

cincinnati wine festival

INTERNATIONAL

poured with purpose

How Wine Changed Lives in 2025



a weekend of joy, a year of impact

For **nearly 35 years**, the Cincinnati International Wine Festival has proven that when people come together over great wine, great things happen. Through the generous support of our presenting sponsor Kroger and our wineries, supporters and ticket buyers, we proudly poured **\$345,000 into 35 non-profit organizations across** Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. This brings our donation total to more than **\$8 million** since our founding in 1991.

This investment **impacted 1.1 million neighbors in need**, supporting programs that feed families, inspire creativity, promote education, uplift health initiatives and strengthen our region's social fabric.

So, every sip (& smile) at the festival fueled real change—and that's worth raising a glass to.



THE WINE COMPETITION

Your Roadmap to Discovery

Dipping your toe into the world of wine can feel daunting. How do I know what I'll like? How do you tell a Chardonnay from a Pinot Grigio? To the uninitiated, the questions can seem unending.

This is why on **January 31, 2025 we assembled 50+ credentialed wine experts to evaluate wines in a direct, blind competition.** But this annual competition isn't about which wines judges love most—it's about determining which offerings best exhibit the standard for each varietal or region.

What does that mean for you? If a certain Pinot Noir wins gold, our experts thought it best demonstrated the characteristics expected for that type of wine. Exploring a new varietal? A medal winner is a great place to start.



THE WEEKEND OF WINE

March 6–8, 2025

More than 3,000 guests and 85 exhibitors came together for a thoughtfully curated weekend of wine, food and community. For the first time, we anchored the festival at the Freestore Foodbank's new Community Resource and Distribution Center—a fitting backdrop that showed how celebration and service go hand in hand.

Leading the Way: Dr. Laura Catena

Dr. Laura Catena, fourth-generation Argentine vintner, physician, author and “the face of Argentine wine,” served as our honorary chair. Born in Mendoza, she graduated magna cum laude from Harvard and earned her M.D. from Stanford. In 1995 she joined her father Nicolás Catena Zapata at the family winery and founded the Catena Institute of Wine with a bold vision: making Argentine wines that could stand their own with the best in the world.

Today, she's the managing director of Bodega Catena Zapata, founder of Luca Winery and a practicing emergency medicine physician in San Francisco. Dr. Catena represented Catena Zapata at the Honorary Chair Dinner, Grand Tasting Sessions, VIP Room and Charity Auction & Luncheon.



THURSDAY

Winery Dinners

Five exceptional dinners launched the weekend at top regional restaurants. Each featured multi-course menus expertly paired with wines from visiting exhibitors.

Partner restaurants included The Capital Grille, Subito, Jag's Steak & Seafood, Son of a Butcher and Carlo & Johnny's by Jeff Ruby, with wines from Banfi, Bezel, Catena Zapata, J.Lohr and Lux Wines.

The new standout? A dinner with the American Culinary Federation National Olympic Team in the Freestore Foodbank kitchen, where guests savored dishes from world-class chefs before they competed on the international stage.

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FRIDAY

Trade Tasting

Over 600 industry professionals—sommeliers, restaurateurs, distributors and retailers—kicked off Friday exploring new products, expanding their palates and building connections. **The Trade Tasting is where business meets pleasure in our vibrant regional wine community.**

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SATURDAY

Charity Auction & Luncheon

The weekend culminated in a sold-out Charity Auction & Luncheon with a beautifully paired multi-course meal and exclusive auction lots—rare wine collections, unforgettable travel experiences and more. **The room buzzed with generosity as paddles flew high, raising need funds for local non-profits.**

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ALL WEEKEND

Grand Tastings & VIP Room

Wine lovers swirled, sipped and savored more than 700 wines from around the world, complemented by bites from Barilla, Chef's Choice Catering, Graeter's Ice Cream, Midwest Culinary Institute, and Murray's Cheese.

The VIP Tasting Room offered early access one hour before each Grand Tasting with premium selections in an elegant atmosphere. Seasoned collectors and curious first-timers alike shared in the joy of discovery.



TEEING UP FOR GOOD

October 6, 2025

The Russ Wiles Memorial Golf Tournament expanded to two courses this year, bringing together 156 players and 58 adult beverage and food suppliers for a dynamic day of golf, camaraderie and brand visibility at Heritage Club and Four Bridges Country Club.

This high-energy event united top-tier distributors, suppliers, brand representatives and hospitality leaders from across the country. More than a tournament, it's a celebration of an industry spirit that supports our mission.



next stop: 35 YEARS!

In 2026, we'll celebrate our 35th year, as we return to downtown Cincinnati and the Cincinnati Convention Center. We're grateful to the Freestore Foodbank for their incredible partnership in 2025, and we're excited to bring our signature weekend back to the heart of the city.

In the spirit of "doing good and having fun" we're also excited to introduce **immersive on-site experiences** that position the Cincinnati International Wine Festival as our city's premier lifestyle event—sophisticated yet accessible, impactful yet entertaining and deeply rooted in community.

New experiences. Returning favorites. More ways to celebrate while giving back. Together, we'll keep the momentum going—and **keep pouring good into our community.**



2025 beneficiary organizations

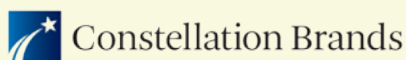


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