

Abstract

Interest in natural or organic wines has slowly increased over the years mainly due to their sincerity and the green factor. Exploring a rather new area, my thesis called ‘State of the Organic and Natural Wine in Romania and Growth Potential in the Next 5 Years’ investigates the chosen topic concentrated on Romania’s potential threats and opportunities in the sphere of natural wine. Therefore, the reason for selecting this topic is rooted within a personal concern for sustainable viticulture and immense opportunities for growth in Romania’s wine market.

The discoveries start with the definitions and classifications of natural wine that includes organic wine, biologic wine, and ecologic wine. Organic wines do not allow for the usage of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers and have laws regulating the health of the vineyard and the balance of ecosystem. Biologic wines meaning is associated with a more extensive set of agro-technological measures like crop rotation or using compost as a main ingredient, which often biologic wines are forwarded according to the lunar calendar. Sustainable wines and ecological wines stress the ‘E’ of environment with such pillars included as water and energy. These categories all together encapsulate a school of thought as far as wine making is concern in that at ‘Domaine’ respect and fostering of the lifecycle of the vine is the cornerstone in bottling wines that are symbiotic to their surrounding and favorable to earth.

Sustainable vineyard management is another key concept which is aimed at vineyards and ecosystems’ health in the long-term prospect. Measures are such things as water and soil conservation, renewable energies, and the protection of biodiversity. Sustainable viticulture successive management models improve the convergence of wine and nature through concepts like no-till farming and cover cropping. These ways help create less vulnerable vine stocks and more fertile ground work that results in wines that are more genuine forms of the natural relations that exist on the earth.

The biodynamic production, which is a further extension of the biologic methods which observes the use of organic practices in harmony with mystical principles of using horn manure and set timings of agriculture activity from cosmic influences, enhances the quality of the soil and nurtures plant growth. All these measures put together collectively build an elaborate sphere within the means of maintaining the health of the soils, alleviating the demand on the ecosystem, and boosting the distribution of life forms in the vineyard.

When elaborating the notion of natural wines, some specific types being orange wine, Pet-Nat, and craft wines were discussed. Thus, orange wine obtained by the practice of leaving white grape skins in contact with the juice, has a deep and intense and amber colored wine with a spectacular taste. Pet-Nat

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or naturally sparkling wine with refermentation in the bottle is a unique product that can be characterized by its taste profile, produced in connection with wild yeast, and minimal access to the vessel. Craft wines are mostly produced using organic farming techniques and natural fermentation process while wines are hand-selected; very little technology is involved.

The accession of Romania to the EU dramatically changed the country's wine producing sector from quantity to quality-oriented winemaking spearheaded by young, educated wine producers. These people were able to come back to Romania with the skills and with environmentalism, which is a big issue with global warming, after going to these elite schools.

An analysis of the general environment of four main Romanian wineries like Bogdan Domain, Vifrana Winery, Lechburg Winery, and others show a strong desire to embrace organic, biodynamic, and regenerative practices. For instance, Bogdan Domain who is a biodynamic pioneer uses interventions that stimulate microbial movement and feed plants; all this follows lunar calendar. Vifrana Winery is organic and relies on the force of gravity in wine making while Lechburg Winery blends traditional methods with minimal interference technologies to make organic wine.

The market study incorporates information received from producers and consumers and sets trends for the market and possibilities for development. The recommendations for marketing are consumer education, partnerships with local vine and organic farmers, influencer marketing and social media platforms, solutions for improving accessibility in e-commerce and specialized stores, and promoting sustainability.

The thesis suggests that the natural and organic wine sales in Romania are small but steadily growing market. This potential is linked with such factors as shifts in the client base, new understanding of the importance of environmental concerns and, to some extent, the ongoing processes of the incrementally greening of the country and its industries. The study also reveals the need for constant communication with the final buyer to improve their perception of natural wine category suggesting, it is essential to pass the wine knowledge to consumers for the category's growth.

All in all, the opportunities of natural and organic wines in Romania remain rather favorable. There is much to be done before Romania can assert itself as a player in the global wine market; however, there are specific avenues that can be explored by sustaining the efforts in ensuring consumer awareness and better environmental management practices innovative techniques for sustainable viticulture have to be adopted over some time, which helps Romania to produce and market its wines that could complement its rich terroir and the thoughtful producers.