# Majestic to build UK’s largest urban winery at Canada Water with Vagabond Wines



Vagabond Wines is set to establish the UK’s largest urban winery at Canada Water, a bold move backed by Majestic following its acquisition of the wine bar chain out of administration. Majestic purchased Vagabond last year in a £6.5 million rescue deal and has since pledged to significantly expand Vagabond’s English wine production. The new 6,000 sq ft facility, situated on the ground floor of the Dock Shed—a recently completed mixed-use development—will house a 100-tonne winery with an annual capacity of up to 100,000 bottles. It will also feature a Vagabond bar incorporating the brand’s signature self-pour wine machines along with multiple event and private hire spaces.

“This urban winery is unlike anything we’ve done before,” said Vagabond managing director Christobell Giles. She described the initiative as a “cathedral to wine,” designed to immerse visitors in the winemaking process and connect them directly with the stories and passion behind every bottle. Giles emphasised that wine should be “alive, expressive, and social,” rather than “living on a dusty shelf,” capturing Vagabond’s philosophy of making wine a vivacious and interactive experience.

Majestic Group chief executive John Colley added that the project had been in planning for several months, with the first guests expected later this year. He noted that the investment demonstrated Majestic’s confidence in Vagabond’s potential and its intention to expand the brand beyond London to major towns and cities across the UK. This aligns with Majestic’s broader strategic vision following its purchase of Vagabond in April 2024, which secured nine operational venues and preserved over 170 jobs. The acquisition, seen as a strategic effort to engage younger wine consumers and enhance Majestic’s hospitality presence, excluded underperforming locations such as Vagabond’s Canary Wharf and two Gatwick Airport sites.

Vagabond has built a reputation since its 2010 founding as a pioneer in urban wine discovery, with bars offering over 100 wines by the glass via self-serve machines, creating a distinctive customer experience centred on accessibility and exploration. The brand’s commitment to urban winemaking is evidenced by its existing small-scale winery in Battersea, London, where it produces award-winning wines from grapes sourced within a two-hour radius to underline sustainability and locality. This artisanal approach reflects Vagabond’s philosophy of minimal intervention, working with nature to craft wines that are expressive of their environment.

The forthcoming Canada Water site aims to build on this ethos but on an unprecedented scale, combining the winery with social spaces and a bar that invites visitors to engage fully with the winemaking journey. Majestic conveys optimism about doubling Vagabond’s estate footprint in the next three years, with new bars planned for St Paul’s and Liverpool Street later this year, signalling clear ambitions for national expansion.

This initiative not only secures Vagabond’s future but also marks a significant evolution in the UK wine scene, bringing production and consumption closer together in vibrant urban settings. By integrating winemaking with interactive social environments and self-pour technology, Vagabond and Majestic seek to redefine how wine is experienced, targeting a demographic eager for discovery and participation in the beverage’s craftsmanship.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/news/majestic-backs-project-to-build-uks-largest-urban-winery-by-vagabond-wines/707377.article), [[4]](https://www.feastmagazine.org/news/majestic-successfully-acquires-vagabond-wines/), [[2]](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2024/04/majestic-completes-acquisition-of-vagabond-wines/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/news/majestic-backs-project-to-build-uks-largest-urban-winery-by-vagabond-wines/707377.article), [[6]](https://www.vagabondwines.co.uk/urban-winery), [[7]](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2017/12/indie-retailer-vagabond-opens-urban-winery-at-battersea-power-station/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/news/majestic-backs-project-to-build-uks-largest-urban-winery-by-vagabond-wines/707377.article), [[2]](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2024/04/majestic-completes-acquisition-of-vagabond-wines/), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/business/business-news/majestic-buys-wine-bar-chain-vagabond-from-administration-b1149573.html), [[4]](https://www.feastmagazine.org/news/majestic-successfully-acquires-vagabond-wines/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://www.vagabondwines.co.uk/about/), [[6]](https://www.vagabondwines.co.uk/urban-winery), [[7]](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2017/12/indie-retailer-vagabond-opens-urban-winery-at-battersea-power-station/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/news/majestic-backs-project-to-build-uks-largest-urban-winery-by-vagabond-wines/707377.article), [[2]](https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2024/04/majestic-completes-acquisition-of-vagabond-wines/), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/business/business-news/majestic-buys-wine-bar-chain-vagabond-from-administration-b1149573.html), [[4]](https://www.feastmagazine.org/news/majestic-successfully-acquires-vagabond-wines/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/news/majestic-backs-project-to-build-uks-largest-urban-winery-by-vagabond-wines/707377.article> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2024/04/majestic-completes-acquisition-of-vagabond-wines/> - In April 2024, Majestic Wine completed the acquisition of Vagabond Wines, a move that secured the future of nine Vagabond venues and over 170 jobs. This strategic purchase aims to bolster Majestic's growth by engaging with a younger demographic of wine consumers and enhancing its business-to-business operations. The acquisition underscores Majestic's commitment to expanding its presence in the hospitality sector and supporting the long-term growth of the Vagabond brand.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/business/business-news/majestic-buys-wine-bar-chain-vagabond-from-administration-b1149573.html> - Majestic Wine has successfully acquired Vagabond Wines from administration, ensuring the continuation of nine Vagabond venues and the employment of 171 staff members. The acquisition excludes Vagabond's underperforming Canary Wharf site and two Gatwick Airport locations. Majestic plans to invest in Vagabond's long-term future and explore opportunities to open additional wine bars when suitable prospects arise.
4. <https://www.feastmagazine.org/news/majestic-successfully-acquires-vagabond-wines/> - Majestic Wine has completed the acquisition of Vagabond Wines, adding nine wine bars to its portfolio and securing over 170 jobs. This move is part of Majestic's strategy to expand its customer base, particularly targeting a younger demographic of wine enthusiasts. The acquisition also aims to enhance Majestic's business-to-business operations, aligning with its growth objectives in the hospitality sector.
5. <https://www.vagabondwines.co.uk/about/> - Vagabond Wines, founded in 2010, has grown from a single wine shop in Fulham to a chain of wine bars focused on discovery and experience. Each bar offers over 100 high-quality wines by the glass, served through self-serve wine machines. The company is committed to making wine accessible to all and has expanded its presence with multiple locations in London and Birmingham.
6. <https://www.vagabondwines.co.uk/urban-winery> - Vagabond Wines operates an urban winery in Battersea, London, where they produce award-winning wines using minimal intervention techniques. The winery sources grapes from vineyards within two hours of London, emphasizing sustainability and a sense of place in their wines. The facility is compact and artisanal, reflecting Vagabond's philosophy of working with nature to create exceptional wines.
7. <https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2017/12/indie-retailer-vagabond-opens-urban-winery-at-battersea-power-station/> - In December 2017, Vagabond Wines opened an urban winery at the iconic Battersea Power Station. This new venue features a small-scale winery that allows customers to observe the wine-making process firsthand. The bar offers tastings and workshops, providing city dwellers with an insight into wine production without the need to visit traditional vineyards.