

Day 1 Highlights From the IBWSS in San Francisco

The International Bulk Wine & Spirits Show (IBWSS) kicked off in San Francisco on July 26 with a packed exhibition hall and a keynote address from Bobby Koch, President and CEO of the Wine Institute. That led to a full day of presentations, workshops and master classes from some of the top names in the bulk wine and spirits industry.



The question on everyone's mind at the event, of course, was: "How can my business make the most out of being involved with the bulk wine and spirits industry?" For some participants, it meant mingling on the showroom floor with the 80 international and domestic exhibitors, who were ready and willing to share their advice on how to take advantage of opportunities in the bulk wine and spirits industry offering trade prospects and private label services.

These exhibitors included some from nearby California wine-growing regions as well as some foreign exhibitors from as far away as Chile and Australia.

Visitors shifted their focus between the Tasting Floor and the series of presentations and workshops at the South San Francisco Conference Center designed to give participants a deep-dive into the world of bulk wine and spirits. Deborah Parker Wong, a wine industry journalist and judge, set the tone for the day with a presentation on "How to deliver successful bulk wine programs." As she noted, the global bulk market is becoming more fluid, and that's changing the go-to-market strategies for many wineries.



That was followed up with presentations designed to cover specialized issues related to the bulk wine industry – everything from marketing to legal issues to pricing. The final presentation of the day came from Nat DiBudo, President of Allied Grape Growers, who went into detail on how current grape supply and demand impacts the industry, using the example of Pinot Grigio. As he suggested, many wineries get involved in the bulk wine industry because the

shifting conditions of supply and demand make it imperative to explore new market approaches.

Day 1 of the IBWSS also included three workshops designed to help wineries and winemakers already involved in the bulk wine industry to develop their expertise even further. For example, winemaker Clark Smith led a master class on postmodern winemaking, in which he described why values like openness, mutual respect and authentic dialogue are so important for today's winemakers to reach

consumers. Steve Burch of Radoux USA followed up with a workshop on how spirits brand owners and distilleries can take advantage of opportunities within the bulk spirits industry, including learning how to make their own aperitif for the consumer market. And, for winemakers trying to negotiate the intricacies of shipping their bulk wines across national borders, Gordon Burns of ETS Laboratories led a workshop on how to use certificates of analysis (COAs) in international trade. As Burns pointed out, wine is an inherently safe product, so many of the COAs now required as part of international trade deals might not really be needed. The goal should be cutting down on the number of certificates required, not demanding more of them. However, when COAs are required, it's paramount to ensure quality results, usually by having the certificates of analysis done by an accredited laboratory.

As the final workshop came to a close, participants milled back out on the exhibition floor of the South San Francisco Conference Center, eager to put their new knowledge to work. Join us on Day 2 of the IBWSS as we hear from another full slate of speakers and workshop participants on topics related to the world of bulk wine and spirits.

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