fordham

December 2025 market update: How the year ended and what's ahead

By Fordham

22 January 2026

In our December 2025 Quarterly Market Update, we explore what's been driving markets and the key developments investors are watching closely. The past year proved challenging for investors, with Donald Trump's administration taking a far more aggressive approach to governing and international relations than many anticipated. Whilst we were on-guard (our publication this time last year was aptly titled 'A Bull in a China Shop'), the speed and degree of turmoil exceeded our expectations.

Please note: except where otherwise noted or quoted, the views in this article are those of Perpetual Private's Investment Research Team.

Download the report

Fortunately, markets were able to shrug off the worst fears, climbing the proverbial 'wall of worry', and leading most indices to meaningfully outpace our expectation baseline. However, though returns remain high, so too does risk, with the first two weeks of 2026 already witnessing the arrest of Venezuela's President Maduro, escalating attacks by the Trump administration on the independence of the Federal Reserve, and escalating unrest in Iran.

This quarter's report delves into the main factors dominating the global economy and investment markets, whilst our Special Article considers the return of Great Power geopolitical dynamics.

Download the report

This information has been prepared by Fordham Business Advisors Pty Ltd (Fordham) ABN 77 140 981 853. Fordham's liability is limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation. It is general information only and is not intended to provide you with advice or take into account your objectives, financial situation or needs. You should consider, with a financial adviser, whether the information is suitable for your circumstances. To the extent permitted by law, no liability is accepted for any loss or damage as a result of any reliance on this information. This information is believed to be accurate at the time of compilation and is provided in good faith. Fordham is a subsidiary of Perpetual Limited ABN 86 000 431 827.