When Wine Meets Vision

Interview by Marzena Mróz
with Adrian Trofim, CEO of Mimi Group.

1

CASTEL MIMI HAS EVOLVED FROM A TRADITIONAL WINERY INTO A FULL-SCALE WINE RESORT. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR JOURNEY IN TRANSFORMING IT INTO ONE OF THE MOST RECOGNIZED ENOTOURISM DESTINATIONS IN THE REGION?

My father taught us—me and my sister—how to build a legacy, and he continues to do so. Our mission is to create a sustainable business with a long-term development strategy that we can pass on to the next generation. We do not seek short-term profits; instead, we constantly evaluate the long-term impact of our decisions.

Our winery has gone through many challenges, which have shaped who we are today. The Russian embargo on Moldovan wines was a turning point that transformed the entire industry. It pushed us to diversify our business.

ADRIAN TROFIM

Is the CEO of Mimi Group and one of the key figures behind the transformation of Castel Mimi into a leading enotourism destination in Eastern Europe. Representing a new generation of leadership, he combines respect for family heritage with a forward-looking, strategic approach to business development. Under his guidance, Castel Mimi has evolved from a traditional winery into a diversified hospitality ecosystem, integrating wine production, premium tourism, wellness, and international events. Trofim is known for his focus on long-term growth, sustainability, and innovation, as well as his ability to navigate complex challenges—from geopolitical instability to global crises. He actively promotes Moldova on international markets, positioning it as an emerging destination for premium wine tourism.

Today, we have both horizontal diversification—such as producing brandy through wine distillation—and vertical diversification, expanding into services like wine tours, hospitality, a hotel, and a wine spa. All of this was a response to market changes. Our flexibility allowed us to adapt quickly, make fast decisions, and continuously transform.

The past few years have not been easy: COVID-19, the regional energy crisis in 2021, the war starting in 2022 and continuing into 2026—these brought significant risks and uncertainties. However, we embrace challenges and aim to position ourselves differently from the mainstream market.

2

MOLDOVA IS INCREASINGLY POSITIONING ITSELF ON THE MAP OF PREMIUM WINE TOURISM. IN YOUR VIEW, WHAT SETS CASTEL MIMI APART FROM OTHER EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS?

At Castel Mimi, everything we do meets not only legal requirements but also international standards. This builds trust and credibility with international clients.

We have created a place where every type of client can find a suitable experience. What makes us unique is the combination of products and services under one roof.

Guests can take a wine tour and learn about production, create and blend their own wine, dine in one of the best restaurants in Moldova, or relax in our wine spa with treatments such as massages and wine baths. This diversity of experiences defines our uniqueness.

3

HOW DO YOU DESIGN THE EXPERIENCE FOR BUSINESS TRAVELERS? WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS THAT MATTER MOST FOR THE MICE AND PREMIUM SEGMENTS?

For business travelers, we offer a highly tailored approach. While we provide a wide range of standard options, our strength lies in customization.

The combination of Castel Mimi and our city-center property, Mimi Hotel in Chișinău, gives us great flexibility. We can offer both an urban business experience and a retreat environment away from traffic and distractions.

Castel Mimi Wine Resort redefining Wine Tourism in Europe.

The most important element in business hospitality is meeting—and exceeding—client expectations. We design our services with great attention to detail, focusing on small elements that create a significant overall impact.

4

HOW IMPORTANT ARE AUTHENTICITY AND HERITAGE WHEN BUILDING A MODERN LUXURY HOSPITALITY PRODUCT?

Authenticity is part of our DNA. While it may not always be the most visible element, it is the foundation on which we build everything.

It helps create identity and gives guests a reason to return. We aim to deliver international-level experiences infused with local character—whether visual, cultural, or gastronomic.

We are proud of our heritage and culture, and we want to share it with the world.

5

HOW ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF BUSINESS TRAVELERS EVOLVING IN TERMS OF LEISURE AND REGENERATION? ARE YOU SEEING A RISE IN TRENDS SUCH AS SLOW BUSINESS TRAVEL OR WORKATION?

Our leisure offering has recently expanded to include wellness and spa services. Naturally, these experiences are closely connected to wine, as this is our foundation—everything from design and therapies to cosmetics is wine-based.

We are already seeing that people are increasingly looking for places where they can disconnect from daily routines and focus on themselves. Castel Mimi provides exactly that environment.

Workation is also becoming more popular. We see this trend especially at Mimi Hotel in the city center, where guests combine work with exploring Moldova, including visiting our winery.

6

CASTEL MIMI HOSTS A GROWING NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL EVENTS. WHICH PROJECTS OR EVENTS HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY MILESTONE MOMENTS FOR YOU?

One of the biggest challenges for us was hosting the EPC Summit in 2023. It required six months of preparation and involved the highest level of security, with 49 heads of state attending.

Timing was critical—everything had to be executed to the second. Successfully delivering such a complex event was a defining milestone for our team.

Another recent and very interesting project was hosting the filming of a Romanian movie in May. The first part of the film was very popular in Romania, and the second part was partially filmed at Castel Mimi.

For our team, those two weeks were both very demanding and exciting, as we had to adapt our operations to the needs of a full production crew while maintaining our usual standards of service. At this stage, we cannot share more details, but it was a valuable and unique experience for us.

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7

HOW DO YOU BALANCE WINEMAKING TRADITION WITH INNOVATION – BOTH IN WINE PRODUCTION AND IN MANAGING THE RESORT?

Winemaking is deeply rooted in tradition. However, certain processes require the highest standards of hygiene and advanced technology to ensure top quality.

We use innovation to enhance quality while preserving traditional methods. For example, apart from sulfites, we do not add anything else to our wines, even though many producers use additional techniques.

The same philosophy applies to our resort. We combine tradition and innovation—historic buildings are complemented by modern infrastructure built to the highest standards. This balance is key to our success.

8

WHAT DOES YOUR COLLABORATION WITH INTERNATIONAL MARKETS LOOK LIKE? IS POLAND AN IMPORTANT MARKET FOR YOU?

International collaboration is essential for our long-term growth. We currently export to over 20 countries and focus on building strong, lasting partnerships based on quality and trust.

Poland is an important and promising market for us, especially in the premium wine segment. Our wines are already available through local partners, including www.winnicemoldawii.pl/.

We aim to further strengthen our presence in Poland and promote not only our products but also Moldova as an emerging wine tourism destination.

9

SUSTAINABILITY IS BECOMING A KEY FOCUS IN HOSPITALITY. WHAT INITIATIVES HAS CASTEL MIMI IMPLEMENTED IN THIS AREA?

Sustainability is fully integrated into the Castel Mimi ecosystem. We approach it not as a trend, but as a long-term commitment.

We have installed 387 kW of photovoltaic capacity and operate with a diversified energy mix that includes solar energy, electricity, heat pumps, and energy recovered from production residues. Our hotel is the first in Moldova designed to operate with zero emissions.

We follow a circular economy model—100% of our winemaking residues are reused. Grape by-products are transformed into natural fertilizers, while distillation waste is used for energy production.

We also cultivate 7.8 hectares of certified organic vineyards and continuously invest in sustainable packaging solutions. Through our Smartpacking initiative, we use recycled and fully recyclable PET packaging, reducing CO_2 emissions by up to 77%.

Beyond environmental impact, we are committed to our community: 67% of our employees are from the local region and we actively support social and cultural projects in Anenii Noi.

10

WHAT ARE YOUR DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR THE COMING YEARS? CAN WE EXPECT NEW INVESTMENTS OR CONCEPTS?

Looking ahead, we plan to continue investing in the diversification of our business, following the same long-term development philosophy.

One of our key projects is the expansion of the Castel Mimi distillery, where we plan to produce whiskey. At this stage, we cannot share more details, but it represents a natural evolution of our portfolio.

We will also continue to develop new experiences within the resort, particularly in the wellness and premium hospitality segments.

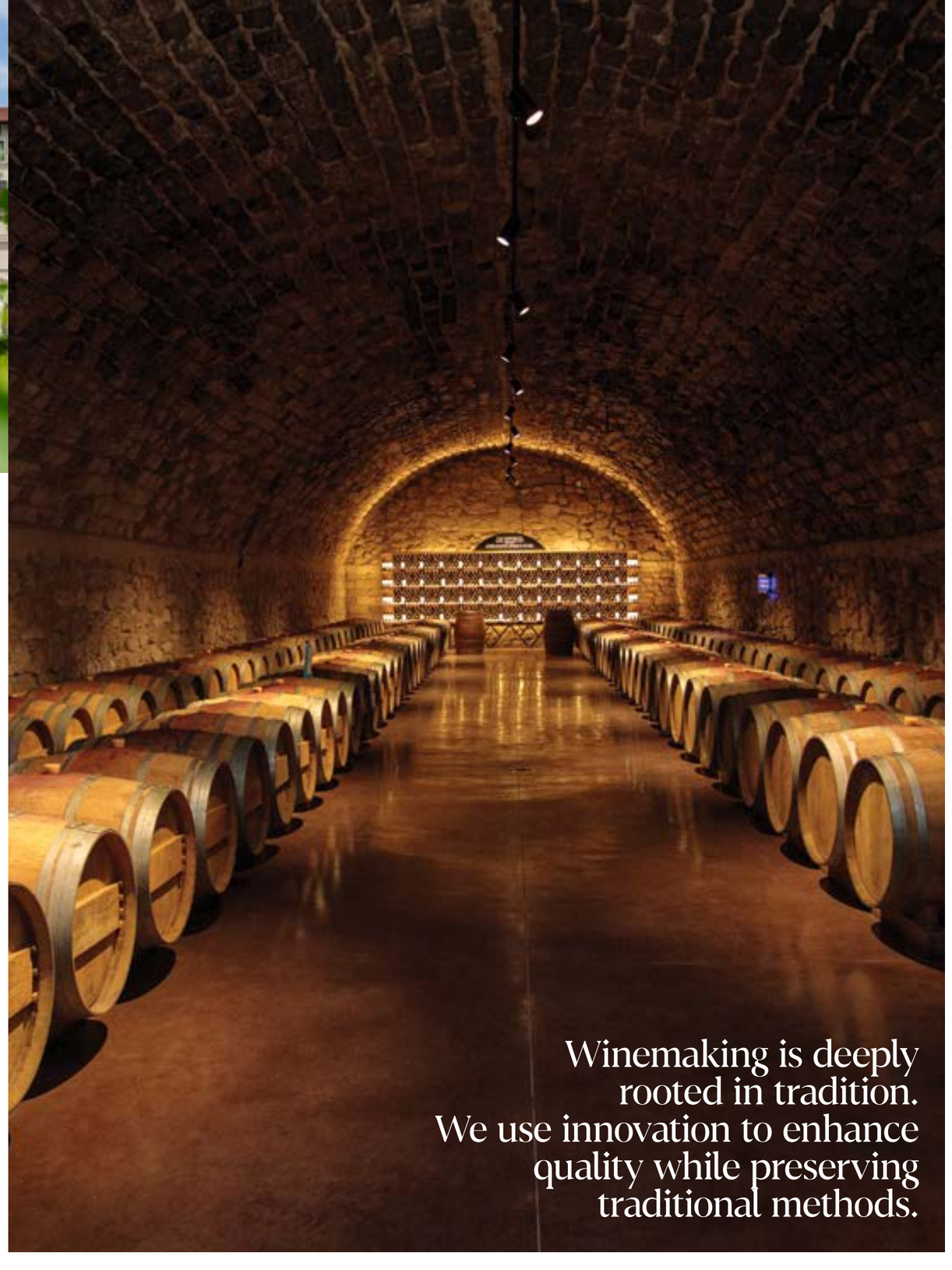
11

IF YOU HAD TO GIVE ONE COMPELLING REASON WHY A BUSINESS LEADER SHOULD VISIT CASTEL MIMI – WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Castel Mimi is more than a destination – it is a reliable long-term partner.

We have built a flexible and sustainable business model that allows us to adapt quickly to market changes while maintaining high international standards. For a potential partner, visiting Castel Mimi means understanding our vision, our capabilities, and our commitment to quality.

It is an opportunity to explore real collaboration potential—whether in distribution, hospitality, events, or new joint concepts—within a unique ecosystem that combines tradition, innovation, and scalability. »



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