
2025 Portuguese Market Annual Report

Manager/Chair: Therese Garces

Committee: Diana Balelo, Maria Silva, Andrea Brito, Ashley Barandiaran, Deo Holmquist, Darlene Byrne, Barbara Hosaka, Chris DaRosa, David Tavares, Rosemarie Silva, Natalie A. Virissimo, Gayle Frank, Rod Guidi, Grace Drummond

“Volunteers don’t get paid, not because they’re worthless, but because they’re priceless.” – Sherry Anderson

In 2011, members of our community founded the Portuguese Market to share Portugal's culture locally. Fourteen years later, the market remains committed to its original vision. Thanks to teamwork and dedication, the current committee continues to serve the community effectively. We strive to acquire new knowledge each day and maximize its benefit. However, it has been essential to thoroughly understand the market's complexities. While our efforts may not yield substantial financial returns, they play an important role in serving both the local community and visitors. Many who travel to Portugal leave with memorable experiences and speak highly of their time there. It is such a rewarding feeling to help our visitors relive Portugal through our little market.

The Market extends sincere appreciation to our community for their ongoing support and to our dedicated employees. We would like to acknowledge Alyssa Barandiaran (Employee of the Year), Gayle Frank, Rosemarie Silva, and our valued volunteers—Barbara Hosaka, Diana Balelo, and Maria Silva—as well as myself, for their exceptional commitment to sustaining our market operations. Each team member brings unique expertise, and their collaboration has greatly contributed to the Market's efficiency.

We reported a notably strong holiday season, surpassing our December 2024 figures by \$7,000. Online shopping activity increased by 74% compared to 2024. Operating entirely with volunteer efforts for packing and shipping poses challenges, yet it fosters a sense of unity within our group.

Following the completion of the 2025 Profit & Loss review, it was determined that shipping fees were not accurately recorded. Moving forward, shipping and handling costs will be included for 2026. We are confident that this issue has been addressed and that all shipping expenses will be properly documented in 2026. Experiences such as these are essential to our ongoing process of continuous improvement.

In 2025, we held two dinners and two wine-tasting events with great success. We also prepared one dinner for a Fado Night hosted and sung by Amanda DaRosa. All our dinners and wine events are fun and very successful. I am incredibly grateful to our distributors who come to our wine events to explain their wines and how to pair wines with special foods. We appreciate our loyal customers who attend our special events and invite more of you to give us a try.

The inventory crew volunteers for 4-5 hours each month to handle tasks like lifting boxes, counting products, checking expiration dates, and working in cold freezers. Diana Balelo, Gayle Frank, Rosemarie Silva, Natalie A. Virissimo, Grace Drummond, Chris DaRosa, Andrea Brito, and Rod Guidi ensure the job gets done. Special thanks to Manuel Balelo for helping with shipments and to Rod Guidi for cutting cheese. Thanks to these volunteers, market demand is met efficiently.

Highlights:

We enjoy strong relationships with our distributors and appreciate their invitations to dinners and wine tastings. Southern Glaziers values our long partnership, noting us as their oldest customers. The Market will continue to host events like dinners, wine tastings, and Festa da Lapa, enhancing its presence through social media.

Thanks to our marketing team—Tess Bloom, Ashley Barandiaran, Darlene Byrne, Jeanette Simoes, and Alana Redmond—the Portuguese Market ranked among the top 3 winners in customer satisfaction, brand reputation, and service excellence in the 2025 Western San Diego Awards, as recognized by Google.

Congratulations to the 2025 Festa Byrne Family on a successful festa, and best wishes to the 2026 Festa Pamela Rodrigues Family.

Respectfully,

Therese Garces