and outlined in the National Department of Tourism's annual report (South Africa Tourism, 2014) directly link wine tourism to youth employability and vocational training. Culinary academies and hospitality centers situated along wine routes offer practical experience, skill acquisition, and community upliftment.

**Portugal** illustrates how strategic investment in wine tourism contributes to national goals. In 2024, the country's tourism sector generated €20.9 billion, with wine tourism playing a significant role in high-value regional offerings (INE, 2024). The Douro Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is exemplary in its fusion of enology, architecture, and gastronomy. Wine lodges throughout the region act as hubs of cultural continuity, where heritage preservation intersects with hospitality excellence. Portugal's Tourism Strategy 2027 explicitly integrates wine and gastronomy into territorial development frameworks, positioning authenticity and sustainability as key differentiators. Moreover, the preservation and adaptive reuse of historical buildings, such as pousadas and tascas, reinforces local identity while generating employment and diversifying rural economies.

**Spain** continues to be a global leader in wine production and exports, ranking among the top three worldwide with €2.94 billion in export value recorded in 2023–2024 (Vinetur, 2023). Routes like Rioja and Ribera del Duero serve as living laboratories for environmental education and cultural immersion. These regions combine enological excellence with sustainable tourism, offering eco-tours, interpretive centers, and wine museums that educate visitors on climate, terroir, and biodiversity. Spain's Paradores system further amplifies this impact by converting historical structures into hospitality venues, simultaneously preserving cultural assets and contributing to decentralized tourism development.

**In Czechia**, wine tourism has seen remarkable growth, particularly in Moravia, where over 1,250 kilometers of wine trails attract more than 500,000 visitors annually (Wine of Czech Republic, 2024). These routes support seasonal revenue generation and non-urban employment, with cellar tours, harvest festivals, and bike-friendly itineraries promoting sustainable tourism. The Czech Journal (2024) notes that cellar hospitality contributes to rural regeneration by fostering entrepreneurship, conserving local traditions, and enabling regional storytelling. Moravian winemakers increasingly align their offerings with ecological standards and community-led tourism models, demonstrating the sector's evolution from agrarian subsistence to strategic development.

In summary, hospitality and wine are no longer confined to leisure sectors; they are embedded within broader socio-economic agendas that span education, sustainability, and cultural diplomacy. By serving as instruments of soft power, these industries shape national narratives, attract international interest, and reconfigure rural spaces into diversified, resilient economies. Their integration into planning policies and branding strategies highlights a global paradigm shift, one that recognizes food, wine, and hosting not only as cultural expressions but as critical platforms for inclusive and sustainable growth.



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## Conclusion

In conclusion, the interlinkage between hospitality and wine has evolved into a strategic axis for national development in several regions across the globe. These sectors transcend their traditional roles as cultural expressions, becoming sophisticated engines of economic growth, territorial revitalization, and global representation. By integrating wine tourism and hospitality into broader frameworks for spatial planning, employment generation, heritage preservation, and brand identity, countries such as Georgia, South Africa, Portugal, Spain, and Czechia demonstrate the transformative potential of experience-based industries.

They serve as instruments of soft power and inclusive development, cultivating immersive environments where visitors engage not only with products but with narratives, landscapes, and communities. The cross-sectoral nature of these initiatives, spanning education, infrastructure, sustainability, and diplomacy, underscores a paradigm shift in how hospitality is leveraged: not as a peripheral service, but as a multidimensional asset with enduring value for cultural continuity and economic resilience. When supported by coherent policy, authentic storytelling, and stakeholder collaboration, wine and hospitality have the capacity to turn tradition into innovation, and place into purpose.

## 3. Hospitality Business Models

Hospitality business models are undergoing a strategic transformation, shifting away from conventional lodging and service provision towards multidimensional platforms that integrate cultural immersion, sustainability, technological innovation, and community empowerment. As highlighted by institutions such as IPVC (2025) and insights from case studies like El Celler de Can Roca (2024), the emphasis has moved decisively toward experiential depth and ecological responsibility, supported by digital infrastructure that enhances personalization and operational efficiency.

In **Georgia**, hospitality entrepreneurship increasingly centers on immersive practices rooted in intangible heritage. Guesthouses throughout Kakheti and Imereti now offer experiences such as qvevri wine tastings, supra-style communal dinners, and traditional bread-making workshops. These activities are often coordinated with local craft cooperatives, reinforcing both social and economic ties within rural communities. Moreover, these initiatives benefit from diaspora investment networks and EU mobility programs, positioning hospitality as a tool for cultural preservation and transnational engagement (National Wine Agency, 2023).

In **South Africa**, hospitality innovation reflects both inclusivity and luxury. Township-based bed-and-breakfasts operate through social franchising mechanisms, enabling local ownership and scalable growth supported by training organizations such as COAG-Jaén (2023). On the other end of the spectrum, luxury wine estates combine high-end lodging with biodiversity tours, wellness retreats, and contemporary art installations. These offerings are aligned with Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) policies, which mandate inclusive participation in economic activity and have become embedded in hospitality investment strategies (South Africa Government, 2014).

**Portugal** exemplifies the convergence of heritage, sustainability, and agricultural technological innovation. The network of pousadas, state-supported conversions of historic buildings into boutique hotels,



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intertwines architectural conservation with curated hospitality. In parallel, urban agritech startups such as Raiz Vertical Farms and NÂM Mushroom promote circular tourism models by transforming urban organic waste into culinary experiences. These projects not only advance sustainability education but integrate food production, gastronomic storytelling, and ecological stewardship into hospitality design (NÂM Mushroom, 2024).

**Spain's** hospitality leadership is visible in the fusion of culinary excellence and technological sophistication. Michelin-starred estates like El Cellar de Can Roca deploy integrated CRM platforms, IoT sensors in tasting rooms, and cloud-based booking systems to manage guest experience with precision and personalization. Additionally, their circular gastronomy initiatives, which include composting, waste minimization, and local sourcing, exemplify how hospitality can support environmental ethics while maintaining operational complexity and artistic integrity (Ribera y Rueda, 2025).

In **Czechia**, hospitality intersects with agritech and folklore in ways that revitalize rural economies and celebrate regional identity. Rural inns and boutique cellars frequently offer seasonal menus paired with Moravian varietals, alongside activities rooted in traditional storytelling and music. Agritech firms such as CleverFarm introduce precision farming technologies into the hospitality supply chain, enabling resource efficiency, real-time monitoring, and sustainability integration into guest experiences (CleverFarm, 2024).

Collectively, these examples illustrate a profound redefinition of hospitality as a multifaceted domain that transcends its conventional boundaries. New business models do not treat lodging and dining as isolated services but as embedded experiences that reinforce cultural meaning, ecological awareness, and digital connectivity. This evolution positions hospitality not only as an economic sector but as a strategic interface through which societies narrate identity, regenerate place, and operationalize sustainability.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, contemporary hospitality business models across Georgia, South Africa, Portugal, Spain, and Czechia exemplify a paradigm shift in how the sector is conceived, designed, and implemented. Hospitality is no longer defined solely by accommodation or gastronomy; it has become a composite space where culture, sustainability, and technology converge to deliver transformative experiences. These innovations reflect a strategic reorientation toward multidimensional value, where local identity is not a backdrop but the very fabric of the service, and where ecological responsibility is not a trend but a structural imperative.

The integration of agritech, heritage conservation, circular gastronomy, and immersive education demonstrates how hospitality can serve broader societal functions: stimulating rural economies, preserving intangible heritage, fostering environmental awareness, and creating inclusive job markets. Supported by coherent policy frameworks, digital infrastructure, and entrepreneurial ecosystems, these models reimagine hospitality as a platform for regenerative development, storytelling, and innovation. In this redefined landscape, hospitality emerges not as a static industry, but as a vital interface between tradition and transformation.



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## 4. Winery Business Models

The global wine industry is becoming increasingly diverse, with wineries adopting business models that reflect their local culture, resources, and market goals. From heritage-based experiences to circular economy innovations, these models vary widely making it difficult to apply a single formula for success. As such, flexible tools like the Business Model Canvas (or its adapted versions in wine education) are useful for analysing and designing winery strategies across different regions.

Despite this diversity, successful wineries tend to share key features: they manage revenue across direct-to-consumer sales, cellar door experiences, events, and wholesale channels, while applying pricing and capacity strategies to maximize margins and cash flow (Sovos Wines & Vines Analytics, 2025). More than just producers, these wineries act as cultural hubs, sustainability leaders, and tourism drivers. The following examples from Portugal, Georgia, South Africa, Spain, and Czechia show how wineries around the world are evolving into dynamic platforms that combine tradition, innovation, and community impact.

**Portuguese** wineries are embracing circular economy principles to transform vineyard waste into valuable resources. In Setúbal and the Douro Valley, initiatives like EMBRACE, WAW – Waste Around the Wine, and ReWINE promote the reuse of grape pomace, lees, and stalks for biogas, grapeseed oil, algae feed, and organic fertilizers. AVIPE, a leading viticulture association, supports over 4,000 hectares of vineyards with precision agriculture and sustainability consulting. Despite logistical and regulatory hurdles, Portugal is positioning its wine sector as a low-impact, high-value ecosystem, integrating agritech, biotechnology, and eco-design.

**Georgia's** wine industry uniquely combines ancient traditions like qvevri winemaking with modern innovations, including organic practices, technology integration, and sustainable production. Supported by government subsidies and protected geographical indications, wineries range from small boutique producers to larger exporters reaching over 54 countries. Wine tourism and immersive cultural experiences play a growing role in revenue and branding, while initiatives empowering women and circular economy ventures add diversity and resilience. Industry associations such as the Natural Wine Association, Imeretian Wine Association and Women in Wine Industry (WIWI) further strengthen collaboration and growth, positioning Georgia as a dynamic and expanding player in the global wine market.

**South Africa** showcases a dual winery model: community-led empowerment and high-end investment. The Township Winery in Khayelitsha integrates school-based vineyards, artisan winemaking, and local ownership, creating jobs and educational opportunities. Meanwhile, estates like Hemelzicht Vineyards offer unitized investment models, where shareholders receive dividends in wine, accommodation, and cash. This contrast reflects a dynamic strategy, social equity meets premium branding, that's redefining South African wine entrepreneurship and expanding access to the industry.

**Spanish** wineries are merging Michelin-starred gastronomy with architectural innovation and digital hospitality. Estates like El Celler de Can Roca and Marqués de Riscal offer sensorial wine experiences, cloud-based booking, and sustainable design. The Rioja Railway District features historic wineries offering curated tastings and immersive tours. Spain's FoodTech ecosystem is driving innovation in wine logistics,



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AI-based viticulture, and plant-based beverage development. These models position Spain as a global leader in wine-tourism fusion, blending tradition with cutting-edge hospitality.

**Czech wineries**, especially in South Moravia, blend precision agriculture, folkloric tourism, and architectural design. Estates like THAYA and Vinselekt Michlovský use IoT sensors, resistant grape varieties, and barrel-aging techniques to produce high-quality wines. The region promotes wine alleys, castle cellars, and UNESCO-listed traditions, attracting tourists through cultural immersion and sustainability. Czech wine is marketed as small-batch, aromatic, and terroir-driven, with growing interest in organic and biodynamic production.

### Conclusion:

The global wine industry is undergoing a strategic shift, from traditional production models to multidimensional platforms that fuse culture, sustainability, technology, and community engagement. As illustrated by the cases of Portugal, Georgia, South Africa, Spain, and Czechia, wineries are no longer just agricultural enterprises; they are becoming innovation hubs, cultural ambassadors, and drivers of inclusive economic development.

Key global trends are emerging:

- **Circular economy and agritech** are redefining resource efficiency, particularly in Portugal's low-impact, high-value ecosystems.
- **Heritage-based branding** is gaining traction, with Georgia leveraging its ancient qvevri tradition to appeal to premium niche markets.
- **Social entrepreneurship and hybrid investment models** in South Africa are expanding access and equity within the wine sector.
- **Experiential luxury and digital hospitality** are positioning Spain as a leader in wine-tourism fusion.
- **Precision agriculture and cultural immersion** in Czechia are blending terroir-driven production with sustainable tourism.

Despite regional differences, successful wineries share common strategic traits: diversified revenue streams, strong destination branding, and adaptive use of technology. They quantify margins across direct-to-consumer channels, events, and wholesale, applying dynamic pricing and capacity management (Sovos Wines & Vines Analytics, 2025).

As climate challenges intensify and consumer preferences evolve, the wineries that thrive will be those that stay rooted in authenticity while embracing innovation. The future of wine lies in regenerative growth—where business models are not only profitable, but also culturally meaningful and ecologically responsible.

## 5. Winery and hospitality Business Models

The convergence of winery operations and hospitality represents one of the most significant transformations in contemporary tourism and regional development. No longer confined to the functional realm of wine production, wineries now operate as experiential hubs that merge gastronomy, heritage, architecture, sustainability, and education. This shift reflects a broader redefinition of hospitality as a multidimensional



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platform for immersive cultural engagement, environmental stewardship, and technological innovation (FEBC Group, 2025; DigitalGuest, 2024).

**Georgia** offers a diverse range of winery and hospitality experiences including guesthouses, wine lodges (such as the unique qvevri-shaped accommodations <https://www.qvevrebi.com/>), wine hotels, and boutique stays. These offerings are not limited to the well-known wine regions of Kakheti and Imereti but are also found across other viticultural areas of the country, including Adjara, Meskheta, Kartli, Samegrelo, and Guria, where winemaking traditions continue to thrive. (<https://www.winesgeorgia.com/appellations/>)

**South African** wineries exemplify hybrid hospitality, blending high-end infrastructure with inclusive community models. Stellenbosch and Franschhoek estates combine wine production with biodiversity trails, art exhibitions, and wellness retreats, offering multisensory experiences that align with Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) policies and the WWF's Conservation Champions framework (WWF South Africa, 2024). Simultaneously, township-based wine tourism initiatives operate through social franchising, linking local entrepreneurs to hospitality networks and training (Franchise Fundi, 2023). In both cases, the winery serves as both an economic catalyst and a tool for social cohesion.

**Portugal's** wine lodges in regions like the Douro Valley or Alentejo demonstrate a seamless fusion of viticulture, architecture, and heritage hospitality. These spaces provide immersive tasting experiences while also preserving historical estates, frequently converted into boutique pousadas with curated gastronomic offerings. Initiatives from startups like NÂM Mushroom and Raiz Vertical Farms further illustrate how wineries participate in circular hospitality models, transforming organic waste into culinary innovation while offering educational workshops that reinforce sustainability narratives (NÂM Mushroom, 2024; Raiz Farms, 2024).

In **Spain**, the winery-hospitality nexus reaches the realm of digital sophistication and culinary prestige. Estates such as El Celler de Can Roca incorporate IoT-enabled tasting rooms, cloud-based booking systems, and zero-waste circular gastronomy into their operations (El Celler de Can Roca, 2024; Ribera y Rueda, 2025). These wineries operate as high-tech hospitality laboratories, merging enology with contemporary design and ethical sourcing. The Paradores system complements this by transforming historic buildings into hospitality venues that frequently partner with local wineries, thus anchoring tourism in cultural landscapes.

**Czechia's** Moravian wine routes represent yet another articulation of winery-led hospitality, where cellar tours, seasonal menus, and folklore programming animate the rural economy. Agritech firms such as CleverFarm provide technological support to wineries, enabling precision viticulture and resource optimization, while enhancing the visitor experience with real-time data engagement (CleverFarm, 2024; SME EnterPRIZE, 2024). Here, the winery is both a space of tradition and an arena for sustainable innovation.

### **Conclusion:**

Across regions, wineries are redefining hospitality by blending tradition with innovation. Wineries around the world are integrating cultural authenticity, ecological responsibility, and technological sophistication into their hospitality models. This transformation reflects a set of emerging global trends:



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- Cultural immersion and heritage preservation, as seen in Georgia and Czechia, where wineries act as custodians of tradition.
- Inclusive entrepreneurship and social equity, exemplified by South Africa's dual model of luxury estates and township-based wine tourism.
- Circular economy and sustainability, with Portugal leading in regenerative hospitality and waste-to-value innovation.
- Digital sophistication and experiential luxury, positioning Spain as a pioneer in tech-enabled wine tourism.
- Agritech integration and precision hospitality, where Czech wineries leverage smart farming to enhance both production and visitor experience.

Successful winery hospitality models also share operational traits: they diversify revenue across direct-to-consumer sales, events, and wholesale channels, and apply dynamic pricing and capacity management to optimize margins and cash flow (Sovos Wines & Vines Analytics, 2025). This convergence of agriculture, culture, and technology is reshaping the role of wineries, from production sites to immersive destinations.

Looking ahead, benchmark regions like Napa Valley offer additional inspiration for future innovation. Napa's emphasis on appointment-only visits, personalized storytelling, and destination stewardship, combined with its integration of wellness, culinary arts, and landscape design, sets a high bar for immersive, high-yield hospitality. Its strategic use of long-range planning, visitor flow management, and premium branding remains underexplored in many other wine regions, presenting opportunities for global adaptation.

Despite the progress observed, the countries analysed still face gaps in fully realizing the potential of winery hospitality. Portugal and Czechia could benefit from stronger international branding and premium positioning. Georgia may need to scale its infrastructure and digital integration to reach broader markets. South Africa's township-based models require sustained investment and global visibility. Spain, while advanced in tech and gastronomy, could deepen its circular economy practices and community engagement.

These gaps and opportunities directly inform the need for targeted competencies:

In response to South Africa's inclusive hospitality models and Portugal's emerging circular economy initiatives, professionals in wine and food tourism must be equipped to design resilient, locally embedded business strategies that balance profitability with social impact. This involves developing entrepreneurial capacity rooted in cultural relevance, stakeholder engagement, and cross-sector collaboration. Inspired by Spain's IoT-enabled tasting rooms and Napa Valley's curated visitor flows, the digital transition in wine and food tourism calls for mastery of sensory innovation, immersive technologies, and data-driven personalization. These tools elevate the visitor experience by integrating neuro-gastronomic principles into hospitality design, transforming tourism into a multisensory and emotionally resonant journey.

Reflecting Portugal's agritech advancements and Czechia's precision viticulture, sustainability in wine and food tourism demands the implementation of regenerative practices, circular economy models, and climate adaptation strategies. Professionals must be able to align their operations with ESG standards, promote biodiversity, and contribute to territorial cohesion through low-impact infrastructure and adaptive reuse of heritage assets. Finally, aligned with Georgia's heritage branding and the global success of Napa Valley, marketing and expansion strategies in this sector



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require expertise in destination storytelling, premium positioning, and multi-channel outreach. This includes leveraging protected origin schemes, digital content creation, and transnational mobility programs to reach both niche and mainstream markets while preserving authenticity and cultural depth.

Together, these competences respond to the sector's complexity and potential, equipping future professionals with the tools to design, manage, and evolve wine and food tourism ecosystems that are authentic, inclusive, and future-ready. Across these diverse contexts, wineries are evolving into hybrid platforms—simultaneously agricultural, experiential, and symbolic. They serve not only as producers of wine but as storytellers, educators, and agents of regenerative tourism. In the architecture of twenty-first century hospitality, the winery stands as a keystone: rooted in place, responsive to change, and rich in possibility.

## 6. National Legislative Frameworks

This section benefits from a broader introduction that situates national legal frameworks within a global context. While the five focus countries; Portugal, Georgia, South Africa, Spain, and Czechia have made important strides in regulating wine tourism, there is still no internationally standardized legal framework for the sector. This regulatory diversity underscores the need for comparative analysis and flexible learning tools.

Global initiatives offer valuable benchmarks. The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), through its Strategic Plan 2025–2029, promotes coordinated approaches to sustainability across the vine and wine sector, including environmental, social, and economic dimensions (OIV, 2024). New World programs such as Sustainable Winegrowing Australia and the International Wineries for Climate Action (IWCA) provide structured models for certification, carbon reduction, and regenerative viticulture (Wine Australia, 2022; IWCA, 2024). These initiatives, although not focused exclusively on tourism, offer transferable insights for ESG integration, climate adaptation, and stakeholder engagement.

National tourism bodies are also increasingly developing ESG guidelines tailored to hospitality and destination management. The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in partnership with the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, is working to establish a harmonized ESG framework for tourism businesses, addressing carbon emissions, biodiversity, and ethical governance (UNWTO & WSHA, 2024).

Against this backdrop, the following country profiles examine how legal and strategic frameworks are shaping wine tourism development. Each case reflects a unique blend of regulatory instruments, cultural heritage, and sustainability priorities, offering rich material for comparative study and curriculum design.

### Portugal

Portugal positions wine tourism as a strategic priority within its national tourism agenda. The Tourism Strategy 2027, developed by Turismo de Portugal, sets out a decade-long roadmap for sustainable growth, with a strong focus on regional development, stakeholder engagement, and the promotion of authentic, experiential tourism (Turismo de Portugal, 2017). In a landmark move, Portugal introduced its first



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dedicated Wine Tourism Law in 2023, unveiled during the 1st World Congress on Wine Tourism and the Law held in Bucelas. This legal framework seeks to consolidate enotourism as a structured economic activity, addressing key challenges such as rural infrastructure gaps, digital transformation, and climate resilience (TourismLaw.pt, 2023).

Wine tourism development is further reinforced by regional innovation clusters and circular economy initiatives, including EMBRACE and ReWINE. These projects exemplify integrated models that connect hospitality, sustainability, and viticulture, contributing to low-carbon tourism and regenerative practices in wine-producing regions (Porto Protocol, 2022).

### Georgia

Georgia's wine sector is governed by the Law on Vine and Wine, which establishes production standards, appellations of origin, and mechanisms for quality control, positioning viticulture as a strategic economic activity (FAOLEX, 1998). Oversight and certification are managed by the National Wine Agency, which ensures compliance with labelling regulations and promotes organic and biodynamic wine production, particularly for export markets (National Wine Agency, 2023).

The Georgian Wine Law is harmonized with EU regulations on geographical indications (GI) and trademark protection, safeguarding the authenticity of regional wine labels and reinforcing international competitiveness (Open Wine Law, 2023). Hospitality and wine tourism are deeply intertwined with Georgia's cultural heritage, notably through the UNESCO-recognized tradition of qvevri winemaking. This ancient method, using clay vessels buried underground for fermentation, is legally protected and celebrated as intangible cultural heritage, contributing to the country's identity and tourism appeal (Georgia.to, 2013).

### South Africa

South Africa's wine and hospitality sectors operate under a layered regulatory framework that combines national and provincial legislation. The *Liquor Act 59 of 2003* governs the wholesale distribution of alcoholic beverages, requiring producers and distributors, such as wine estates and cellars, to register and obtain appropriate licenses (SouthAfrica.co.za, 2023). At the provincial level, the *Western Cape Liquor Amendment Act 10 of 2010* provides specific guidelines for retail and micro-manufacturing licenses in wine-producing regions, including conditions for compliance and enforcement mechanisms (SouthAfrica.co.za, 2023).

Tourism policy is anchored in the *Tourism Act No. 3 of 2014*, which promotes sustainable tourism development as a tool for economic inclusion, rural revitalization, and cultural preservation. The Act supports wine tourism as a strategic driver of local growth and integrates it within the broader National Tourism Sector Strategy (Department of Tourism, 2014).

Hospitality businesses must also navigate a complex set of operational regulations, including food safety, advertising standards, liquor licensing, and labor law compliance. The *Hospitality Law Services Framework*, developed by Barnard Inc., offers legal guidance across these domains, helping businesses align with national legislation and mitigate operational risks (Barnard Inc., 2019).



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## Spain

Spain launched its National Plan for Enogastronomic Tourism in 2022, investing €68.6 million to promote wine and culinary tourism through sustainability, innovation, and stakeholder collaboration (Ministry of Industry and Tourism, 2022). The plan outlines strategic actions to position Spain as a global leader in enogastronomic experiences, emphasizing digital transformation, territorial cohesion, and the valorisation of local products and traditions. It includes measures to support SMEs, enhance destination branding, and foster public-private partnerships, particularly in rural areas and regions with strong culinary heritage.

The plan is part of the broader Tourism Strategy 2030, which integrates wine tourism into cultural and rural development goals (EU Tourism Platform, 2024). Wine sector regulation is governed by the EU Common Market Organisation (CMO), which defines oenological practices, labeling, and geographical indications (European Parliament, 2023). These frameworks collectively reinforce Spain's commitment to sustainable tourism, regional innovation, and international competitiveness.

The Canary Islands offer a compelling model of strategic transformation, placing citizens and climate resilience at the heart of tourism planning. Their 2023 Strategic Tourism Plan, valued at €61.5 million, is structured around digital leadership, product innovation, and environmental sustainability (Promotur Turismo de Canarias, 2023a). Through initiatives like *Canarias Destino*, the region is reducing its tourism carbon footprint while enhancing visitor experience via data-driven personalization and tourism intelligence (Promotur Turismo de Canarias, 2023b). The 2024 Action Plan further emphasizes well-being, employment quality, and heritage preservation, aligning with the Glasgow Declaration on climate neutrality (Promotur Turismo de Canarias, 2024).

## Czechia

Czechia's wine sector is governed by the Law on Vine and Wine, which establishes viticulture zones, wine classifications, and labeling standards, ensuring product quality and regional authenticity (FAOLEX, 2023). The National Wine Centre plays a pivotal role in promoting wine tourism through educational programs, cultural events, and regional branding initiatives that connect viticulture with hospitality and heritage (Vinarske Centrum, 2023).

Hospitality and wine tourism are further shaped by regional development policies and environmental compliance frameworks, with a strong emphasis on sustainable rural tourism and landscape preservation (Government of Czech Republic, 2023). The Czech legal system also incorporates EU directives on tourism, food safety, and environmental protection, aligning wine hospitality businesses with international standards and reinforcing cross-border regulatory coherence (European e-Justice Portal, 2023).

## Conclusion:

The evolution of wine tourism is not solely driven by market trends or consumer desires, it is deeply shaped by national legal frameworks that regulate quality, sustainability, and cultural authenticity. The comparative analysis of legal and strategic frameworks across Portugal, Georgia, South Africa, Spain, and Czechia reveals a dynamic and evolving landscape for wine tourism regulation. While each country demonstrates unique approaches rooted in cultural heritage, economic priorities, and sustainability goals, the absence of



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a unified international legal standard presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Global initiatives, such as those led by the OIV, IWCA, and UNWTO, offer valuable reference points for harmonizing ESG principles and fostering cross-border collaboration.

By embedding global benchmarks into national strategies, wine tourism is poised to become a more resilient, inclusive, and forward-looking sector. Portugal sets a precedent with its pioneering Wine Tourism Law, which strategically aligns enotourism with regional development, digital transition, and circular economy innovation. Georgia's Law on Vine and Wine safeguards its millennia-old winemaking heritage while harmonizing with EU standards on geographical indications and quality control. South Africa's regulatory framework, combining liquor licensing and tourism legislation, supports both grassroots empowerment initiatives and high-end hospitality ventures. Spain is institutionalizing its enogastronomic sector through substantial national investment and alignment with broader EU tourism and sustainability goals. Czechia integrates wine and hospitality regulation within regional development and environmental planning, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable rural tourism and international compliance.

These legal frameworks are essential for shaping a wine tourism ecosystem that is inclusive, resilient, and future-facing. As climate challenges and global competition intensify, countries that embed wine hospitality into coherent legislative and cultural strategies will emerge as leaders in this dynamic sector.

## 7. Digitalization and Internationalization

In the rapidly evolving landscape of hospitality, wine, and culinary tourism, digitalization and internationalization have emerged as twin pillars of transformation. Entrepreneurs across these sectors are increasingly adopting global policy frameworks, advanced technologies, and sustainability certifications to expand market reach, enhance operational resilience, and elevate the visitor experience. As highlighted by the Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA, 2023), digital literacy and infrastructure are now essential for scaling agrifood enterprises within the global knowledge economy. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2020) further underscores that sustainable practices, when embedded in digital strategies, serve as key drivers of territorial cohesion and competitiveness.

Complementing these global insights, the EU Smart Tourism Destinations Toolkit offers actionable guidance for integrating innovation, accessibility, and environmental responsibility into destination management. By leveraging data-driven solutions such as IoT deployment, AI-enhanced services, and real-time analytics, smart tourism empowers local stakeholders to optimize resource use, personalize guest experiences, and foster inclusive growth. For wine tourism regions, this toolkit provides a strategic roadmap to align with EU standards and future-proof their operations.

Across the five countries analyzed, digitalization and internationalization manifest in diverse yet convergent ways:

In **Georgia**, authenticity is preserved and marketed through innovations like QR-coded tasting menus and Geographical Indication (GI) branding, enhancing traceability and cultural resonance (EUIPO, 2024). Wineries and guesthouses participate in Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe programs, advancing rural hospitality through cross-border knowledge exchange (European Commission, 2024). The UNESCO-



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recognized qvevri winemaking method, dating back over 8,000 years, continues to serve as both a symbolic and economic cornerstone for Georgia's global wine identity (UNESCO, 2013).

In **South Africa**, digital inclusivity and ethical production are central to internationalization. Township chefs routinely use WhatsApp and CRM tools to manage bookings and build customer relationships, while wine farms achieve Fairtrade and organic certifications to meet the demands of European and North American markets (Fairtrade International, 2023). Vocational education programs like those offered by the Cape Wine Academy align hospitality skill-building with local food traditions and empowerment initiatives (Cape Wine Academy, 2025).

**Portugal** integrates smart infrastructure, e-commerce platforms, and sustainability labeling into rural hospitality. According to INE (2024), digital tourism solutions have become standard, while platforms like Portugal Farm Experiences enhance storytelling and regional clustering through curated agritourism packages (PortugalFarmExperience.com, 2024). The adaptive reuse of heritage assets, including pousadas and tascas, creates immersive venues that preserve cultural integrity while appealing to international travellers.

In **Spain**, hospitality operators deploy digital wine routes, CRM personalization, and eco-labelling linked to public funding programs, allowing producers to integrate sustainability and personalization into service design (OECD, 2024). Architectural innovations such as solar-powered tasting rooms and zero-waste kitchens reinforce ecological credibility (FoodCompliance International, 2024). The National Plan for Enogastronomic Tourism, backed by €68.6 million, exemplifies Spain's strategy to connect local producers with global hospitality networks (Spanish Ministry of Industry and Tourism, 2023).

**Czechia** showcases a fusion of digital craftsmanship and agroecological entrepreneurship. In regions like South Moravia, wineries offer QR-coded cellar tours, subscription-based wine tastings, and aquaponics demonstrations, strengthening educational impact and tourist engagement (Wine of Czech Republic, 2024). Collaborations with Austrian Slow Food chapters extend Czech culinary diplomacy across borders (Czech Journal of Gastronomy, 2024), while urban centres like Brno and Prague blend heritage and innovation through natural wines and vernacular architecture.

Collectively, these developments illustrate a paradigm shift in how wine and hospitality are conceptualized—not as passive leisure sectors but as transformational platforms for inclusive growth, intercultural exchange, and global sustainability.

### **Conclusion:**

The convergence of innovation, sustainability, and cultural authenticity is reshaping the global hospitality and winery sectors. From Georgia's digital traceability and heritage branding to South Africa's inclusive tech tools and ethical certifications, entrepreneurs are crafting tourism ecosystems that are both locally grounded and globally connected. In Portugal, Czechia, and Spain, immersive storytelling, circular design, and smart infrastructure are enhancing international visibility while reinforcing regional identity.

Ultimately, hospitality and wine tourism have evolved into platforms of transformative impact, linking communities, preserving traditions, and driving sustainable progress across borders. Their digital and international dimensions are not auxiliary features but strategic imperatives for building resilient, future-ready tourism landscapes.

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## 8. Conclusion and proposed Business Development Competencies

This comparative analysis reveals that wine, gastronomy, and hospitality sectors thrive when rooted in cultural heritage, guided by strategic innovation, and responsive to global trends. From Georgia's UNESCO-recognized qvevri winemaking to Spain's solar-powered tasting rooms and Czechia's aquaponic cellars, the fusion of local identity with global integration offers a compelling blueprint for inclusive and sustainable growth.

Each country examined contributes uniquely to this transformation, whether through vocational programs grounded in regional food cultures, smart legislation enabling digital entrepreneurship, or immersive guest experiences that reinforce destination branding. These sectors now operate at the intersection of economic development, community empowerment, and climate action, positioning them as strategic platforms for territorial cohesion and regenerative tourism.

Below are the proposed business development competencies for each of the four foundational competencies identified:

### 1. Wine & Food Tourism Business Development and Entrepreneurship

- **Strategic thinking & decision-making:** building resilient, place-based business models.
- **Financial & business planning:** revenue diversification (cellar door, events, exports), cash flow, and investment readiness.
- **Entrepreneurship & management skills:** creating scalable SMEs, family businesses, and inclusive cooperatives.
- **Leadership & team management:** guiding multi-stakeholder ventures, workforce development, and succession planning.

Case studies of regions and wineries demonstrating these business development competences:

|              |                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Georgia      | Schuchmann Wines: vertically integrated winery with boutique hotel, restaurant, and wellness center, showcasing business diversification. |
| South Africa | Township Winery (Khayelitsha): empowerment-driven model combining local ownership, school vineyards, and artisan winemaking.              |
| Portugal     | Pousadas Network: conversion of heritage buildings into boutique hospitality, blending tradition with entrepreneurship.                   |
| Spain        | Marqués de Riscal: iconic winery-hotel integrating architecture and gastronomy, balancing financial viability with cultural branding      |

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|         |                                                                                                            |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Czechia | Vinselekt Michlovský: SME winery innovating with resistant grape varieties and premium market positioning. |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 2. Digital Transition in Wine & Food Tourism (Innovation & Neuro-Gastronomy)

- **Digital literacy for tourism & hospitality:** online booking, CRM, social media, mobile payments.
- **Innovation & problem-solving:** immersive technologies (AR/VR, IoT-enabled tasting rooms), digital storytelling.
- **Neuro-gastronomy principles:** sensory experience design integrating lighting, sound, and textures.
- **Data-driven personalization:** using analytics to tailor guest experiences and strengthen competitiveness.

Case studies of regions and wineries demonstrating these business development competences:

|              |                                                                                                            |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Georgia      | Shumi Winery: digital booking, multilingual services, and cultural museum integration.                     |
| South Africa | Boschendal Estate: tech-enabled bookings, digital marketing, and smart visitor management.                 |
| Portugal     | NÂM Mushroom/Agrotech startups: using circular food tech to link sustainability with digital storytelling. |
| Spain        | El Celler de Can Roca: IoT-enabled tasting rooms, cloud-based booking, immersive culinary experiences.     |
| Czechia      | CleverFarm partnerships: agritech and precision viticulture integrated into guest engagement.              |

## 3. Sustainability and Local Development

- **Sustainability standards:** ESG alignment, ISO 21401/22000, GSTC tourism certification.
- **Circular economy practices:** waste-to-value projects (Portugal's ReWINE, South Africa's zero-waste dining).
- **Heritage conservation:** adaptive reuse of historical assets (Portugal's pousadas, Czech wine cellars).

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- **Community-based tourism & empowerment:** embedding equity (B-BBEE in South Africa), preserving traditions (Georgia's supra, Czech folklore).
- **Responsible operations:** health, hygiene, and safety compliance as market prerequisites.

Case studies of regions and wineries demonstrating these business development competences:

|              |                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Georgia      | Kindzmarauli Corporation: export-certified winery combining heritage preservation with sustainability standards.                        |
| South Africa | Grootbos & Creation Wines: regenerative tourism and farm-to-table practices aligned with global ESG goals.                              |
| Portugal     | ReWINE & EMBRACE projects: circular economy initiatives transforming vineyard waste into biogas, grapeseed oil, and organic fertilizer. |
| Spain        | Paradores system: preservation of historic structures as hospitality venues while supporting sustainable rural development.             |
| Czechia      | Moravian wine trails: cellar-based tourism with ecological farming and cultural preservation.                                           |

#### 4. Wine & Food Tourism Marketing and Expansion

- **Marketing research & analysis:** understanding visitor preferences, market segmentation.
- **Communication & storytelling:** heritage-based narratives (qvevri wines, Ubuntu hospitality, tapas/maridaje).
- **Destination branding & premium positioning:** leveraging GIs/protected origin schemes.
- **International expansion:** alignment with trade agreements (EU DCFTA, AfCFTA, SADC), participation in global fairs (ProWein, London Wine Fair).
- **Multi-channel promotion:** digital campaigns, influencer collaborations, mobility programs.

Case studies of regions and wineries demonstrating these business development competences:

|              |                                                                                                              |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Georgia      | Qvevri wine branding: UNESCO heritage leveraged for niche premium positioning                                |
| South Africa | Cape Wine Routes: integrated marketing of Stellenbosch, Paarl, and Franschhoek as cultural-tourism corridors |
| Portugal     | Douro Valley branding: combining wine lodges, UNESCO heritage, and storytelling in global campaigns          |



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|         |                                                                                              |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Spain   | Rioja & Ribera del Duero: premium exports tied to terroir narratives and international fairs |
| Czechia | South Moravia festivals: storytelling through folklore, seasonal festivals, and GI branding  |

### Final Considerations

Wine and hospitality have evolved far beyond their traditional roles as leisure commodities. Today, they function as multidimensional instruments of cultural diplomacy, environmental stewardship, and entrepreneurial innovation. These sectors are no longer peripheral to national development, they are central to shaping resilient, inclusive, and future-oriented rural economies.

By embedding business development within frameworks of sustainability, digital transformation, and strategic marketing, professionals can activate tourism ecosystems that are both locally grounded and globally connected. This alignment enables communities to preserve their heritage while embracing innovation, fostering experiences that are authentic, regenerative, and economically viable.

Ultimately, the convergence of tradition and technology, place and purpose, positions wine and hospitality not merely as industries, but as strategic platforms for territorial cohesion, intercultural dialogue, and climate-conscious growth. The competencies outlined in this chapter are not optional enhancements; they are foundational tools for shaping the next generation of tourism leadership.



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