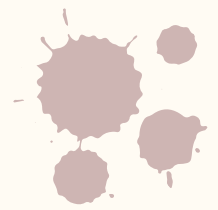




2026 WINE & GATHERING STUDY

The opportunity for wine is creating more reasons to come together.

New research from Come Over October, conducted in partnership with LocalWineEvents.com, asked wine consumers directly what draws them together — and what still gets in the way.



We asked wine consumers directly: what's getting in the way of getting together?

Come Over October partnered with LocalWineEvents.com, the nation's premier wine event hosting site, tapping its network of 250k+ wine consumers nationwide to hear directly about how they gather, what gets in the way, the economics of those occasions, and where wine fits in.



The goal: understand how wine consumers spend time together, what gets in the way, the economics behind those occasions, and where wine fits in.



1,553

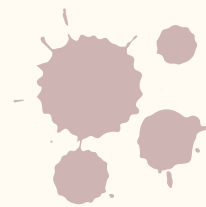
wine consumers surveyed nationwide

2

survey versions (A/B testing), combined for analysis
(n=894 + n=659)

Respondents span a range of ages, incomes, and household types — all of them wine consumers.

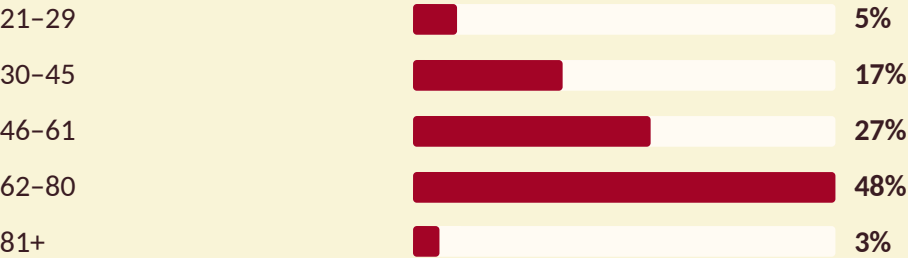
Survey questions were designed in consultation with Christian Miller, Director of Research for the Wine Market Council, a non-profit 501(c)(6) research organization.



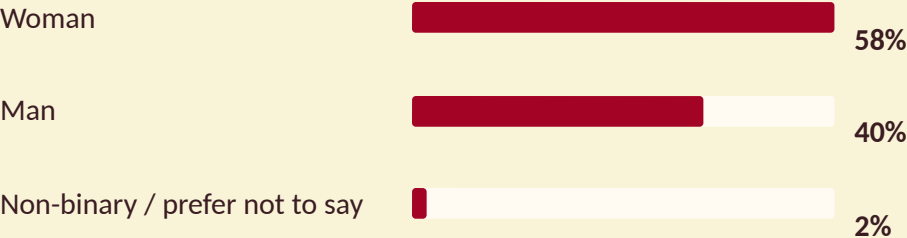
Who we heard from

A skew toward older, established wine consumers with a wide variety of household incomes.

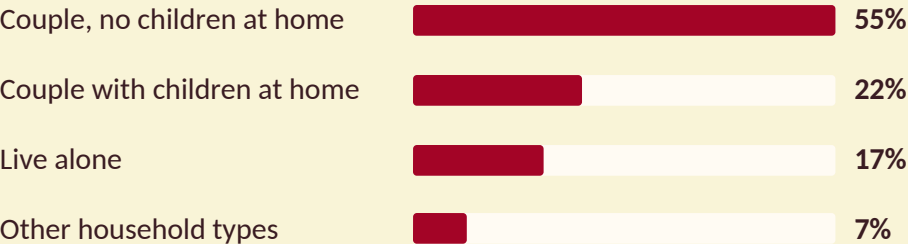
AGE



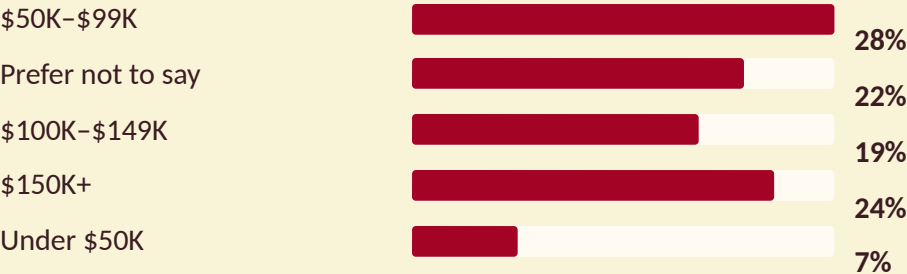
GENDER



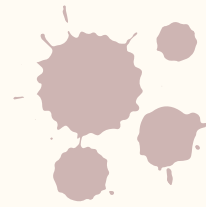
HOUSEHOLD



HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Age: n=1,553. Gender, household, and income: n=1,351 (base shrinks slightly due to skipped demographic questions). Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding. This is a wine-consumer sample and skews older than the general U.S. population — see Methodology.



What people gain from getting together isn't small talk. It's laughter, reconnection, and ease.

59%

say they laugh more than they
do on their own



56%

reconnect with people they
haven't seen in a while



53%

feel better about life in general

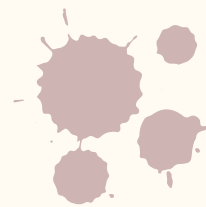


40%

feel less stressed or more at
ease



Among 1,455 wine consumers who answered this question; respondents could select up to three benefits. "What's the best thing that happens when you get together with people you care about?"



The biggest barrier isn't desire. It's finding the time.

The desire to gather (and enjoy wine) is clearly there. It's practical barriers that get in the way.

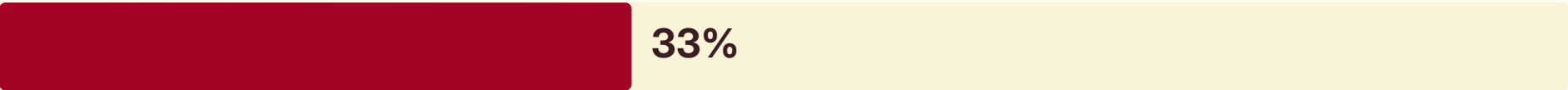
Busy schedules — hard to find a time that works



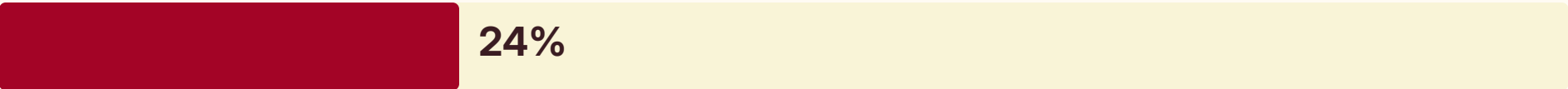
Living far from the people I want to see



The cost of going out



The effort involved in hosting at home



Among 1,455 wine consumers who answered; respondents could select up to three barriers. "What are the biggest things that keep you from getting together as often as you'd like?"

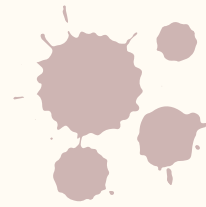
SOMETIMES PEOPLE JUST NEED A REASON

41%

say a specific occasion or reason to gather — like Come Over October — would make them more likely to host a gathering with wine.

Among 1,455 wine consumers; respondents could select up to three answers. "Which of the following would make you more likely to host a gathering with wine?"





Give people a reason, and make hosting simple.

What would make wine consumers more likely to host a gathering with wine:

44%

Easy recipe and food-pairing ideas

41%

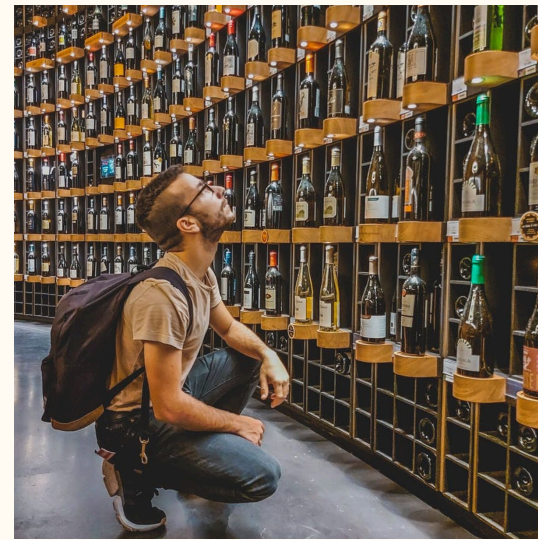
A specific occasion or reason to gather

32%

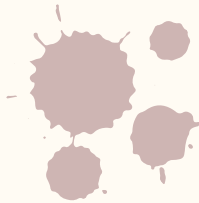
Wine recommendations for different budgets or occasions

19%

Tips and ideas for potluck gatherings

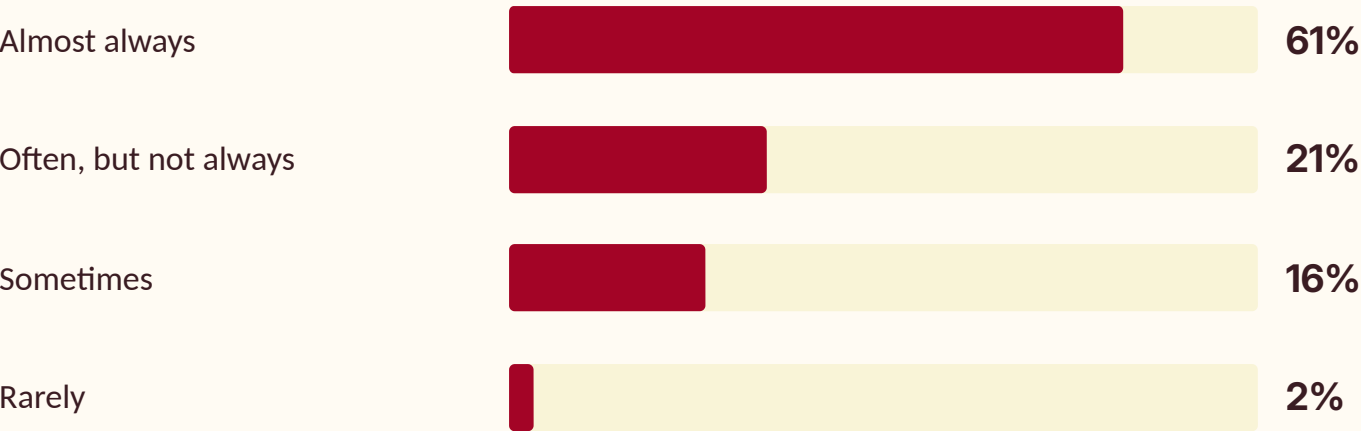


Among 1,455 wine consumers; respondents could select up to three answers. "Which of the following would make you more likely to host a gathering with wine?"



Among these wine consumers, wine is already woven into how they connect.

How often wine is part of social get-togethers, among wine-consumer respondents:

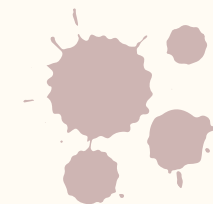


Among 1,396 wine consumers who answered. "How often is wine part of your social get-togethers?" A note on this sample: non-drinkers and non-wine-drinkers were excluded from the study. This reflects how central wine already is among wine consumers — not a claim about the general population.

82%

say wine is almost always or often part of their social get-togethers.





Economic pressure is reshaping where people gather — not whether they want to.

29% are getting together with friends and family at home more instead

26% are going out to restaurants or bars less often

32% are taking shorter or more local trips instead of longer ones

TYPICAL SPEND PER PERSON

\$31–\$50

away from home (44% of respondents)

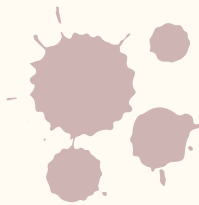
\$15–\$30

hosting at home (38% of respondents)

Hosting at home typically costs meaningfully less per person than going out.

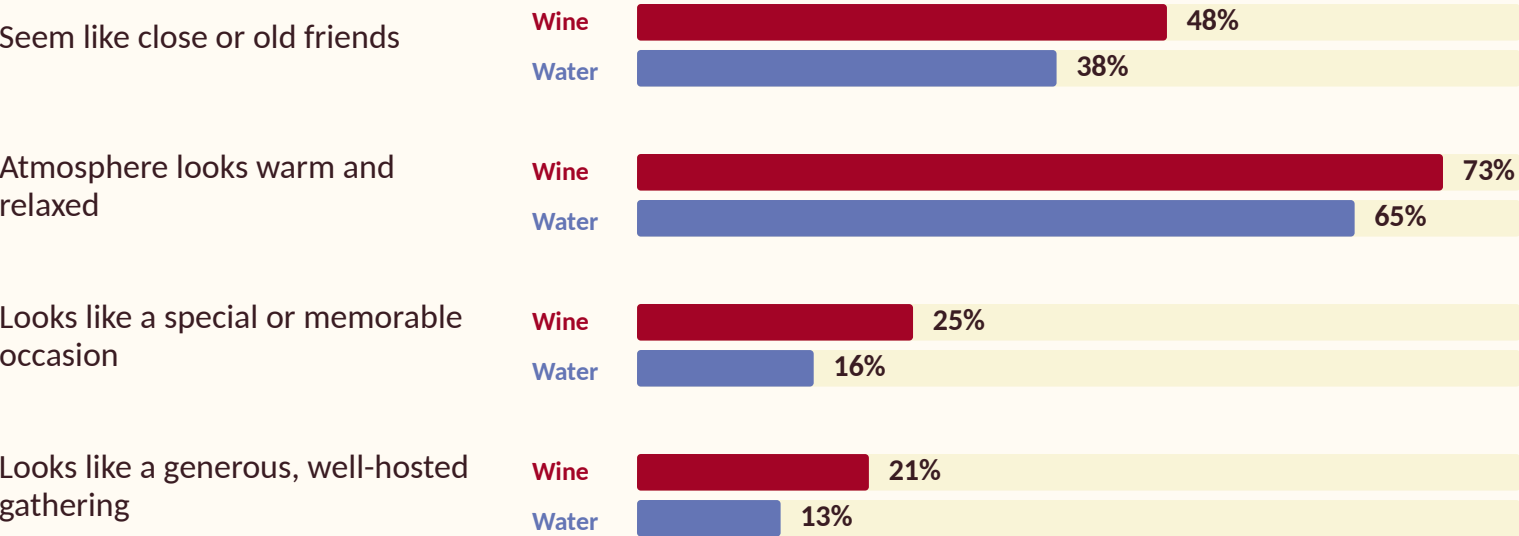
Even so, going out hasn't disappeared: 57% still visit a bar or restaurant at least monthly, and 23% visit a winery or tasting room at least monthly. Economic pressure appears to be changing how and where this wine-engaged audience socializes — not eliminating its appetite for shared experiences. The opportunity for wine exists both at home and away from it.

Based on combined respondent data, n=1,455–1,520 depending on question; bases vary due to skipped responses.



The presence of wine was tied to a warmer read of the very same scene.

Respondents saw one of two versions of the exact same dinner-gathering photo — one showing wine, one showing water — then described the group.



Respondents were randomly assigned to the wine or water version via a rotator link, so these differences can be attributed to the image itself. The effect is real and consistent, though modest in size and not a wholesale transformation of perception.

Wine image n=804, Water image n=592. “Based on this photo, which of the following would you say applies to this group?” All differences shown are statistically significant ($p<0.01$).

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

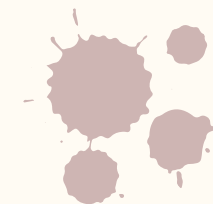
Asked for the first word or phrase that comes to mind about sharing wine with friends — open-ended, no answer choices given:

A word cloud of responses to the question 'What's the first word or phrase that comes to mind about sharing wine with friends?'. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with 'connection' being the largest and most central word. Other prominent words include 'fun', 'friendship', 'good times', 'conversation', 'joy', 'celebrate', 'warmth', 'relax', and 'togetherness'. The words are in various shades of blue and green, with some in white. The background is a dark blue gradient with a faint circular pattern of dots.

fun togetherness **relax**
friendship warmth
connection
good times celebrate **joy**
conversation

Friendship, connection, togetherness, warmth, and conversation appear alongside fun and relaxation as dominant, spontaneous themes — together touching roughly a third of all responses.

Among 1,396 open-ended responses. "What's the first word or phrase that comes to mind when you think about sharing wine with friends?"



The concept resonated before respondents even finished the survey.

91%

expressed some interest in or openness to Come Over October

familiar, aware, or said it sounds appealing

55%

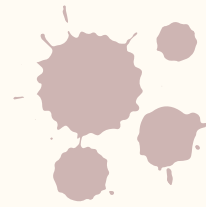
opted in to receive more information about hosting a gathering

an opt-in action, not a yes/no approval rating

74%

said they're very or somewhat likely to host or attend a wine gathering this October

Combined base n=1,390–1,553 depending on question. Q16 "Have you heard of Come Over October?"; Q17 email opt-in; Q15 likelihood to host/attend this October.



Give people a reason. Make it easy. Meet them where they want to connect.

1

Give people a reason

A specific occasion — like Come Over October — is one of the clearest, most actionable levers the research identifies.

2

Make it easy

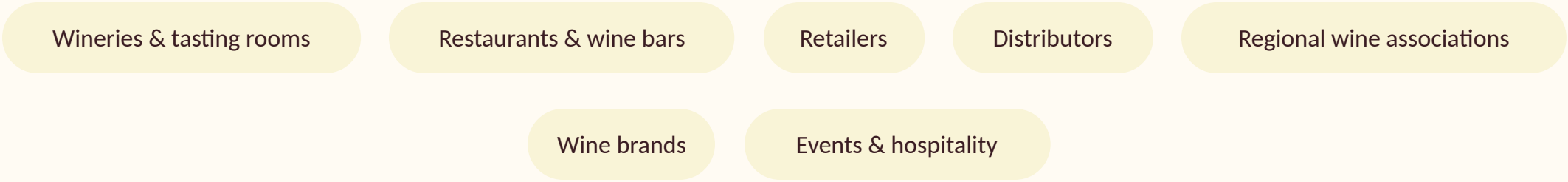
Recipes, pairings, and budget-friendly recommendations lower the effort barrier to hosting.

3

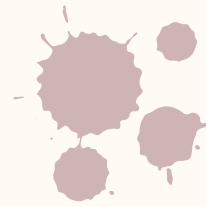
Meet them where they connect

Come Over October supports both at-home gatherings and out-of-home occasions — the opportunity spans both.

The opportunity spans the entire wine ecosystem:



Not identical activations for every player — a shared opportunity, applied differently across the ecosystem.



Come Over October gives the industry a shared occasion to build around.

One national movement, activated locally across events, hospitality, and everyday consumer touchpoints.

Events & tastings

Winery, retail, and community tastings built around the occasion.



Hospitality programming

Restaurant and wine-bar menus, specials, and reservations tied to October.



At-home inspiration

Recipes, pairing guides, and hosting tips that lower the effort of gathering.

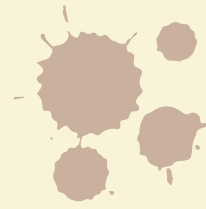


Consumer communications & promotions

Shared messaging and offers that give people a reason to say yes.

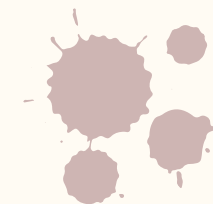


The research makes the case for participation — a wine-engaged audience that wants more reasons to gather, and a category positioned to help create them.



How this study was conducted

- 1,553 total respondents across two survey samples: Survey A (n=894) and Survey B (n=659).
- Conducted by Come Over October in partnership with LocalWineEvents.com.
- A wine-consumer sample: non-drinkers and respondents who indicated they do not drink wine were excluded.
- Survey questions were designed in consultation with Christian Miller, Director of Research for the Wine Market Council, a nonprofit (501(c)(6)) research organization.
- The sample skews older and highly wine-engaged, and should not be read as representative of the general U.S. population.
- The two questionnaires were identical except for one image shown in two questions, designed to test whether the presence of wine affected perceptions of a social gathering: Survey A respondents saw guests drinking wine; Survey B respondents saw the identical scene with guests drinking water.
- Assignment to Survey A or Survey B was fully randomized via a rotator link, so differences between the two groups can be attributed to the image shown (wine n=804, water n=592).
- For all other questions, responses from both surveys were combined and percentages recalculated from the combined counts. Individual question bases vary slightly (n=1,351–1,553) due to skipped responses.
- All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number for readability; underlying unrounded figures were used for all calculations.



What and Who is Come Over October?

Come Over October™ is a national campaign inviting people to gather with the people they care about — and share a bottle of wine — throughout the month of October. Founded by a small group of wine industry veterans, it gives the wine industry a shared, recurring occasion to build around: one platform, activated locally by wineries, retailers, restaurants, and wine lovers everywhere.



Karen MacNeil

Co-Founder, *Come Over October*
Best-Selling Author,
The Wine Bible



Kimberly Noelle Charles, DipWSET

Co-Founder, *Come Over October*
President & Founder,
Charles Communications Associates



Gino Colangelo

Co-Founder, *Come Over October*
President & Co-Founder,
Colangelo & Partners



Barbara Fitzgerald

Executive Director,
Come Over October



Come Over October's survey partner, **LocalWineEvents.com** connects wine lovers with tastings and events nationwide, reaching wine consumers through **THE JUICE**, its newsletter network of 250,000+ subscribers, and a new app of the same name.

[Visit LocalWineEvents.com →](https://LocalWineEvents.com)

THE TAKEAWAY

People still want connection. Consumers already believe wine belongs at the table. Come Over October gives the industry a reason to help create more of those moments.



www.comeoveroctober.com



[@comeoveroctober](https://www.instagram.com/comeoveroctober)



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Learn how to bring Come Over October to your business this October.

