

# **CLERISSA**

LONDON WINE CONSULTANCY

**UK Market Entry Opportunity**

**2026 / 2027**

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## **1. Executive Summary.**

We warmly welcome you to our business plan document to facilitate entry to the UK wine industry for wineries / wine regions / wine producing countries (hereby known as the client).

This plan can be adapted to suit budget requirements, expectations and assignment duration. The plan will suit both new entries to the UK as well as maintaining / increasing results on existing and established projects. The plan is a starting point which can / will evolve dependent on market conditions and how each project develops.

This proposal is advised to durate for a minimum of a contractual period of one year period though it can accommodate shorter and longer periods upon request.

The UK wine market remains one of the most competitive and attractive global markets and is valued at £19.66 billion as per 2024. It remains a mostly import market due to domestic wine production not being anywhere near sufficient to meet demand in volume and styles.

The average price per litre imported in 2024 was GBP 3.10/litre (EUR 3.75/litre)<sup>1</sup>. France leads the export market of wine to the UK in value with Italy leading the market for volume imported. The UK market currently sees France, Italy, Spain, Australia and Chile leading the wine export volumes as of 2024.

Still bottled wine accounts for approximate figures of over 50% of imported wine to the UK with 20% being bulk wine and 15% being sparkling wine.

The UK market has many key benefits for those looking to export their wines including an existing and successful, high volume wine consuming population and distribution network. There remains a vibrant and successful community of wine journalists, sommeliers, influencers and it's home to some of the world's most famous wine critics who continuously highlight long standing and new entry wines and wine regions. London is seen as the *capital of wine consumption* globally and is an important export market to have on client profiles. London is a fine gastronomic capital with a diverse choice of restaurants, bars and hotels with 85 restaurants in Greater London with a Michelin star rating<sup>2</sup>.

Recent wine region success stories within the UK market includes Prosecco DOC. This follows a successful marketing drive and continuous agenda of brand strengthening as a competitively priced and great quality sparkling wine. Sales increase showed over 30 million bottles sold to the UK in 2013 increasing to 130 million bottles in 2022 along with a bigger volume production. There are continued growth expectations for Prosecco DOC export volumes to the UK market.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vinetur.com/documentos/article/86922/UK%20Wine%20Market%20Analysis%202024.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Michelin-starred\\_restaurants\\_in\\_Greater\\_London](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Michelin-starred_restaurants_in_Greater_London)

Any new / existing client looking to enter / maintain presence within the UK market can expect many challenges due to the complex importation procedures, overcrowded market and already well versed market. These challenges mount for any client conducting activities from outside of the UK namely being acquainted with current procedures, ability to attend easily and economically relevant events and having a deep understanding of the market and maintaining relationships with key professionals to include wine commentators and wine buyers. These obstacles can be successfully overcome by securing a full time team with a central London office / tasting room who understand market trends and hold both strong and respected key market relationships.

This *UK Market Entry Opportunity* plan will outline the current market and opportunities, the challenges, the objectives and likely costs in order to build, grow and maintain a successful wine sales channel to the UK market. It is important to understand the challenge ahead when entering the UK wine market and it is important that the client maintains realistic expectations and to appreciate that a slow and steady progress is far more financially rewarding over relying on trends that *come and go*. Patience is key as well as ongoing support and communication between the client and Clerissa in order to produce and maintain an established and economical wine sales channel to the UK market. A successfully run project can elevate the clients global status and help to open new sales channels as many leading export markets take reference of the UK market.

New clients can take inspiration that wine drinking consumers in the UK are not only very loyal to more traditional wines such as Bordeaux, Barolo, Rioja, Prosecco and Champagne, they are also very keen to explore new terroirs and varieties especially when well represented to the market.

## 2. The Project of 'UK Market Entry Opportunity' by Clerissa.

The UK wine import market remains relatively unchanged in entry format over recent years. London especially, there is a highly active trade events programme led primarily by national trade tastings with both *general formats* showcasing mixed wines / wine regions, such as the annual London Wine Fair, to smaller region and style focused tastings. Tastings also take place via merchants showcasing their portfolios. A majority of these tastings will take place at central London locations.

There are also consumer tastings, usually ticketed at set fees, with many annual events such as The Taste of London<sup>1</sup> or via a whole network of smaller club / membership format tastings led by local wine experts across the UK.

Further introduction of wines to the UK buyers market take place via formats such as masterclasses, lunches & dinners, launch parties and other product introduction events. Additional exposure comes via key partnerships, sponsorships and donations with relevant hospitality and lifestyle themed brands and events such as UK Restaurant Manager of the Year Awards<sup>2</sup> and the Best International Independent Film Awards<sup>3</sup>.

Attention is also put towards introducing wineries and wine regions to relevant wine professionals by way of press visits so to discover the terroir, the wines, the people, the wine tourism opportunities, local gastronomy and more.

London contains and attracts a large selection of wine journalists, writers, critics with the UK being the residence of internationally acclaimed names such as Jancis Robinson, Oz Clarke and Hugh Johnson.

Over 200 Master of Wines live in the UK, just under 50% of the total holding this top accolade (415 Master of Wines as of December 2025<sup>4</sup>).

Traditional tastings remain the most popular, and by far best, way in which to introduce new wines and flavours along with confirming status of existing wines to the trade and consumer market. Though a trend to showcase wines via online video meeting channels such as Zoom bloomed during the lock downs of the Covid era, face to face tastings have recovered their status. Much of the wine purchasing in the UK market remains highly connected to buying from *people you know* and trust in those who have made a positive impression in both the on trade and off trade routes.

<sup>1</sup> <https://london.tastefestivals.com/>

<sup>2</sup> Sponsored by Prosecco DOC <https://www.instituteofhospitality.org/ioh-announce-uk-restaurant-manager-of-the-year-2022-shortlist-and-new-event-sponsor-processor-doc/>

<sup>3</sup> Sponsored by Champagne Taittinger <https://www.bifa.film/news/bifa-2025-international-longlist-announced/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mastersofwine.org/about-us/faqs>

There is also a heavy reliance on the news and information shared both in print, media and online to include social media channels and blogs. It is still highly acclaimed to be referred to in such print publications as Decanter Magazine or online websites such as JancisRobinson.com and influencers relying on social media channels with great exposure work done on platforms such as Instagram, Youtube and Facebook. Articles, scores, podcasts, photography, interviews and many more themes are published daily as well as appearances on local and national television and radio shows.

Awards take a very serious role in the elevation of wines and their regions. Acclaiming top marks, trophies and medals can both highlight unknown labels as well as confirming the status of others. Many of the more famous wine competitions are judged and awarded in central London.

Senior wine critic scoring is another route that can be taken with famous and trending examples to include those of James Suckling, Jancis Robinson and Robert Parker.

Sustainability credentials and other green themed wine production methods can also lend great value and give added positive exposure.

### **Tastings.**

Weekly wine tastings in central London: Clerissa has a monthly programme of trade and press tastings at our exclusive tasting room in central London E1W.

Popular weekly events such as '*What in the Somm?*' for respected and up and coming sommeliers of HoReCa locations across London & '*Thought Leaders & Honest Debates*' attracting senior wine professionals to include buyers and Master of Wines taking place via lunch / dinner pairing formats.



Guests are prompted to explore our client wines in a relaxing and closed group format. Scoring taking place during each tasting via our own *Clerissa scoring format* focusing on value for money and delivering feedback to the client on pricing, branding and current trade positioning / direct competition.

Wines are showcased alongside appropriate food pairings, served in the recommended glassware at the correct serving temperature. Each wine has a full presentation and additional bottles are offered to any wine professional requiring a second opinion on a potential to import.

### **Annual Trade Tasting.**

As part of brand development and further opportunities for key wine professionals to taste client wines, an annual trade tasting is highly recommended. This is a direct opportunity for group wineries to show their wines, key team members of each client, promote the wine region / wine tourism, deliver masterclasses and distribute literature, merchandise, samples and share business cards / details.

A wide choice of venues across London are available for trade tastings from luxurious / traditional locations to more innovative options such as boats on the Thames, cellars of churches, top level of buildings such as the Gherkin and The Shard. Budget depending, with consideration of further expenses to include staffing, trade equipment hire, transportation, audio / visual hire and more.

Clerissa has a long history of managing national trade shows attracting several hundred visitors including leading wine buyer attendees at many of the popular wine exhibiting venues to include The Savoy Hotel<sup>1</sup> and Vintners Hall.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcPmRXxlAao>

## **Annual Masterclass(es).**

Hosted by senior and region experienced wine professionals, our masterclasses are organised so to build a more defined tasting experience combining education, engagement and entertainment to attendees, formulating a lasting impression and takeaway memories. An opportunity to align guests to the specific characters of the client from terroir to production methods. Clerissa has a selection of Master of Wines we choose to host our masterclasses, led by Patricia Stefanowicz MW.

Masterclasses are recommended to include local / native small bite food pairings and additional wine sample takeaways for guests. Audio and visual supporting media is also advised.

Masterclass size up to 12 guests to include wine buyers / importers for both on and off trade, senior wine critics, sommeliers and other required attendees.

Again, there are many locations across London that can provide suitable space and services to run a successful masterclass from room hire to catering.



## **Annual Dinner.**

An exclusive fine dining experience to pair a range of client wines alongside fine gastronomy delights to show each labels pairing capabilities. Such wonderful occasions are recommended to have a senior member from the client alongside a senior wine critic to host.

These events are a perfect way to introduce the client, their wines and the pairing opportunities for the diverse cuisine menus across the UK. These have been taking place for many years and, depending on theme, time and location, attract senior

wine professionals and increase opportunity of post event exposure by way of social media posts and articles.

From prestigious fine dining restaurants to creative pairing menus challenging the versatility of the wines on show such as lining up against Asian dishes or traditional English dishes to include fish and chips.



### **One to One Tastings and Online.**

Throughout the period of the project there will be separate one to one tastings at the Clerissa central London tasting location in E1W as and when required with varied warm leads / interested buyers / online bookings.

All clients will be showcased at the Clerissa tasting location with labels on show, sample stock ready to taste and, as required, suitable audio and visual equipment to showcase clients in the best possible light.

Clients will be able to request, upon adequate notice, private tastings at the Clerissa tasting location to showcase their wines to their own guests.

Additional options include consideration of live online video presentations and tastings of client wines via software options such as Zoom / Google Meet allowing guests from across the UK to attend virtually and taste live with a senior wine critic and, ideally, a team member of the client.

### **Building Consumer Awareness.**

The value of consumer persuasion on HoReCa locations remains an important influence on buyers in the UK market. If serious wine buying customers favour a

wine, it is then likely that a wine serving location will consider that wine to purchase either importing directly or reaching out to the applicable importer.

At Clerissa, we like to partner with and partake in selected wine club tastings at venues across London, building awareness of the terroir of client region(s) and the quality of the wines being produced. International wines continue to allure buyers with their diversity, history, and the promise of exotic experiences<sup>1</sup>. UK consumers are very happy to explore unknown, new to the market wines, styles, terroir.

There's a growing trend towards mindful drinking. Consumers are not necessarily abandoning wine, but are choosing to drink less and focus on quality over quantity<sup>2</sup>.

In partnership with our venue in central London, Clerissa holds a monthly wine club for serious consumer wine buyers to taste and score our client wines.

### **Creating Trends.**

Suggestions will be offered to make sure that each client can be easily found and followed within the industry. Examples such as hashtags on social media, and relevant keyword placement for organic search results via Google, are ideal for creating trends and thus curiosity especially to new clients entering the UK market.

Innovative, viral and *out of the box* thinking is another direct route to market, and depending on desired audiences, can speed up awareness in introducing / maintaining a clients presence.

Such suggestions will be shared with each client, and upon agreement, implemented in ongoing marketing efforts.

### **Client Reporting.**

It is important that each client maintains regular contact with Clerissa. We request at least a quarterly online meeting to discuss progress of the project.

Monthly progress reports will be sent via email to include transferring online the recording of all events by way of photography and videos as well as the *pricing score sheets* of each tasting.

<sup>1</sup> <https://eltoro.wine/blogs/spain-uncorked/the-preference-for-local-vs-international-wine-in-uk>

<sup>2</sup> The Rise of Mindful Drinking (UK): <https://lerouxvins.com/en/people-are-drinking-less-wine-but-theyre-drinking-better/>

### **3. Introduction to Clerissa London Wine Consultancy.**

Clerissa was founded by Christopher Walkey and Oliver Walkey who hold a combined 25 years experience in wine consultancy, event management and marketing. Their expertise is on introducing and expanding awareness and sales for wines, wine regions and wine countries to the UK market.

Award winning consultants, both Christopher and Oliver combined their expertise under the Clerissa brand and currently manage a portfolio of international client projects.

Their tasting area can be found in central London, Gauging Square E1W, where frequent tastings, lunches and dinners take place showcasing their client wines to relevant key industry professionals.

Their expertise includes:

- National trade show management.
- Awards (judging & announcements) management.
- Masterclasses.
- Wine dinners.
- International press tour management.
- Online PR and marketing.
- Consumer tasting events.

Clerissa remains a family run business with Eve Walkey managing accounts and administration.



**Client testimonials include:**

*“Christopher and Oliver are one of the best teams in the UK currently showcasing wines who are looking for representation in the UK to potential buyers. I am always happy to help them.”* **Christopher Burr – Master of Wine**

*“We are absolutely delighted as a small Champagne producer to now have our wines served in London.”* **Champagne Colette Bonnet**

*“It was encouraging to see so many Slovenian wineries express a genuine interest in presenting their exceptional wines to the British audience. We are confident that initiatives such as this (at the annual Slovenian Trade & Buyers Show from Clerissa) will help bring a wider selection of Slovenian wines to consumers in the United Kingdom and further promote Slovenia’s rich winemaking tradition.”* - **Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in London**

*“... we saw an immediate increase in the amount of interest and orders.”* **Gonzalez Byass UK in reference to Champagne Deutz Blanc de Blancs vintage label**

#### 4. The UK Wine Industry current overview.

*“We like to cautiously advise clients that the UK market is like no other globally. The bright lights came calling to many and opportunity beckons to suit most expectations, but understanding the market first, or choosing the correct team to represent you, can vastly reduce costs, time and limit risk.” **Christopher Walkey***

The UK wine and spirits sector supports over 400,000 jobs across production, retail, commerce, logistics, marketing, tourism, hospitality, and more<sup>1</sup>. Approximately 358,000 are employed across the supply chain<sup>2</sup>.

The UK remains, and firmly so, a key global player in the world of wine as the second largest wine importer by both volume after Germany and second behind the US for value. It imports approximately 1.6 billion bottles of wine a year.

This huge, constantly evolving commercial opportunity attracts the interest of wineries globally. From profile and brand building to exporting to reduce risk, there are many reasons a winery might wish to enter the UK wine market scene.

*“With a long history of importing wines, and with still only a small production of home grown wines available, the UK has established channels of entry for international wineries to explore. Independently, or via group / regional / country efforts, there are many options to choose from for varying needs. From bulk wine to investment, all styles and classifications, from red to orange to white with or without bubbles or sediment, there is a demand to be explored. There is no limit to what can be sold, but expectations need to be managed.” **Oliver Walkey***

The UK is also seen as the most prestigious and influential wine market due its long history of fine wine consumption. It is home to some of the world's most famous wine connoisseurs and buyers, wine critics and long established trade shows / awards / publications.

- 71.2% of adults in the UK consume alcohol at least once a week<sup>3</sup>.
- White wine is the most popular choice of alcoholic beverage in the UK with red wine in third place.
- The average price of a mid range bottle of wine in the UK is £8.00<sup>4</sup>.
- The most popular wine in the UK is crisp dry white with Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc the preferred grapes.
- Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon are the most preferred red wine grapes.
- The RPI (Retail Price Index) of a 175ml glass of wine in the UK is £5.17<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.plumpton.ac.uk/news-events/calendar-of-events/national-wine-careers-week/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/uk-wine-industry-overview>

<sup>3</sup> [https://lunzerwine.com/blogs/news/alcohol-consumption-statistics?srsltid=AfmBOopqUiXvP11bqOufcsFgaTUy-NMIVF16Y7wvEoWxRC\\_I9n6dev7p](https://lunzerwine.com/blogs/news/alcohol-consumption-statistics?srsltid=AfmBOopqUiXvP11bqOufcsFgaTUy-NMIVF16Y7wvEoWxRC_I9n6dev7p)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.decanter.com/learn/wine-prices-which-is-europes-most-expensive-country-570903/>

<sup>5</sup> UK Office of National Statistics <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/timeseries/kef4>

**Where is wine sold in the UK?** Off trade accounts for most of the wine sold in the UK with approximately 58% of all wine sold. Supermarkets take up most of this market with around 82% of all off trade sales.

On trade sales sits at around 42% via HoReCa locations across the country. As of March 2022, there were over 817,000 personal alcohol licences in England and Wales, allowing individuals to authorise alcohol sales, plus hundreds of thousands of premises licences for places like pubs and shops<sup>1</sup>.

The most current Alcohol Duty Rates in the UK should be referred to by the official government website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/alcohol-duty-rates>

*‘99% of wine consumed in the UK is imported’<sup>2</sup>*

### **Taxation.**

The UK wine (and spirits) market has been, and continues to be, one of the most heavily taxed in Europe. The current exercise duty on a bottle of 75cl 12.5% abv wine sits at £2.87, 20% VAT will also be added on the total price per bottle.

Duty fees will depend on types of wine, bottle size, alcohol volume – A sparkling wine will have a differing fee to a still wine.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/alcohol-and-late-night-refreshment-licensing-england-and-wales-31-march-2022#:~:text=homeoffice.gov.uk-,1.,cumulative%20impac](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/alcohol-and-late-night-refreshment-licensing-england-and-wales-31-march-2022/alcohol-and-late-night-refreshment-licensing-england-and-wales-year-ending-31-march-2022#:~:text=homeoffice.gov.uk-,1.,cumulative%20impac)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bauduc.com/news/your-guide-to-uk-tax-on-wine/>

## 5. Why Export to the UK?

Though difficulties as per the challenges discussed previously, the UK wine market remains one of the most popular export markets for wineries globally.

There are many advantages to exporting wines to the UK to include:

- Build global brand recognition.
- Add brand value by being served / sold in the London / UK market.
- Current market research thanks to the large and diverse network of wine experts who live and work in the UK.
- The huge market and constant demand can help increase export sales.
- Reduce risk by exploring a new export market.
- Potential to elevate wine prices and profits.
- Increase interest in the region / country producing the wines thus improving wine tourism figures.

*'If you can succeed in exporting your wines to the UK, you can succeed anywhere'* is a commonly used quote. It can influence global wine sales and convert small domestic only wines into high value, new export markets. If your wine gets noticed in the UK, it will likely *echo out* globally.

Wine drinkers in the UK are very open minded when it comes to exploring new wines and new wine regions. There is a well developed wine distribution network across the UK. Wines are accessible to most people by either off trade locations such as supermarkets which can stock up to 650 wines in-store<sup>1</sup> to countless online shopping options offering same day delivery.

There is no shortage of wine education for consumers from online courses to those offered by WSET<sup>2</sup> along with countless wine clubs up and down the country and national / regional wine events open to the public.

The UK also has a very diverse *wine buyer* with attraction to all pricing from budget wines / bulk wines / box wines / canned wines to the more finer wines of top producers. There is also a strong interest in wine investment in the UK, many seeking short to mid term profits as well as those looking to lay down wines for future enjoyment.

It is widely known that approximately 97.5% of wines sold in the UK at retail level is £10 or less thus leaving a very tiny 2.5% of sales above £10. Volume favours lower priced wines, not unexpectedly, though consumers are becoming far more aware of global wines and are prepared to pay more in order to experience something different thus accommodating transport and duty fees.

<sup>1</sup> Tesco stock up to 650 in store wines <https://www.escopl.com/tesco-helps-customers-pick-the-right-wines-to-impress/#:~:text=With%20the%20broadest%20wine%20range,%C2%A37.99%20NOW%20%C2%A35.50>

<sup>2</sup> In the academic year 2021-2022, approximately 20,000 candidates in the UK registered to take a WSET qualification <https://www.wsetglobal.com/news-events/news/2022/september/28/wset-education-available-in-more-countries-than-ever-academic-year-2021-22#:~:text=In%20total%2C%20117%2C000%20students%20took,markets%20E2%80%93%20were%20the%20strongest%20performers.>

## **6. Objectives.**

It is important to set targets and agree on expectations. It is also very important to work *with* the industry and not *against* it, adapting and changing as required. Aligning with successful strategies and reducing on endeavours which do not deliver, working *with* the market as it develops.

Depending on the current position of the client in the UK market, three key factors will need to be of focus.

- Build Awareness
- Build Reputation
- Build Sales

### **Build Awareness.**

Any introduction to a new market requires a series of events that are detailed in section 2. These need to be consistently run at convenient locations so to attract a wide range of industry professionals.

To represent the client with an experienced and enthusiastic team who are easily contactable and willing to always satisfy the customers needs. A permanent tasting room / office in central London, with active representatives, will grow confidence in the client wines and make them more approachable.

### **Build Reputation.**

Depending on the client and reputation desired, it will be important to maintain a programme of awards, critic scores and tasting notes, easy accessible and featured information online to include social media and keeping *in* with other key influencers within the market.

Keeping the client wines in trending topics of conversation with regular news updates and discoveries to explore is key.

### **Build Sales.**

To build a distribution channel to the UK so to facilitate logistics either through customs and / or direct to bond storage.

To have ready a selection of sample wines and stock for any immediate purchases. To maintain fluid distribution (and reputation of).

Client to be advised on realistic pricing structures and comparing their wines against similar successful labels in the UK. Continued market research so to be aware of any new competitors and challengers.

To find and work on re-seller(s) at the correct level for the client. Work on supporting initial re-sellers with required back up of events as discussed in section 2.

Make the client wines easily accessible to purchase online via re-seller websites or adequate independent e-commerce web options.

## 7. Current UK Retail and Wholesale Price Structure.

It is widely known that the more money you spend on your bottle of wine then better quality of wine you get. This is also in reference to the costings per bottle of packaging, logistics, VAT, excise duty and re-seller margins, *what is left is the price you are paying for the wine itself* – The more you spend on your bottle of wine the more of your money goes on the wine itself.

An average £9 bottle of 12% abv wine in the UK retail scene will see 50% of this price going to the government in taxes leaving just £1 towards the wine (and farming) itself. An average £20 bottle of 12% abv wine in the UK will see around 45% of the price going to the government in taxes though this time leaving £6 towards the wine (and farming). This shows that by doubling the price you pay for your bottle of wine will give you six times more value for money in the wine after taxes / shipping and logistics / bottling and packaging. These figures are repeated in on trade also.

Breakdown of wine costs, UK restaurants



UK duty on 75cl at 13.5% abv from 1/2/25. Varies by c11p +/- for each 0.5% abv. Margins or costs may vary.

@GavinQuinney | gavinquinney.com

**Image credit:** Full copyright belongs to Gavin Quinney: <https://gavinquinney.com/2024/11/30/your-guide-to-uk-tax-on-wine/>

## **8. Routes to the UK Market.**

As previously discussed, there are many well established routes to market for wine in the UK market. From a simple local market stall to restaurant chains and hotel groups. Wine is very accessible in the UK and will in most occasions appear on the shelf or drinks menu for you to chose from.

The two routes to market are *off trade* and *on trade*.

It is important to establish which route(s) is best for the client and research the leading personal in this distribution chain.

### **Supermarkets.**

Though the lure of having wines on the shelves of major supermarket chains due to their footfall is tempting, there will be little to no margin for profit. Shelving space is 'expensive' - Fast selling wines on shelves will be at a highly competitive rate favouring the store and slower selling wines will have more premium prices set with a 'fat' retail margin to justify the space taken.

Though sales can be made directly to the major supermarket stores of the UK as many employ their own senior wine critics to lead the purchasing and marketing of wines, on the ground efforts can also be highly effective.

Many large retail stockists of wine in the UK will attend trade tastings / masterclasses to include requesting to taste privately one on one and / or request samples to be sent. Trust and dependability is key between buyer and seller.

### **Online Sales.**

An ever increasing sector in the process of selling wine is via online channels.

It is important to not only to be visible and easily found, continued research should be undertaken to see where trends lay and which company / person is trending / succeeding with relevant wine sales.

Added costs could go towards online marketing campaigns from social media channels to keyword search engine positioning.

### **Importers / Distributors / Wholesalers / Cash & Carry.**

The UK market has many small to mid sized re-sellers of which many are independent. They cover the whole of the UK with some locally focused and others nationally.

Person to person relationships are key at this level. Having the reputation of finding and showcasing great wines with the required set-up<sup>1</sup> can take years, but this commitment to the industry leverages opportunities with such re-sellers.

<sup>1</sup> Sufficient stock in the UK. Depth of range to support all areas of the market. Support from the winery.

## **Restaurants / Bars and Pubs / Hotels.**

Many consumers *on trade* association with wine will take place during social and dining events and reliant on the advice of the likes of sommeliers, bar staff, chefs, buyers, managers and more. Education of wine for such hospitality staffing is key.

Most of the engagement of such staff take place at relevant tastings as discussed in section 2.

These sectors will be supplied by either independent re-sellers and / or services at wholesaler level. Names such as Matthew Clark, Bookers and Berkmann Wine Cellars are some of the leading companies in supplying wines to the industry.

**Clerissa will help guide the client through the correct channels, build relationships with suitable distributors and grow a sales pipeline.**

## **9. Current Challenges and Solutions.**

There are plenty of challenges to entering, build sales and maintaining sales within the UK wine market. Each challenge *does* have a solution.

### **Cost of entry.**

Depending on origination, there has been an increased cost of entry for wines to the UK. There is also more confusing and changing requirements on paperwork. Increasing inflation also puts pressure on all key cost points.

Using the most cost effective routes to the UK market will save long term costs and potential loses in time and products.

### **Storage.**

There are a number of bond storage solutions across the UK, depending on chosen supplier, the costs have to be factored into profit / loss calculations. Choosing the best option for storage reduce the risk of storage damage, delayed logistics and more.

### **Investment.**

The UK wine market is busy and forever active. New wines enter daily increasing choice of price, quality and styles for all involved.

Decent investment by any client looking to enter the UK market will be required as there is very little chance of making an impact on minimum budgets. Cutting corners, economising, reductions and other negative growth options will easily be targeted by competing wines / wineries / regions.

### **Maintaining and Competition.**

Growth within the UK market is likely to be slow whereas declines can be rapid.

When building a client profile, it is advised to maintain positioning by continued investment. Setting a senior representative within the UK market is key so not to be quickly forgotten. This can extend to offering a role of a brand ambassador who will have varied social and trade events to attend and to organise.

There will always be a new wine on the scene that will offer better pricing and quality, it is vital to keep your market presence to ensure consistent placement.

### **Movement within the UK Wine Sector.**

The UK wine employment market is busy and forever changing. Long term relationships can be built and suddenly that said person(s) leaves the company or leaves the industry altogether – It is important to continue to build new relationships.

## **Global Finance / Regulations.**

Global wine markets are very vulnerable to governmental updates both on costs in taxation and regulations from production to bottling. Trending factors such as environmental commitments, usually regulated by regional (wine) governing bodies, can have financial effects on wineries. Ultimately, the end effect is increasing the price per bottle which will have a knock on effect to the re-seller, on trade locations and the end consumer.

Any such changes need to be *planned for* so that market positioning will not be greatly effected or kept in-line with major competitors.

## **10. Key Benefits and Expectations.**

Having discussed the challenges, and the obstacles, of succeeding in the UK market, let us take a look at the benefits and what you can expect upon a successful campaign.

As we have previously discussed previously, the UK is essentially an import market with a well versed and having *open to exploring new wine options* buyers. With the second largest premium wine market in the world, the UK market is not limited to only budget wines. Trends extend to *wine investment* with a growing amount of finance and interest as a luxury goods investment growth alternative.

With a long history of buying and enjoying wines, there is already in place a complete network of people and services to import wines with relevant sales channels in place to include a vibrant HoReCa scene. UK also leads a positive wine innovation and technology sector and remains at the forefront of current and future trends and visions.

Though household wine (region) names such as Champagne, Bordeaux, Chianti, Rioja, Prosecco remain highly popular, and the benchmark for many to include trust in *quality* for consumers and trust in *sales* for re-sellers, big opportunity channels remain open for others to explore.

It can be said that the UK wine scene never sleeps and this is backed up with the countless trade shows, masterclasses, dinners, awards and more that take place and especially within London. Some days see multiple annual tastings taking place with an equal active evening programme. Senior wine critics can be swamped with invitations and most wine events are usually busy / fully booked. Wine events also remain highly popular for the general public with many times *sold out* being the end result.

**The UK market is prime for new wines to enter the market. It can offer:**

- A quick route to market / to sales.
- A chance to build global brand recognition and increase base line profits.
- A chance to acquire regularly the best feedback via leading wine critics.
- Opportunities to showcase wine regularly from January to December.
- Facilitate / embrace entry of unknown brands, varying styles, quantities, price points.
- Plenty of research data is available. What *not to do* and what *succeeds* is clearly researchable as countless attempts have been previously attempted with varying degrees of success. The likes of New Zealand's *Sauvignon Blanc*<sup>1</sup> success story in the UK are well documented and how they established themselves profitability and brand awareness increases with success spreading globally for them.
- There are many Government funded opportunities available to enter the UK market.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.binkwines.com/blog/new-zealand-sauvignon-blanc-a-global-success-story/>

## **The route to the UK wine market is well and truly open, what can you expect?**

With huge demand comes huge supply, and (constantly challenging) options, especially in a market that has big supply volume globally looking for new markets to spread risk into. *Clerissa constantly speaks to new wineries seeking to enter the UK market for the first time.*

Clients need to expect to have immense competition. Results are better slower with foundations being set, over rapid without an infrastructure in place to maintain market position. A mid to long term vision is safer over any short term endeavours.

Your expectations should be:

- A mid to long term vision over any quick fix solution.
- Investment in finance and time required.
- Being consistent in your efforts.
- The right representative / team will pay you back in the long run.
- Increase in market feedback (including online) so being prepared for *criticism* as well as *praise*.
- Increase in sales.
- Increase in winery footfall / wine tourism.
- Increase of enquiries.
- Increase in global attention and demand.
- An enlightening experience for your team, if you can make it in the UK market then you can make it in any market.

## **11. Provisional Costings.**

Set out below is our standard package at Clerissa for an *Annual Plan*. This covers all points outlined in section 2.

Bespoke packages can be offered to cater for financial and result requirements of the client and for specific assignments.

A yearly budget is proposed below and to be implemented in two stages and funding. Months 1 – 6 will require 65% of the annual fee. Months 7 – 12 will require 35% of the annual fee.

### **Months 1 – 6.**

Establishment of the client in the UK market to include regional education to senior wine professionals and familiarity of qualities of wines and competitive positioning. Objective being to find importer / distributor to commence sales.

Funding required for presentations, staffing, event space bookings and hirings, catering and dispatching of sample wines, PR and marketing and expenses to include transportation, POS (point of sale) items, award entries, shows and relevant research and training.

Additional fees (expenses) at this stage would be travel, accommodation, hospitality and expenses relating to press trip visits to the client.

### **Months 7 – 12.**

Continuation the evolving of all points outlined in section 2 and to increase and maintain distribution networks and sales.

### **Additional points.**

Each event that takes place by Clerissa is recorded by photography and where possible, by video, to support funding expenditure claiming and to have audio / visual content for sharing online and for keeping on company files.

Quarterly updates between Clerissa and the client is highly recommended by online video meetings.

Monthly reports are shared by email and file transfer.

Usage of client branding and other copyrighted materials will be discussed and confirmed prior to usage.

## **Basic yearly cost breakdown.**

Client Management by a senior team member	£36,000
Event Space <sup>1</sup>	£8,500
Catering	£1,500
Additional Event Supplies <sup>2</sup>	£1,500
Promotional Materials to include Design Work <sup>3</sup>	£2,500
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£50,000</b>

## **Payment instalments.**

Month 1 – 6:	£32,500
Month 7 – 12:	£17,500

## **All additional expense fees to be covered, and agreed to, by the client and managed by Clerissa.**

Logistical costs of getting wines to the UK and to the Clerissa office / tasting room. Any agreed additional storage options (outside of the Clerissa office / tasting location which is covered within the basic yearly cost).

Supplying of required samples.

Delivery costs to events outside of Clerissa office / tasting room.

All and any costs associated to press trips (not to include any management fees).

All expense fees are invoiced monthly.

*“From years of experience in wine event management and associated fees involved, we have set very specific costings and hope to have minimal additional expenses for the client. We have also negotiated favourable rates to include venues spaces due to our long term partnerships and these reduced costs we offer out to our clients as savings. Clerissa also owns its own stock of event equipment that we can loan out free of charge to our clients offering further savings. We hope that our fees remain highly competitive, and results driven, for your exploration in to the UK market.” Christopher Walkey*

<sup>1</sup> Proposed venue for masterclasses is Louie London WC2. Proposed venue for trade shows is Vintners Hall EC4. Additional venues can be used with relevant costings added or to minus as required. Costs also include transportation of Clerissa owned event equipment to and from storage to each event.

<sup>2</sup> Items and services to include, and not limited to, ice / water / laundry / equipment hire to include audio and visual.

<sup>3</sup> To cover required banners and literature. Please note that tasting booklets remain online only to reduce paper waste.

## **12. Important Information and contact details.**

- All projections, guidelines, advice given are believed to be realistic at the time of completing this documentation (December 2025), no representations can be made as to their attainability.
- While the information set forth herein in this document are deemed to be accurate, Clerissa LTD shall not be held liable for the accuracy of, or omissions, from the advice and information here within this document and for any written or oral communication transmitted to the client and, or any other party in the course of its evaluation.
- Any prices stated were accurate at the time of publication, but should only be used as a guide and are subject to change.
- If any questions are to be raised, or errors spotted, in this document to include any copyright infringement, we please ask you to contact Clerissa LTD directly via +44 (0)1206 700888 / [christopher@clerissa.com](mailto:christopher@clerissa.com)

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