



Great Wine Capitals – Media Release

20 May 2026

Hawke's Bay, New Zealand, to Host Premier International Wine Tourism Conference

The 26th Great Wine Capitals International Annual Conference comes to the Southern Hemisphere in October 2026

Hawke's Bay, New Zealand [20 May 2026] - One of the world's most celebrated wine regions is about to step into the global spotlight. Hawke's Bay, New Zealand, will host the 26th Great Wine Capitals International Annual Conference from 18–22 October 2026, bringing together the world's most influential wine tourism regions under one roof in the Southern Hemisphere.

The conference is the flagship event of the Great Wine Capitals Global Network, a community uniting the world's foremost wine tourism destinations, including Bordeaux, Mendoza, Napa Valley, and Adelaide. Registrations are now open for delegates from across the international wine and tourism community.

Hawke's Bay was accepted as a member of the Great Wine Capitals Global Network in 2023, making the region's selection as conference host a significant milestone for New Zealand's international wine tourism profile.

Under the theme '*A World of New*', the five-day programme has been designed to deliver new cultures, new wines, new experiences, and new business opportunities. Delegates can expect keynote presentations, roundtable discussions, travel trade meetings, structured networking, hosted dinners, winery visits, and curated regional experiences.

President of the Great Wine Capitals Global Network, Jo Collins, said the timing could not be more relevant: "At a time when the global wine sector is navigating both challenges and transformation, our conference in Hawke's Bay offers a vital opportunity to come together, share knowledge, and strengthen one another. This is more than a conference; it's a chance to shape the future of wine tourism collectively."

For international delegates, Hawke's Bay offers a compelling destination in its own right. Kim Thorp, GWC Hawke's Bay Ambassador, said: "Hawke's Bay is New Zealand's Food & Wine Country and one of the most extraordinary regions, and we couldn't be prouder to welcome the world here. Ancient soils from the Gimblett Gravels to limestone ridges and clay hillsides produce exceptional diversity, from world-class Syrah and Cabernet blends to elegant Chardonnay. But wine is only part of the story. Delegates will discover Hawke's Bay's iconic Art Deco architecture, stunning mountain and coastal landscapes, and cycle trails winding through vineyards. This is a place that will inspire every delegate long after they leave."

A selection of exclusive pre and post-conference delegate experiences has been developed in partnership with local businesses to showcase the region.



Full programme details and registration: gwchawkesbay26.com.

Event Information

Dates: October 18 to 22, 2026

Location: Hawke's Bay, New Zealand

Attendees: Representatives of the 11 member capitals, international buyers, tourism professionals, wineries, institutional stakeholders, and media

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About Great Wine Capitals

The Great Wine Capitals Global Network is an international alliance of renowned wine regions and their cities, founded in Bordeaux in 1999. It brings together leading destinations where wine and wine tourism shape culture, economy, and community life, offering a unique platform for cooperation, innovation, and global promotion. Through joint projects and shared values, the Network showcases the excellence of its members and strengthens the visibility and competitiveness of great wine regions worldwide.

The Network currently consists of 11 world renowned wine regions from the northern and southern hemispheres, spanning the old and new worlds of wine including: Adelaide, South Australia; Bilbao-Rioja, Spain; Bordeaux, France; Hawke's Bay, New Zealand; Lausanne, Switzerland; Mainz-Rheinhessen, Germany; Mendoza, Argentina; Porto, Portugal; San Francisco-Napa Valley, USA; Valparaiso-Casablanca Valley, Chile and Verona, Italy.

For more information about the GWC Global Network's involvement in upcoming events, visit www.greatwinecapitals.com. Also follow them on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and subscribe to their [YouTube](#) channel.

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