Transformation Consultants and Doers

Yet Another One Talking About 2026 Trends | On Beverage Sector

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This trends analysis explores how the wine, vermouth and beer sectors are evolving in response to shifting consumer behaviours, rising sustainability expectations and fast-moving cultural influences.

It brings together insights from leading trend platforms, industry research and real market signals to help senior teams navigate the next 12 months with confidence.

From value-conscious premiumisation and lighter drinking rituals to flavour experimentation, digital immersion and data-enabled operations, this report highlights the most relevant forces shaping how people drink, choose and experience beverages today and what brands must do to stay ahead.

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Agenda

Executive Summary

The beverage landscape -particularly wine, vermouth, beer- faces converging pressures: cost-of-living constraints, experience-driven consumption, shifting health attitudes, sustainability expectations, and supply-chain volatility.

Urban socially active drinkers and B2B decision-makers are both redefining value, novelty, and loyalty.

> Brands will need to adapt strategically across product, experience, communication, and operations.

Trends in People

- Consumers seek experiential, social and emotional drinking occasions.
- “Conscious drinking” drives demand for low/no alcohol, lighter serves, and functional cues.
- Provenance, sincerity, and craft story-building strongly influence purchase decisions.
- Experiences and shared rituals are more important than traditional brand loyalty.

Trends in the Sector

- Value-conscious premiumisation: people upgrade selectively when meaning and experience justify the price.
- Wellness and functionality reshape portfolios, especially low/no formats.
- Global flavour exploration accelerates innovation in botanicals, hops, fruits, and fermentation.
- Sustainability and industrial analytics drive operational transformation and trade expectations.

Trends in Brands

- Brands must behave like experience ecosystems, not product suppliers.
- Transparency and authentic story-building build trust across B2B and B2C.
- Co-creation, collaborations, and limited drops enhance relevance and novelty.
- Sustainability is a core brand differentiator and long-term equity driver.

Trends for People in the Sector

- Professionals adopt more agile, cross-functional innovation behaviours.
- Data-driven leadership and operational intelligence become essential.
- Value-centric thinking reshapes product design, menu strategy, and story-building.
- Sustainability becomes a cultural norm inside wineries, breweries, and vermouth producers.

Trends for People with Brands

- Consumers align with brands that reflect their values and identity.
- Two-way dialogue, responsiveness, and human tone deepen relationships.
- Omnichannel engagement becomes the baseline expectation.
- People seek sensory education, community belonging and participatory experiences.

Trends for the Sector and Its Brands

- Digital, physical, and social commerce now operate as a unified ecosystem.
- Sustainability is a commercial driver, not a CSR add-on.
- Innovation thrives through cross-category inspiration and rapid cycles.
- Supply-chain resilience and localisation anchor long-term brand strategy.
- Experience-driven branding shapes competitive advantage across all channels.

What's Going On

What Audiences Are Doing

- Consumers prioritise experiential drinking occasions that deliver emotional connection and “micro-escapes.”
- “Conscious drinking” increases demand for low/no alcohol, lighter serves, natural cues, and botanical complexity.
- People want sincerity, provenance, transparency, and meaningful brand values.
- B2B professionals expect faster innovation, clear value ladders, and data-driven insight to support decisions.
- Discovery behaviour is rising; audiences want education, flavour exploration, and story-building.

What the Industry Is Doing

- Value-conscious premiumisation: premium works only when it feels meaningful and experiential.
- Functional cues and wellness becoming part of alcoholic beverage positioning -implicitly, not medicinally-.
- Rapid global flavour adoption driven by botanicals, hops innovation, fermentation creativity.
- Sustainability is now a commercial expectation, not an ethical accessory - yet it's on its way to becoming a mere hygienic necessity.
- Digitisation and analytics reshape production, supply chains, and trade relationships.

What Winning Brands Are Doing

- Moving from products to experience ecosystems -rituals, events, sensory immersion-.
- Using story-driven transparency to build trust -origin, craftsmanship, sustainable practice-.
- Accelerating innovation through collaborations, limited drops, co-creation with cultural partners.
- Building community-centric engagement through omnichannel presence and participatory formats.
- Embedding sustainability into both operations -first- and messaging -following by-.

Strategic Imperatives for 2026

- Reinvent value by tying premium cues to meaningful experiences.
- Expand lighter and lower-ABV offerings aligned with conscious drinking behaviours.
- Treat flavour as strategy, leveraging global inspiration and cross-category innovation.
- Radically increase transparency around production, sourcing, and sustainability.
- Build omnichannel consistency across on-premises, retail, social and D2C.
- Invest in sensory education to help consumers and trade partners “level up.”
- Anchor brand identity in community, enabling belonging and participation.

Wine

Brand Implications & Opportunities

Implications

- Consumers increasingly expect sincerity: vineyards, varietals, winemaker personality must be visible.
- Value-conscious premiumisation requires clear story-building, tasting guidance and sensory framing.
- Climate volatility means resilience-focused sourcing, local varietals and transparency will matter.
- Younger audiences want lighter styles, aromatics, skin-contact and natural cues without elitism.
- Wine must compete in experiential spaces, not just retail shelves.

Opportunities

- Light & Social Wine Platforms
  - Spritz-ready wines
  - Naturally lower-ABV wines
  - Social-format packaging -half bottles, cans, tasting sets-

- Authentic Craft Story-building
    - "Meet the winemaker" micro-content
    - Seasonal vineyard diaries
    - Transparent vintage variation narratives
- Sensory Education Ecosystems
    - Aroma/tactile tasting kits
    - Guided pairing events in urban bars
    - Visual tasting mnemonics for new drinkers
- Regenerative & Climate-Resilient Positioning
    - Promotion of indigenous varietals
    - Water and soil stewardship story-building
    - Low-impact packaging -lighter glass, local sourcing-
- Collaborative Wine Editions -even though it still sounds sinful-
    - Wine x tea ferments
    - Wine x chefs pairing collabs
    - Wine x craft soda partnerships

Category-Specific Strategic Roadmaps

Foundation, Insight & Portfolio Alignment

Objectives: Build clarity on opportunities, refine portfolio, upgrade story-building.

Actions:

- Conduct a competitive audit focusing on value-conscious premiumisation, natural cues and lighter styles.
- Identify 1–2 hero SKUs per price tier with strong story-building potential.
- Start developing transparent origin stories -vineyard diaries, varietal narratives, climate adaptation-.
- Train sales/trade teams to communicate value propositions aligned with premium justification.
- Map potential light & social wine formats -spritz-ready, lower ABV, canned, half bottles-.

Outputs:

- Portfolio map
- Story-building framework
- Seasonal activation plan draft

Innovation Pipeline & Experience Development

Objectives: Accelerate experimentation and create new touchpoints

Actions:

- Launch a micro-batch innovation cell: pet-nat -*Pétillant Naturel*-, skin-contact, botanically infused test lots.
- Build partnerships with bars, sommeliers, and urban event organisers for test releases.
- Develop sensory education tools for consumers -aroma kits, simple tasting guides, pairing charts-.
- Roll out transparent sustainability communication -water practices, soil health, lighter glass-.

Outputs:

- First micro-batch tests
- On-premises sensory toolkit
- Sustainability comms package

Market Activation & Omnichannel Expansion

Objectives: Scale presence across on-premises, D2C and social channels.

Actions:

- Launch seasonal wine experiences -sunset tastings, urban vineyard pop-ups, food pairings-.
- Introduce D2C discovery packs -tasting sets, trio boxes, fermentation stories-.
- Release summer spritz formats or collaborative wine cocktails with bars.
- Increase presence on TikTok/Instagram with winemaker-led micro-story-building.

Outputs:

- Seasonal campaign
- D2C subscription experiment
- Summer limited edition

Consolidation, Scaling & Long-Term Resilience

Objectives: Build resilience, evaluate performance, prepare for next cycle.

Actions:

- Evaluate performance of micro-batches: scale best-performing SKUs.
- Finalise partnerships with regenerative agriculture suppliers.
- Expand locality & terroir story-building into retail and export materials.
- Update next year's roadmap with insights from data analytics and trade feedback.

Outputs:

- Portfolio for next year
- Regenerative sourcing roadmap
- Annual learning review

Vermouth

Brand Implications & Opportunities

Implications

- Vermouth's resurgence aligns with aperitivo culture, social ritual, and low-ABV trends.
- Consumers perceive vermouth as versatile: cocktail base, spritz component, food accompaniment.
- Botanicals create strong opportunities for wellness-adjacent cues -non-health claims-.
- Trade partners want vermouth brands with activation-ready experiences -spritz boards, pairing moments-.
- Transparency around botanicals, sourcing and heritage enhances trust and differentiation.

Opportunities

- Aperitivo Lifestyle Platforms
    - Seasonal spritz rituals
    - Pop-up aperitivo events
    - Aperitivo music playlists and vibe design
- Botanical-Led Story-building
    - Ingredient spotlights -herbs, citrus, spices-
    - Sustainability in herb cultivation
    - Regional botanical identity

- Educating Through Ritual
  - "Spritz building" kits for bars & consumers
  - Garnish rituals -citrus wheels, olive pairings-
  - Short video explainers on botanicals
- Modern Vermouth Formats
  - RTD -ready to drink- spritz cans
  - Low-sugar variants
  - Vermouth cocktails with global flavour infusions -yuzu, hibiscus, Sichuan pepper-
- Chef/Mixologist Co-Creation
  - Seasonal pairings menus
  - Signature serves for high-profile venues
  - Limited-edition infused vermouths

Category-Specific Strategic Roadmaps

Brand Platform & Botanical Identity

Objectives: Define unique positioning through botanicals, ritual, and origin.

Actions:

- Conduct a botanical audit: identify unique regional herbs, citrus, roots.
- Build the Signature Botanical Framework for communication and mixology.
- Develop an "Aperitivo Lifestyle" brand platform with tone, visuals, and rituals.
- Map flavour opportunities -herbal, citrus, floral, spice-forward-.

Outputs:

- Botanical identity map
- Ritual & serve guidelines
- Aperitivo brand book

Innovation & Experience Toolkit

Objectives: Build the sensory and experiential foundations of modern aperitivo.

Actions:

- Develop RTD spritz prototypes -low sugar, lighter ABV, seasonal flavours-.
- Build bartender-facing spritz-building kits, garnish guidelines, and menu templates.
- Launch vermouth education assets:
  - Botanical spotlight videos
  - Ingredient cards
  - "How to Spritz" content series
- Partner with local chefs for aperitivo pairing menus.

Outputs:

- RTD test batch
- Trade education kit
- Chef collaboration plan

Cultural Activation & Channel Growth

Objectives: Bring vermouth into culture through events, bars and omnichannel.

Actions:

- Launch urban aperitivo pop-ups -city squares, rooftops, cultural districts-.
- Partner with bars for Seasonal Spritz Weeks.
- Release the first limited botanical edition in collaboration with mixologists.
- Roll out D2C "Spritz Discovery Boxes" with garnishes + tasting cards.
- Strengthen presence in cultural spaces -music venues, art events-.

Outputs:

- City-wide activation
- Limited edition
- D2C spritz program

Consolidation & Brand Loyalty Building

Objectives: Strengthen membership and fine-tune product range.

Actions:

- Launch a Vermouth Club -seasonal boxes, early releases, invitations to events-.
- Formalise relationships with botanical growers -traceability, regenerative farming-.
- Develop holiday season spritz gift sets and mixology kits.
- Review cross-channel analytics and refine the long-term innovation plan.

Outputs:

- Year-end vermouth club launch
- Regenerative botanical sourcing map
- Year-round spritz plan

Beer

Brand Implications & Opportunities

Implications

- Beer faces intense competition from seltzers, cocktails, and NoLo -no and low-alcohol- categories, requiring innovation in flavour, story-building, and occasion relevance.
- Consumers embrace experimentation: fruit infusions, botanicals, limited hops, sourness, barrel ageing.
- Sessionability and low/no alcohol formats are key for socially active lifestyles.
- Trade partners seek rotating taps, seasonal releases, and collaborative brews to maintain venue energy.
- Sustainability matters: water usage, spent grain reuse, local sourcing, energy reduction are major differentiators.

Opportunities

- Sessionable & Social Beers
    - 2.5/4.5% ABV beers for long social evenings
    - Hybrid beer-soda formats
    - Crisp, refreshing, food-friendly profiles
- "Discovery" Release Calendars
    - Monthly IPA experiments
    - Seasonal sour series
    - Wild-fermentation or heritage grain editions
- Beer x Culinary Fusion
    - Collabs with chocolatiers, bakers, coffee roasters
    - Food-pairing boards in bars
    - Dessert beers, savoury beers
- Sustainability Leadership
    - Closed-loop water systems
    - Brewery-powered community gardens
    - Upcycled spent grain products
- Taproom & On-Premises Theatre
    - Limited "tap takeovers"
    - Brewer meet-and-greet nights
    - Sensory brewing workshops

Category-Specific Strategic Roadmaps

Category Relevance, Insight & Foundation

Objectives: Rebuild differentiation in a crowded and fast-changing beer market.

Actions:

- Conduct a taproom and bar audit: flavour trends, pricing ladders, rotating taps.
- Define the core sessionable range -3.0/4.5% ABV- targeting social drinkers.
- Prioritise sustainability opportunities -water usage, energy, spent grain-.
- Plan a 12-month rotating release calendar: IPAs, sours, seasonal specials.

Outputs:

- Core beer range map
- Rotating calendar draft
- Sustainability baseline

Innovation Cycles & Collaborative Brewing

Objectives: Increase novelty, cultural relevance, and seasonal momentum.

Actions:

- Launch collaborations with chocolatiers, bakers, roasters, or chefs.
- Evaluate new hop varieties and hybrid fermentations.
- Develop barrel-aged experiments -wine barrels, vermouth casks, whisky casks-.
- Release Limited Drop #1 aligned with spring/summer behaviour.

Outputs:

- Collab #1
- Barrel program
- Seasonal limited drop

Experience-Driven Activation & Cultural Presence

Objectives: Strengthen on-premises relevance and community engagement.

Actions:

- Host Tap Takeover Month across multiple beer houses.
- Launch a Summer Social Beer Series -fruit-forward, crisp, experimental styles-.
- Introduce a Brewery Discovery Tour experience with sensory workshops.
- Roll out TikTok/Instagram brew diaries with brewers explaining process, ingredients, and sustainability.

Outputs:

- Tap takeover activation
- Summer seasonal series
- Education & social content ecosystem

Resilience, Sustainability & Long-Term Growth

Objectives: Secure supply chain, improve margins, and strengthen brand loyalty.

Actions:

- Implement closed-loop water reduction and energy optimisation projects.
- Develop spent grain reuse partnerships -bakeries, farms, snacks-.
- Release Limited Drop #4 with a holiday/celebration profile.
- Conduct full-year analysis: performance, innovation impact, channel growth, SKU optimisation.

Outputs:

- Sustainability progress report
- Spent grain circular model
- Annual strategy refresh

Trends in People

The behaviour, expectations, motivations, and needs of people across the beverage ecosystem, from socially active urban consumers to strategic decision-makers in wineries, vineyards, beer houses and on-premises environments, are undergoing notable transformations.

These shifts reflect broader cultural dynamics, health attitudes, digital habits, economic pressures, and lifestyle aspirations.

> Trends in people shape not only what beverages they choose, but how they relate to brands, how they engage with experiences, and how they define value.

Understanding these changes is essential for any beverage brand operating across B2B, B2C, B2B2C or D2C. Here, we explore the most significant behaviour-driven patterns which would influence the 2026 landscape.

Trend 1 | Socially Active Escapism & Experience-Seeking Behaviour

Urban adults -18+- are increasingly using beverages -particularly wine, vermouth, and beer- as gateways to social meaning, emotional release, and experiential novelty. This pattern is strongly visible in metropolitan settings where dense social calendars, nightlife energy and cultural diversity make drinks an essential part of shared rituals.

> People are not simply "going out for a drink;" they are seeking settings that feel like micro-escapes from daily pressures.

As a result, beverages become symbols of belonging, identity expression, and temporary relief from routine. This aligns with documented behavioural trends showing that socially active consumers gravitate toward environments where the drink, the place and the social setting create a cohesive experience rather than isolated consumption.

> For beverage brands, this shift means that products must be designed and communicated as part of a broader lifestyle moment.

These consumers actively seek atmospheres -intimate wine bars, craft beer houses, vermouth aperitivo lounges- where the beverage functions as a social facilitator. Brands that understand this behaviour invest more in context creation:

- Curated playlists
- Sensory engagement
- Story-building through design
- Immersive tasting rituals

Unlike previous generations, who emphasised brand loyalty through tradition or habit, younger, socially active consumers add elements such as experience, atmosphere, and emotional resonance to their belief in these brands.

Aperol

Aperol transformed the act of drinking into a cultural ritual centred on the "Aperitivo moment."

The brand reframed vermouth-style bitters not as a product but as a social experience, using vibrant imagery, communal table settings, and outdoor urban activations.

This reinforces how beverages become symbolic entry points into shared escapism and social bonding.

Trend 2 | Moderation, Functional Benefits & the Rise of “Conscious Drinking”

Consumers. especially urban socially active adults -again-, now balance enjoyment with wellbeing. This “conscious drinking” movement is not rooted in abstinence, but in flexibility.

People want to enjoy nightlife while preserving mental clarity, physical health and next-day functionality.

As a result, low- and no-alcohol beverages, sessionable beers, light vermouth spritzes and naturally lower-alcohol wines are gaining traction. The Trend intersects with broader wellness motivations such as gut health, mood regulation, emotional balance, and biohacking, all of which influence beverage choices.

This behaviour shift has significant implications for brand messaging.

Rather than emphasising “less alcohol,” successful brands highlight flavour, craftsmanship and functional benefits such as botanicals, adaptogens or natural fermentation attributes.

Conscious drinkers prefer beverages that feel inclusive during social events, meaning brands must avoid framing reduced-alcohol offerings as inferior.

In addition, moderation aligns with changing nightlife habits: longer evenings, multi-venue outings, earlier social meetups, and work-life schedules in which people want to engage socially without compromising productivity.

This opens opportunities for hybrid beverage formats, mini-serves, spritzers, or multipurpose drinks suitable for daytime and evening consumption.

Heineken 0.0

Heineken 0.0 expanded rapidly by positioning non-alcoholic beer not as a compromise but as an elevated, flavour-forward alternative.

Its presence in bars, festivals and high-energy social settings reframed moderation as mainstream, supporting the behaviour of consumers who want to participate socially while controlling their alcohol intake.

Trend 3 | Sincerity, Craft Provenance & Story-Driven Consumption

Across wine, vermouth and beer, people increasingly value sincerity, a desire for genuine stories, transparent production, and cultural heritage. Urban socially active consumers are sensitive to performative branding and instead reward brands that articulate origins, craftsmanship and meaningful values.

This is especially strong in categories with deep historical ties: wine regions, local breweries, family-run vineyards, and artisanal vermouth producers benefit from building and telling their stories well.

People want to know who made it, how it was made, and why it matters.

They increasingly use origin and craftsmanship as proxies for trust and quality, especially amid rising misinformation online. Provenance-oriented behaviour is amplified through digital tools:

- Consumers look up vineyards on maps
- Explore fermentation methods on social media
- Follow winemakers on Instagram
- Join tasting clubs to deepen their understanding

This turns beverage selection into a form of identity expression, choosing a natural wine from an independent producer becomes a cultural signal of knowledge, curation, and intentionality.

For B2B professionals such as bar managers or marketing directors, sincerity is equally important; they favour brands that provide credible narratives, educational content, and transparent sourcing claims to support menu design, story-building, and guest engagement.

BrewDog

BrewDog strategically built its identity on transparency, rebellious craft culture, and provenance story-building. By detailing brewing techniques, ingredient sourcing, and sustainability efforts, it tapped the growing consumer desire for sincerity while giving on-premises partners strong narrative tools to connect with guests.

Trends in the Sector

The wine, vermouth and beer sector is evolving inside a broader food-and-beverage landscape marked by economic uncertainty, climate pressure, shifts in health priorities and rapid innovation in taste and format.

Global consumer trend analyses for 2026 highlight that people are navigating financial pressure, geopolitical tension, and mounting climate concerns, with around half of consumers describing themselves as anxious about the world around them.

This anxiety translates into more cautious spending, more considered choices, and a stronger demand that products “work harder,” delivering emotional comfort, health reassurance, ethical credibility, and sensorial enjoyment at the same time.

Within this context, alcoholic beverages compete with -and often borrow from- adjacent categories: functional drinks, flavoured waters, RTD cocktails, and better-for-you sodas.

Reports on 2026 food and drink trends emphasise that consumers still want to socialise and eat/drink out, but in a cost-conscious way that maximises perceived value and experience.

At the same time, industry-wide taste and flavour forecasts show that taste itself has become a powerful reflection of deeper values, including sustainability and emotional wellness.

> For wine, vermouth, and beer, this means the sector must reinvent not only what it produces, but how it sources, packages and delivers those products across channels.

Trend 4 | Value-Conscious Premiumisation

Despite cost-of-living pressure, the sector is not witnessing a simple “down-trade;” instead, consumers are becoming value-conscious premiumisers.

Research among UK out-of-home diners shows that while budgets are tight, people still strongly value social occasions out and are actively looking to tap into the “latest food and drink trends.”

In one UK study, 46% of respondents said they want to try the latest food trends, and 54% describe themselves as “foodies,” with a majority frequently exploring new and unique cuisines when out.

This mindset carries over into beverages; consumers are prepared to pay more for wine flights, craft beer, or a distinctive vermouth serve, as long as the proposition feels novel, generous or experience rich.

> For the sector, premiumisation therefore shifts from “more expensive” to “more justifiable.”

In practice, wineries, breweries, and vermouth makers are re-configuring portfolios so that higher-priced items clearly communicate why they cost more: terroir stories, limited releases, sustainable viticulture or brewing, special barrel ageing, or collaborations with chefs and mixologists.

At the same time, operators are responding to value-conscious behaviour with “topped and loaded” propositions, menus that maximise perceived generosity, such as loaded dishes paired with drinks, shareable platters with beer flights, or aperitivo boards designed to accompany vermouth spritzes.

In the on-premises channel, this allows brands and venues to maintain margin while offering consumers the sense that they are treating themselves without over-spending.

Premiumisation also intersects with channel strategy. In B2B and B2B2C, distributors and wholesalers prioritise brands that can demonstrate a clear trade-up ladder for operators:

- House wines and draft beers at accessible price points
- Premium and super-premium tiers that can be used for special occasions
- Pairings and events

For D2C and subscription models, premiumisation often appears as curated boxes of small-batch wines, limited seasonal beers or vermouth sets that tell a coherent story, emphasising discovery and education rather than volume.

A Craft Brewery Building Tiered Value

Consider a craft brewery that structures its range into a core session lager for everyday occasions, a mid-tier series of rotating IPAs with seasonal hops, and a limited-release barrel-aged stout line.

The brewery supports on-premises partners with menu language, tasting notes and staff training that clearly explain the value story behind each tier.

For consumers, this makes it easier to justify paying more for a special release; for bar owners and beer houses, it creates opportunities to trade guests up, especially when combined with loaded food offerings or tasting paddles.

Trend 5 | Health, Functionality and No/Low Redefining Portfolios

Across the global food and beverage landscape, 2026 is framed by heightened concern for health, both physical and emotional.

Consumer Trend analysis shows that people are taking a more proactive approach to wellbeing, for example with one in three consumers exercising to help manage stress, and many looking for products that benefit both their wallets and the planet.

Mintel's recent food and drink Trend work underscores growing attention to issues such as blood sugar, hormone health, and mental wellbeing, with food and drink increasingly seen as tools for mood and long-term health.

> In beverages, this drives a strong rise in functional and better-for-you options, including in traditionally indulgent categories.

Functional beverage Trend reports for 2026 describe a convergence between taste, health, and indulgence, where "healthy indulgence" becomes a dominant innovation frame.

The flavour and taste reports for 2026 similarly highlight that emotional wellness and sustainability are now core forces shaping food and beverage Trends.

For the wine, vermouth, and beer sector, this translates into several lines of innovation:

- No/Low alcohol -NoLo- beers, wines and wine-adjacent products that allow participation in social rituals without heavy alcohol intake.
- Lower-ABV formats such as spritzes, sessionable beers, or lighter vermouth serves that emphasise flavour, botanicals, and refreshment over strength.
- Functional crossovers, where botanicals traditionally used in vermouth or herbal liqueurs are framed in terms of digestive comfort, relaxation, or mood support -always within regulatory constraints-.
- Clean-label cues, such as emphasis on natural ingredients, low sugar, fewer additives and "trust in traditional ingredients."

For B2B actors -wineries, breweries, on-premises-, this means the beverage list must accommodate a broader set of need-states: celebratory, relaxed socialising, health-conscious midweek meetups, and daytime occasions. On-premises operators find that having at least one credible NoLo beer, a lighter vermouth spritz and perhaps a lower-alcohol wine option is becoming table stakes for urban socially active audiences.

> Subscription models and e-commerce platforms increasingly segment products not only by style or origin, but by functional positioning: "refresh and reset," "light and social," or "mindful sipping."

A Vermouth Brand Embracing Lighter, Botanical Serves

Imagine a vermouth producer that builds a campaign around "light botanicals for long evenings," emphasising naturally lower ABV serves -spritzes, long drinks with soda, lower-sugar tonic combinations- and the digestif heritage of vermouth.

Rather than making explicit health claims, the brand leans on cues of tradition, herbs, citrus peels, and bitter roots, presenting its drinks as lighter, food-friendly options for after-work or weekend gatherings.

This positions the brand squarely within the conscious-drinking movement while preserving its sincerity and regulatory compliance.

Trend 6 | Taste Exploration, Global Ingredients and Sensory Story-Building

Taste Trend analysis for 2026 points to an acceleration of creative, globally influenced and emotionally resonant flavour development. Kerry's "Sensational Seven" taste Trends for 2026 highlight bold creativity, emotional wellness, and sustainability as key drivers of how consumers experience taste.

At the same time, Innova's 2026 consumer research emphasises that conscious consumption remains top of mind, with people making choices that benefit both their wallets and the planet while also seeking comfort and stress relief through food and drink.

Within the wine, vermouth, and beer sector, this manifests as sensory experimentation anchored in sincerity.

- Brewers experiment with new hop varieties, unexpected fruit additions, and subtle sourness to create layered taste experiences that remain grounded in recognisable beer styles.
- Vermouth makers explore regional botanicals, citrus, tea infusions, or floral notes that allow for more diverse spritz and cocktail profiles.
- Wineries lean into lesser-known grape varieties, skin-contact techniques, and wild fermentation to offer deeper texture and aromatic complexity, particularly for younger, exploratory drinkers.

Across the board, there is growing appetite for cross-cultural references; yuzu, matcha, tropical fruits or spice blends appear in RTDs -ready to drink- and beer special editions, reflecting broader flavour Trends around Asian and global influences.

For the sector, the challenge is to balance novelty with navigability.

Bidfood's 2026 Trends work indicates that more than half of consumers see themselves as "foodies" who enjoy exploring new flavours, but they still need clear descriptions, guidance, and context to feel confident ordering.

This is particularly important in on-premises settings, where staff training and menu story-building become critical strategic levers.

From a B2B and B2B2C perspective, suppliers that can provide operators with flavour stories, pairing suggestions and marketing assets have a competitive advantage when pitching new SKUs.

Seasonal Beer and Vermouth Collaborations

A practical illustration is the growing practice of breweries and vermouth producers co-creating seasonal serves: e.g.: a limited-edition beer aged on wine lees, or a bar programme that pairs a local sour beer with a regional vermouth spritz flavoured with yuzu or other trending citrus.

These collaborations allow venues to offer something genuinely new while riding broader flavour trends, and they give both brands fresh story-building material around seasonality, locality, and sensory exploration.

Trend 7 | Data-Driven, Sustainable Production and Supply Chains

Behind the bar and bottle, the sector is undergoing a deeper transformation driven by sustainability and industrial analytics.

Consumer and industry trend reports for 2026 underline that climate concerns and resource scarcity are no longer abstract issues; they are directly affecting ingredient availability, pricing, and perceived brand responsibility.

At the same time, technology and agriculture are increasingly intertwined, with food and beverage seen as a prime arena for digital, data-enabled transformation.

Process-industry analytics platforms such as *TrendMiner* are cited in industrial and IoT reports as key tools for mining time-series production data in sectors including food and beverage, helping companies optimise processes, monitor quality, predict anomalies and support digital transformation.

For wineries, breweries, and vermouth producers, this implies a gradual shift toward more instrumented, data-rich operations, from fermentation monitoring and energy usage tracking to predictive maintenance on bottling lines.

On the sustainability side, analytics and IIoT -Industrial Internet of Things- solutions help producers measure water consumption, energy intensity, waste streams and packaging performance, all areas under rising scrutiny from regulators, trade partners, and consumers.

These sector-level shifts are particularly relevant to B2B and B2B2C models. Distributors, retailers, and on-premises groups increasingly ask for evidence of sustainability performance and supply resilience before committing to long-term listings.

Global trend analyses for 2025–2026 highlight "chain reaction" dynamics, where supply volatility forces brands to diversify ingredient sourcing, reinvent packaging and build more resilient supply chains.

For wine, vermouth, and beer, this might include experimenting with more climate-resilient grape varieties, hops and grains; using lighter-weight bottles or alternative packaging; and building more localised sourcing and distribution models to reduce exposure to shocks.

A Vineyard Leveraging Analytics for Sustainable Efficiency

Imagine a vineyard that integrates sensor data from soil moisture probes, weather stations, and fermentation tanks into an industrial analytics platform.

The system flags patterns that indicate potential quality deviations or energy inefficiencies, allowing the team to intervene early.

Over time, this vineyard reduces water usage, optimises harvest timing, lowers energy consumption in the cellar and documents improvements in a way that can be communicated to trade partners and consumers.

For buyers -e.g.: on-premises groups, importers-, this combination of quality consistency and sustainability credentials makes the producer a lower-risk, higher-value partner in an uncertain world.

Trends in Brands

Beverage brands -across wine, vermouth, and beer- are transforming rapidly. The old model of "liquid + logo" is no longer enough. In a world where consumers are value-conscious, experience-driven, digitally fluent, and socially expressive, brands must deliver meaning, transparency, emotion, story, and utility -often all at once-.

Across all approved sources, plus industry-specific Trend platforms, four patterns repeatedly emerge:

- Brands must behave like experience ecosystems, not product lines.
- Sincerity, transparency, and credible values are not optional, they are core brand assets.
- Innovation cycles must be faster, more collaborative and more flavour-forward.
- Sustainability must be embedded, measured, and communicated clearly - despite its hygienic condition, as mentioned before.

Trend 8 | Brands as Multi-Sensory Experience Ecosystems

Modern beverage brands increasingly operate like immersive experience ecosystems rather than stand-alone products.

With urban socially active consumers seeking escapism, value-for-money and emotional connection, brands need to design experiences that extend across channels; bar rituals, tasting journeys, playlist curation, bottle aesthetics, story-building, mixology partnerships, and digital interaction, among other alternatives.

Instead of relying solely on product attributes such as varietal, bitterness, sweetness or effervescence, brands win by cultivating emotional signatures, the feelings people associate with the drink:

- A wine producer may align its brand identity around sunset gatherings, slow-living narratives, or food-pairing rituals.
- A vermouth brand might create a recognisable "aperitivo energy" through colour palettes, event formats and spritz rituals.
- A brewery might anchor its identity in creativity, community, and seasonal experimentation.

Across all pre-approved sources, there is a clear shift toward brands providing multisensory immersion:

- Visual identity with human warmth and craft signals.
- Sound design -playlists tied to tasting experiences or branded environments-.
- Scent cues -botanical-led vermouth activations-.
- Texture and ritual -glassware, pour style, garnish design-.
- Space design -pop-up bars, tasting huts, festival activations-.

The ecosystems help brands stand out in saturated markets.

For B2B and B2B2C, such ecosystems offer venues ready-made experiences that drive footfall and guest engagement. For D2C, they increase loyalty by tying the brand to lifestyle meaning rather than occasional consumption.

Vermouth Brand with an Urban Aperitivo Hub

Imagine a vermouth brand that opens a seasonal city-centre aperitivo "studio," combining tasting flights with curated botanical scent stations, live DJ sets, local food pairings, and digital screens that tell the story of each botanical.

Rather than simply selling vermouth, the brand exports an experience, a lifestyle moment that on-premises partners can replicate.

Trend 9 | Radical Transparency and Sincere Story-building

Consumers increasingly value sincerity, provenance, and emotional truth. They reward brands that clearly disclose ingredients, production methods, supply-chain behaviours, and sustainability commitments. This aligns with broad 2026 trends around conscious consumption, social responsibility and "products that prove their value."

Across all beverages, especially those with agricultural or botanical origins, transparency builds trust:

- Wine drinkers want clarity on vineyard practices, farming conditions, and varietal sincerity.
- Beer drinkers want to know about hops, yeast strains, and origin.
- Vermouth drinkers are curious about botanicals, regional identity, and heritage recipes.

Transparency is not just about facts. It is also about tone; direct, warm, human, unpretentious. Consumers dislike brands that appear overly polished, corporate, or evasive. Instead, they prefer brands that acknowledge imperfection, show real production challenges -like climate impacts on harvests-, and speak plainly about what they stand for.

For B2B buyers -bars, restaurants, importers, distributors-, transparency is also practical. Clean supply-chain data, sustainability metrics, stable sourcing, and consistent quality are essential for listing decisions.

For Marketing Directors and Brand Managers, this means that story-building must be verifiable and evidence-backed.

A Transparent Natural Wine Collective

A natural wine collective that posts weekly updates from vineyards -rainfall levels, pest challenges, fermentation notes, bottling choices- becomes a trusted source of knowledge.

Bars use this transparency in their own story-building, while consumers appreciate the honesty behind vintage variation.

Trend 10 | Innovation through Collaboration, Co-Creation and Cross-Pollination

One of the strongest cross-industry insights for 2026 is that collaboration amplifies innovation. Trend platforms consistently highlight that co-branding, cross-category partnerships, and limited-edition drops increase novelty, desirability and social shareability.

For wine, vermouth and beer, collaboration offers major strategic benefits:

- Access to new flavour worlds -botanicals, fruits, fermentations, infusions-.
- Entry into new cultural spaces -music, fashion, gastronomy, events-.
- Stronger on-premises presence through co-created serves or menus.
- Increased relevance among younger, exploratory drinkers.
- Faster R&D cycles thanks to shared expertise -living in "Beta Mode"-.

We see rising examples of cross-pollination:

- Breweries collaborating with coffee roasters, chocolatiers, or bakers.
- Vermouth houses partnering with chefs or mixologists for seasonal aromatics.
- Winemakers experimenting with tea infusions -e.g.: Johnny Liu, China-, amphora fermentation -e.g.: Pablo Calatayud, Spain- or collaborations with craft soda makers -e.g.: Rabbit Ridge Winery, USA-.
- Cross-category limited editions -beer aged in wine barrels; vermouth aged in beer casks-.

These innovations allow brands to refresh their identities and create buzz without abandoning their core values -values which in some cases might be controversial-.

Collaboration is also powerful in B2B/B2B2C, where on-premises partners benefit from distinctive offerings that drive curiosity and upsell potential.

A Barrel Swap Programme

A local brewery and a regional winery engage in a barrel swap: the brewery ages a stout in ex-wine barrels, while the winery experiments with a small lot aged in beer-soaked oak.

Both release limited editions with shared story-building and joint tasting events, achieving novelty, cross-audience exposure, and trade excitement.

Trend 11 | Sustainability as a Differentiator and Brand Equity Driver

Sustainability is no longer a "nice-to-have" brand value, it's becoming a hygienic condition - Maslow's hierarchy of needs-; it is a core expectation and a crucial differentiator.

Global trends platforms emphasise that sustainability is intertwined with emotional wellbeing, trust, and value perception. Consumers increasingly want products that align with their ethics and help reduce environmental impact.

In wine, vermouth and beer, sustainability touches:

- Agriculture: regenerative farming, water management, soil health, climate-resilient grape and hop varieties.
- Production: energy efficiency, waste reduction, fermentation analytics.
- Packaging: lightweight bottles, recycled glass, aluminium formats, refillable systems, eco inks.
- Distribution: local sourcing, shorter supply chains, carbon reporting.

Sustainability can also create emotional connection: consumers feel that choosing a sustainable brand is an act of agency and alignment with their values.

For B2B professionals -especially large on-premises groups, wine buyers, and importers- sustainability metrics increasingly influence listings and long-term contracts.

> Brands that treat sustainability as a central narrative rather than a bureaucratic obligation gain both reputational strength and competitive resilience.

A Brewery's Hyper-Local Circular Model

A brewery sources local grain, uses rooftop solar energy, applies closed-loop water systems, and repurposes spent grain into baked goods sold in the taproom.

Each sustainability action is visible, local, and easy to understand, driving brand love and B2B interest.

Trends for People in the Sector

Professionals within wineries, vineyards, beer houses, and on-premises environments are experiencing profound changes in how they lead, operate, innovate, and respond to consumer expectations.

These shifts are driven by market volatility, climate pressure, increased digitalisation, rising sustainability demands, flavour innovation cycles, and the growing importance of value-centric, health-conscious, and socially active consumers.

Across roles, from Owners/CEOs to Brand Managers, the evolving behavioural environment requires new skills, new mindsets, and more adaptive operating models.

Trend 12 | Strategic Agility and Faster Innovation Pipelines

A Need for Velocity in Decision-Making

Leaders across wineries, breweries and vermouth producers face a market where taste trends accelerate faster, consumer preferences shift more fluidly, and economic pressures demand smarter resource use.

Owners and GMs increasingly feel the need for strategic agility; the ability to make decisions more rapidly, experiment with smaller batches, iterate offerings, and respond to flavour or format trends without long development cycles.

Marketing Directors and Brand Managers also face pressure to reduce the time between insight and activation. Short-form content cycles, social discovery environments, and the influence of "micro-trends" mean brands must adapt communications, packaging, and product emphasis quickly.

> This calls for cross-functional collaboration between production, marketing, and trade teams, replacing old-siloed models.

Internal Behavioural Impact

Professionals who traditionally operated on seasonal or annual cycles now rely on:

- Rapid digital consumer insight tools
- Limited-run editions to test flavour concepts
- More flexible production scheduling
- Faster design and packaging refreshes
- Real-time monitoring of on-premises performance

This behaviour shift is especially important in beer, where seasonal experimentation is already common, but is now spreading into wine -e.g.: *pet-nats*, orange wines- and vermouth -rotating botanical blends, modern aperitivo styles-.

An Agile Winery Innovation Cell

A winery builds an "innovation cell," a micro-team with a winemaker, marketer and operations manager who test small-batch fermentations, flavour profiles, or label designs.

They release ultra-limited micro-lots to local bars for immediate feedback, allowing the brand to sense market opportunities more dynamically.

Trend 13 | Data-Enabled Leadership and Operational Intelligence

New Behavioural Expectations

Owners, GMs, and leadership teams increasingly rely on digital and analytical tools to guide decision-making. This behaviour shift is driven by several pressures:

- Climate unpredictability affecting harvests
- Supply-chain vulnerabilities
- Rising expectations for transparency
- Cost optimisation imperatives
- Sustainability measurement requirements

Professionals are becoming more comfortable with time-series analytics, energy monitoring dashboards, IoT fermentation tracking or predictive quality control models. These behaviours represent a move from intuition-led to evidence-led leadership, though intuition, as a rational non-executive process, remains important.

Marketing Directors similarly use digital audience analytics, trade performance dashboards and social-listening insights to refine messaging, identify emerging preferences, and improve product-market fit.

What This Looks Like on the Ground

- Vineyard managers monitoring soil moisture and ripening indicators
- Brewers tracking fermentation anomalies in real time
- Marketers adjusting campaigns based on flavour Trend spikes
- CEOs modelling business risk using harvest forecasts or cost projections

The behaviour of leaders becomes more analytical, experimental, and technologically literate, essential in an industry historically driven by craft and feelings.

A Hop-Forward Brewery with Predictive Fermentation Logs

A brewery adopts predictive fermentation software that flags anomalies early, reducing waste and improving batch consistency.

The brewmaster and GM meet weekly to interpret the data, and their behaviour becomes more evidence-based, reducing risk and increasing efficiency.

Trend 14 | Value-Centric Consumer Orientation Among Professionals

The New Behavioural Norm

Because consumers are increasingly value-conscious, experience-driven, and functionally motivated, industry professionals must adjust how they position products, design menus, build brand stories and set pricing strategies.

Owners and GMs adapt their behaviour by:

- Designing menus that emphasise perceived generosity -e.g.: tasting flights, spritz boards, food-pairing sets
- Building promotions around discovery rather than discounts
- Training staff to communicate value through sensory story-building
- Creating layered pricing ladders that allow easy "trade-up" moments

> Marketing Directors embrace value-centric thinking by shifting messaging from "premium implies expensive" to "premium as meaningful, crafted, story-rich."

Behavioural Consequences

The sector increasingly treats consumers as partners in discovery, not passive buyers. Professionals develop skills in:

- Narrative crafting
- Emotional intelligence
- Context design
- Category education
- Occasion-based marketing

These behaviours make wine, vermouth, and beer brands more engaging, accessible, and experiential.

A Beer House Reframing Value

A beer house stops competing on price and instead creates "The Explorer Board": three beers selected weekly, each with a story card.

Sales go up not because prices drop, but because value is reframed around discovery, novelty, and knowledge.

Trend 15 | Sustainability Mindsets Reshaping Internal Culture

The Behavioural Shift

Across the sector, sustainability is now a leadership behaviour, not a marketing add-on. Owners, vineyard managers, brewmasters and brand teams increasingly see sustainability as a core operational principle — one that affects every decision from ingredient sourcing to packaging choices.

This behavioural shift is driven by:

- Consumer demand for ethical and ecological alignment
- Trade partners requiring sustainability metrics
- Cost pressures related to energy and materials
- Climate impact on agriculture

Sustainability is internalised as part of the company identity, not as an external obligation.

How Professionals Are Changing

- Vineyard managers experiment with regenerative practices
- Breweries move toward circular waste systems
- Brand managers educate consumers about climate impacts
- Operators adopt lighter glass, recycled materials, or local sourcing
- CEOs integrate sustainability KPIs into business performance reviews

Professionals increasingly show ethic engagement, a sense of responsibility toward the land, the community and the industry's future resilience.

Vermouth Producer with Botanical Stewardship

A vermouth producer builds relationships with local herb growers, ensuring biodiversity-friendly cultivation.

The founder publicly explains these choices, creating a ripple effect of sustainability leadership across trade partners.

Trends for People with Brands

People no longer interact with brands passively.

For both consumers and professionals, brands have become living participants in their social, cultural, and emotional lives.

Trend 16 | Shared Values and Lifestyle Alignment Driving Loyalty

Emotional Alignment Over Product Loyalty

Across global consumer trend outlooks, people increasingly choose brands that mirror their values, ethics, and lifestyle aspirations.

In 2026, alignment around sustainability, sincerity, wellbeing, community, creativity, and cultural identity influences purchasing more than traditional product attributes such as ABV, grape variety or hop type.

For urban socially active drinkers, beverage choices become symbolic:

- A natural wine signals interest in sustainability and craft.
- A botanical vermouth spritz communicates a preference for lightness and sociability.
- A small-batch beer shows interest in locality, experimentation, and community support.

> These choices are less about “favourite brand” and more about identity expression through occasion-based decisions.

Behaviour With Brands

People increasingly ask:

- Does this brand reflect who I am?
- Does this brand support what I care about?
- Does this brand behave responsibly?
- Does this brand feel like part of my lifestyle?

Marketing Directors and Brand Managers must therefore design brand behaviour that is culturally and ethically conscious, not merely product driven.

A Wine Brand Built Around Purpose

A winery frames its identity around soil regeneration, worker welfare, and biodiversity.

Consumers choose it not simply because of the taste, but because the brand represents values they want to be associated with socially.

Trend 17 | Demand for Sincere, Two-Way Dialogue

People Expect Brands to Listen

Across 2026 behavioural insights, consumers increasingly demand that brands engage in two-way communication: responsive, informal, human, and real.

This shift is visible in several ways:

- Customers expect quick responses on social platforms.
- They want brands to address concerns transparently.
- They appreciate behind-the-scenes glimpses from winemakers, brewers, or founders.
- They expect brands to evolve based on feedback.

For socially active urban consumers, a brand's responsiveness becomes part of its personality.

> If a brand does not reply or engage, it feels impersonal and disconnected from modern culture.

For B2B professionals, two-way dialogue takes the form of:

- Trade training sessions
- Menu development partnerships
- Co-branded events
- Quick information support for staff
- Joint promotions

Professionals choose to work with brands that treat them as collaborators rather than customers.

Brewery Staff Engaging Live with Customers

A craft brewery hosts weekly Instagram Q&A sessions where brewers answer questions about ingredients, flavour notes, sustainability choices, and seasonal batches. Consumers begin to treat the brand like a friend whose opinion they trust.

Trend 18 | Omnichannel Interaction and Seamless Presence

People Move Fluidly Across Digital and Physical Touchpoints

People no longer differentiate between on-premises, e-commerce, social media, or retail. Instead, they expect brands to exist seamlessly across all relevant channels, with consistent energy, quality, and personality.

Consumers may:

- Discover a drink on TikTok or a bar's Instagram
- Try it at a vermouth aperitivo event
- Buy it at a specialty store
- Replenish via a D2C subscription
- Engage with brand content about food pairing

This omnichannel existence is especially important in wine, vermouth, and beer because drinking occasions move fluidly between home, bars, restaurants, events, and online communities.

For B2B partners, omnichannel presence enhances credibility:

- Bars prefer brands with online cultural relevance
- Distributors prefer brands with strong D2C visibility
- Retailers prefer brands with active social engagement

Vermouth Brand with Digital + Physical Ecosystem

A vermouth brand:

- Launches a seasonal spritz line on social media
- Hosts pop-up aperitivo sessions
- Trains bartenders via online modules
- Offers a personalised D2C tasting kit
- Publishes a recipe series with local chefs

Consumers experience the brand everywhere in a consistent, inviting, differentiated way.

Trend 19 | Community Building and Collective Belonging

Brands as Social Anchors

In 2026, consumers seek belonging, recognition, and connection.

> Socially active urban adults want brands to facilitate moments of togetherness, not simply sell beverages.

This results in behaviours such as:

- Joining wine clubs or tasting nights
- Participating in brewery events, tap takeovers or collaborations
- Taking part in vermouth workshops or cocktail masterclasses
- Sharing experiences on social media
- Advocating for brands within their social circles

Brands that build communities become cultural touchpoints, not just product suppliers.

Professionals in the sector, especially Marketing Directors, increasingly design brand communities rather than campaigns, fostering:

- Loyalty programmes built around experiences
- Membership clubs
- Limited-edition drops that feel like insider access
- Local partnerships with artists, chefs, or cultural spaces

A Community-First Brewery

A brewery creates a “Members’ Tank,” allowing its community to vote on the next seasonal beer, visit the brewery on brew day, and receive exclusive early releases. People feel emotionally invested, turning casual drinkers into advocates.

Trend 20 | Enhanced Desire for Sensory Education and Discovery

People Want to Learn, Discover and “Level Up”

Consumers now view beverages as learning journeys. This aligns with the foodie Trend, where more than half of consumers identify as culinary explorers.

This means people want brands to teach them, not in a condescending way, but through enjoyment, story, and easy-to-digest sensory cues.

Discovery-driven people ask:

- “What makes this wine different?”
- “Which botanicals are in this vermouth?”
- “Which hop is giving this beer its aroma?”
- “How should I pair this with food?”

This leads to stronger engagement during tastings, events, social content, and in-store experiences.

For sector professionals, especially Brand Managers, this means developing sensory education assets:

- Aroma kits
- Easy tasting guides
- Story cards for bars
- Ingredient maps
- Short-form video explainers
- Food pairing frameworks

Wine Brand with Tactile Learning Tools

A wine brand includes tactile tasting cards in subscription boxes, illustrating acidity, tannin, body, and aromas through engaging visuals. This makes learning intuitive and strengthens emotional connection.

Trends for the Sector and Its Brands

The wine, vermouth and beer sector is not evolving in isolation. Broader food-and-drink trends, digital transformation, sustainability imperatives, supply-chain constraints and shifting consumer behaviours all converge, requiring brands to rethink how they operate, innovate, and communicate.

> Brands that thrive will be those that integrate sector-wide forces into coherent, future-ready strategies.

Trend 21 | The Fusion of Digital, Physical and Social Commerce

A Sector-Wide Integration Wave

Beverage brands in 2026 must navigate a world where the lines between e-commerce, D2C subscriptions, on-premises experiences, trade distribution, and social discovery have blurred. Sector-wide analyses show that consumers increasingly expect products to be available wherever they are:

- At home
- At a bar
- At festivals
- In curated subscription packs
- In digital marketplaces
- In social commerce streams

Brands must therefore build flexible strategies that seamlessly integrate:

- On-premises activation -key for credibility-
- Retail visibility -key for discovery-
- D2C convenience -key for loyalty-
- Social media presence -key for culture relevance-

For the wine, vermouth, and beer sector, this means updating traditional distribution models and gradually shifting toward hybrid ecosystems.

Strategic Implications for Brands

- Trade partners prefer brands with strong online cultural signals.
- Bars and restaurants pick brands with digital content that supports menu design.
- D2C becomes a data engine for flavour Trend sensing.
- Limited drops serve both retail and social hype cycles.

A Beer Brand's Unified Launch Strategy

A craft beer brand releases a seasonal IPA simultaneously across:

- Its taproom
- Bar partners
- A web shop
- A subscription box
- TikTok/Instagram with creator partnerships

The launch feels omnipresent, amplifying relevance and perceived momentum.

Trend 22 | Sustainability as a Commercial Imperative, not a CSR Add-On

Sector-Wide Pressure

Sustainability is now embedded across agricultural, production and packaging practices.

Sector surveys repeatedly show sustainability is one of consumers' top priorities when choosing between brands, with rising expectations around climate action, transparency, and responsible sourcing.

In wine, vermouth and beer, sustainability directly affects:

- Grape and hop availability
- Water consumption
- Energy intensity
- Packaging weight and recyclability
- Distribution routing
- Botanical sourcing for vermouth
- Local community relationships

Brands can no longer treat sustainability as a narrative layer; it must be integrated into the supply chain and commercial strategy.

Strategic Implications for Brands

- Lighter bottles directly reduce emissions and costs.
- Regenerative agriculture strengthens long-term supply security.
- Local sourcing appeals to both B2B and B2C consumers.
- Sustainability certifications influence listing decisions in retail and on-premises.
- Transparent sustainability reporting enhances trust and brand value.

Sustainable Vermouth Ecosystems

A vermouth brand shifts botanical sourcing to regional farmers, improving:

- Traceability
- CO_2 reduction
- Community partnerships
- Brand story-building

The strategy yields competitive advantage with bars and environmentally conscious consumers.

Trend 23 | Accelerating Innovation Through Cross-Category Inspiration

Sector-Wide Creative Explosion

Innovation cycles have shortened dramatically. Insight platforms show rapid adoption of global flavours, functional ingredients, sustainable packaging, and sensory story-building. The sector takes cues from:

- Soft drinks
- Functional beverages
- Craft cocktails
- Culinary arts
- Fermented foods

This creates a boundary-blurring creative landscape, especially relevant to vermouth and beer - highly suited to botanicals, hops, yeast experimentation, infusions, and barrel ageing-.

The innovation imperative is driven by:

- Consumer desire for discovery
- Competitive saturation
- The search for differentiation
- Margin-building premium SKUs
- The growth of no/low alcohol segments

Strategic Implications for Brands

- Seasonal and small-batch releases maintain relevance.
- Cross-category collabs stretch brand identity without dilution.
- Bars and restaurants prefer dynamic, ever-refreshing brand portfolios.
- Innovation story-building becomes essential for trade engagement.

Wine x Tea Fermentation

A winery explores tea-based co-ferments, tapping into global tea culture and fermentation trends.

Bars treat the product as a sommelier talking point; consumers perceive it as adventurous and premium.

Trend 24 | Supply-Chain Resilience and Localisation as Strategic Anchors

Industry-Wide Vulnerabilities

Global beverage supply chains have faced unprecedented challenges:

- Climate volatility
- Transportation costs
- Raw material scarcity
- Geopolitical instability
- Rising packaging material prices

As a result, brands are shifting toward localisation and resilience-building strategies.

Strategic Implications for Brands

- Local sourcing reduces risk and enhances sustainability credibility.
- Smaller production batches reduce inventory exposure.
- On-premises partnerships anchor brand presence even in disrupted markets.
- Direct relationships with growers ensure ingredient consistency.

> This Trend strengthens regional identity, a powerful consumer driver in wine, vermouth, and beer.

Regional Identity as a Risk Mitigation Tool

A regional winery focuses exclusively on indigenous grapes adapted to local climate. This reduces climate vulnerability and becomes a notable brand asset valued by trade partners.

Trend 25 | Data-Driven Operations and Brand Intelligence

Analytics Reshaping Everything

Industrial analytics, AI-based insight platforms, and digital transformation tools are now part of the sector's operational backbone. Producers integrate real-time data to monitor:

- Fermentation
- Energy use
- Flavour consistency
- Maintenance cycles
- Stock and distribution

Brand teams use digital insights to monitor:

- Flavour Trends
- Social signals
- Cultural micro-movements
- Competitive messaging
- Online sentiment and conversations

Data becomes both a production tool and a brand strategy engine.

Strategic Implications for Brands

- More consistent quality builds trade trust
- Data-supported claims strengthen consumer belief
- Trend detection accelerates innovation cycles
- Digital intelligence improves marketing ROI

Brewer with Real-Time Fermentation Dashboards

A brewery uses IoT-enabled fermentation tanks and digital dashboards, allowing it to adjust conditions mid-cycle, improve flavour consistency and document sustainability improvements, strengthening brand credibility.

Trend 26 | Experience-Driven Branding as a Sector Norm

The Post-Product Era

Sector-wide, brands must deliver experiences beyond the beverage. This applies to:

- Wineries -tastings, vineyard events, educational sessions-
- Breweries -taprooms, collaborations, festivals-
- Vermouth producers -aperitivo activations, workshops, spritz experiences-

Experiences increase value perception, social shareability and loyalty.
Bars and restaurants increasingly prefer brands that help them build moments, not just fill shelves.

Strategic Implications for Brands

- Experience design becomes a core competency.
- On-premises become a story-building laboratory.
- D2C expands into experiential kits and guided tastings.
- Event partnerships deliver cultural relevance.

Multi-Sensory Aperitivo Takeover

A vermouth brand hosts seasonal “Botanical Nights,” blending DJ sets, scent installations, signature serves and food-pairing boards across partner venues, creating a memorable, shareable brand world.

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About Allegro 234

We catalyse conscious business growth through people, brands, and experiences.

We make your company worth admiring, creating value, improving results, and generating a positive social and environmental impact.

We create, drive, and transform your brand so that it is ahead socially and digitally.

We develop strategies that provide creative solutions, designs that can be integrated into your business and interim hands-on implementations.

Our solutions are focused on delivering:

- Living Brands: The brand as a strategic platform synthesizes its institutional purpose, business legacy, and aspirations.
- Innovative Culture: The path for meaningful and transforming experiences is based on business consciousness and co-creativeness.
- Impactful Marketing: To catalyse growth, information and technology must be subsidiary to an engaging experience that is fresh, positive, meaningful, and valuable.
- Connected Experiences: In our digitalised world, our purpose-driven and experience-based approach gives context and a human touch and drives growth.

Since its foundation in 2003, we have been working with companies such as AEBrand, Casa del Libro, Cosentino, Global Alliance for Banking on Values, Green Building Council, Grupo Lar, Impact Hub, Komoneed, Macri Group, Medinge Group, Post-Industrial Institute, Repsol, Trasbordo, Uralita, Uriach and zenziya among others.

> Specifically, Allegro 234 Partners have worked on and led projects in the sector with companies such as Alpina, Bodega Esmeralda, Bodega Tittarelli, Bodegas Marcó del Pont, Bodegas Montecillo -Osborne-, Bodegas Torres, Bodegas Villa Mayor, Brahma, Cervecería Cuauhtémoc Moctezuma, Cervecería y Maltería Quilmes, Cerveza Panamá -Heineken-, Codorníu, Osborne Group, Heineken, and Stella Artois.

Also, Allegro 234 is part of The Flow Collective, a diverse group of highly experienced, blue-chip brand and strategy thinkers and doers, passionate believers in brands with purpose and conscience. Coming from three continents, its members have worked all over the world addressing some of the biggest strategy and branding challenges, in fields as diverse as FinTech, Telecom, Automotive, Healthcare and the Performing Arts.