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Wine Industry Comes Together In October To Celebrate Community

Forget Sober October. An international marketing campaign encourages people to share a glass of wine in the month of October in celebration of community, friendship, and connection.

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Come Over October is a campaign designed to bring wine lovers together in celebration of the communal aspect of wine. GETTY

United States wine consumption is on a stark decline. According to the Wine Institute, 2023's 2.68 gallons of total wine per resident rates just above 2010 levels. Many factors contribute to these falling numbers, but within the wine industry concern over the rise of the Neo-Prohibition movement is most striking.

In January 2023, Karen MacNeil, one of the United States foremost wine experts and author of the book, *The Wine Bible*, took to Instagram to express her distress over Dry January, and subsequently Sober October, belying the binary choice that those consuming wine are either sober or drunk. "We all know most people who drink wine are not sober but they are not drunk either. Most of us are somewhere in the moderate, middle ground," says MacNeil.

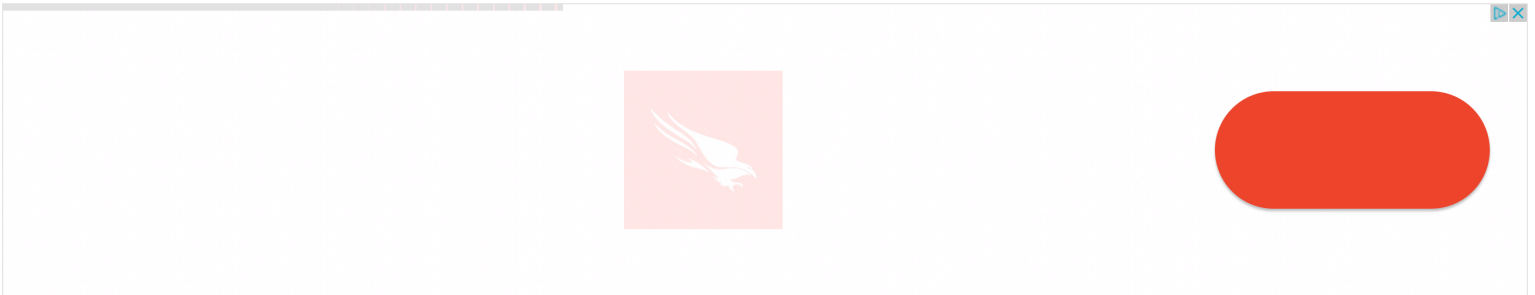
Believing wine's narrative has been lost amid the larger alcohol abstinence messaging, MacNeil joined forces with two wine industry communicators, Gino Colangelo, president of Colangelo and Partners, and Kimberly Charles, founder and president of Charles Communications Associates, to launch an international campaign called, [Come Over October](#), encouraging wine lovers to gather together and share a glass of wine in October.

"For its eleven-thousand-year history, wine has been a communal beverage that brings people together. It's a beverage of friendship – creating new friendships and deepening old," she says. "This story is not being told."

Feeling Dry January was taking on a “self-righteous” tone, the group sought to create a month of gathering where all feel included, “whether one is imbibing in alcohol or not,” says Charles. This year’s campaign includes Tomorrow Cellars, a non-alcoholic wine company. Furthermore, the trio looks to expand non-alcoholic recommendations in future campaigns. “Our responsibility and moderation message anchors each page on our website. We brought Lyft onboard early to be a partner and their support is incredible,” she says. “They are offering discount codes to new and established riders.”

Since its initial launch, Come Over October has raised over \$100,000. Support is coming from national wine retailers, individual wineries, wine regions around the world, importers and distributors. “We have had extraordinary support. We are excited so many people have said ‘yes’”, says MacNeil.

Willamette Valley Winery Association is offering an intimate dinner with the owners of Abbey Farm, space limited. The Texas Department of Agriculture’s Uncork Texas Wine Program created the Come Over, Ya’ll initiative in promotion of Come Over October and Texas Wine Month. Texas Wine & Grape Growers Association, Texas Hill Country Wineries, Texas Wine Growers and Texas Fine Wine are encouraging member wineries to participate.



“Texas Fine Wine was quick to jump on the Come Over October campaign because it’s very premise is what we are all about: Getting together over a fabulous bottle of Texas wine to create connections, experiences and memories,” says Denise Clarke, Director of Texas Fine Wine. “Wine is part of the fabric of our lives and the connection to so many people we have met over the years. As we celebrate our 10th anniversary, we are honored to have played a role in establishing Texas as a respected wine region and we could not be more proud to say ‘Come On Over Y’all’ and enjoy the diversification, sophistication and caliber of wines in this grand state.”

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Karen MacNeil, author of The Wine Bible

The Come Over October campaign resonates in mission and messaging with wine

associations and regions around the world. Current global supporters include Wines of Chile, Wines of Australia, the Champagne Bureau, New Zealand Wine and Wines of South Africa. Champagne Bureau is partial to celebrating with bubbles and burgers. They invite all celebrating Come Over October with Champagne to tag them on Instagram. Wines of Chile is integrating the campaign with their organic wine initiative in partnership with Wine.com. Additionally, those attending the Chile Wine Fest in New York City on October 21, 2024, will receive information on how to engage with the larger Come Over October movement.

“As a Latin American region, far from the traditional European or Californian wine hubs, we face challenges in gaining the same traction, but we are steadily fighting, one step and one glass at a time,” says Julio Alonso, executive director of Wines of Chile North America.



Come Over October celebrates the togetherness, the history, and the stories of wine that go beyond what's in the glass. GETTY

Wine advocacy groups such as Women In WineSense, Women of the Vine & Spirits, Wine in Moderation, Zinfandel Advocates and Producers, and Hispanics in Wine & Spirits are among the dozens of organizations engaged in the campaign.

"As part of our core mission as a nonprofit organization, Hispanics in Wine & Spirits (HiWS) partners with companies and advocacy groups to create a welcoming space for Hispanic/Latine consumers to engage through mindful, genuine conversations that incorporate this wonderful beverage into our customs, celebrations, and experiences, while also promoting wellness and mindful drinking," says Maria Calvert and Lydia Richards, Co-Founders of Hispanics in Wine & Spirits. "Being part of the Come Over October campaign allows us to introduce wine to a key target demographic that continues to grow, showing no signs of stopping in a way that's culturally authentic and encourages balance and well-being." Adding, "this initiative gives us an opportunity to celebrate and uplift vineyard workers during harvest season, a community that's largely Hispanic/Latine, who are the true backbone of the wine industry and are often left out of the conversation."

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An advertisement for Asana. On the left, the Asana logo is displayed above the text "Connect the whole company in one place." and a "Try for free" button. On the right, a screenshot of the Asana interface is shown. It features a notification box at the top right that says "Launch is on track" with a green progress bar. Below this, a sidebar lists "Connected teams" with "Marketing" and "Operations" listed. Under "Marketing", there is a task "Test A/B messages" with a checkmark and a user icon. Under "Operations", there is a task "Integrate CRM" with a checkmark and a user icon.

Imagination is the limit on how to celebrate Come Over October. Gather for a music listening party, host a wine and sports watching event, throw a fall festival, or include wine in Oktoberfest celebrations.

“In the Surgeon General’s report, he says social isolation and loneliness are at epidemic levels in society. Our main message is to come together. No one is excluded from the table,” says MacNeil. “The premise of Come Over October is to be together. Wine is often on the table when people get together, but the people at the table is the most important part.”

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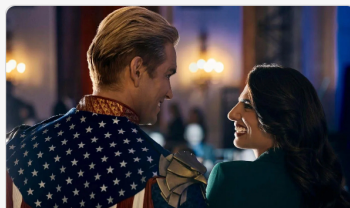
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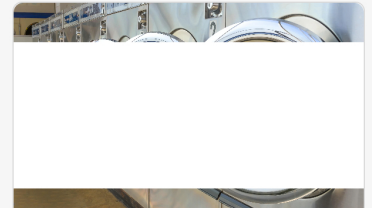
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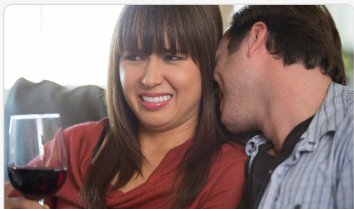
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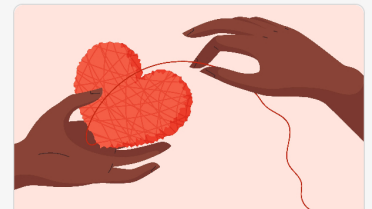
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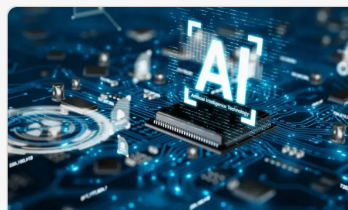
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