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Italian Wine Exports to the U.S. Rose Nearly 10% in July

The uptick narrowed the seven-month shortfall to -11%. Producers warned that the market remained fragile.

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Italian wine exports to the United States showed a modest recovery in July, offering some relief after months of weakness in the industry’s most important foreign market.

The Unione Italiana Vini, or UIV, said Monday that official trade data pointed to a year-over-year increase of nearly 10% in export value in July. Export volumes rose 1.3%, while the average price increased by more than 8%. The figures mark a small improvement for Italian producers that have been dealing with soft demand and a difficult trading environment in the United States.

UIV said the July result helped narrow the cumulative decline for the first seven months of the year. The shortfall stood at -11% through July, compared with -14% through June. The group said that if current estimates for August are confirmed, the decline could improve further to around -9.5%.

The organization also said August could post an even stronger performance than July. Still, it warned that the comparison comes against a weak base. In the same two-month summer period of 2025, Italian wine exports to the United States had posted combined losses close to -30%, making any rebound easier to achieve in statistical terms.

Paolo Castelletti, UIV’s secretary-general, said it was too early to call the recent data a real turnaround in transatlantic shipments. He said U.S. consumer demand has not yet shown a meaningful restart, even as the latest numbers suggest some easing in market pressure. According to Castelletti, the industry had not seen two consecutive positive months since the beginning of 2025.

That matters well beyond a single monthly trade report because the United States remains the main overseas outlet for Italian wine. A more stable U.S. market could reduce pressure on producers, exporters, distributors and retailers tied to the wine business, while continued volatility could spill into the broader beverage trade by affecting pricing, inventory planning and promotional activity.

The summer rebound comes ahead of key fall trade events in the United States, including Vinitaly in New York in October, where Italian producers will try to reinforce relationships with importers and buyers. Industry representatives view those meetings as especially important at a time when the market remains fragile and competition for shelf space and restaurant placements is tight.

UIV said several risks are still weighing on the outlook for European wine in the United States. Among them is an overcapacity investigation that could lead to additional tariffs. Castelletti also pointed to persistent inflation and the resulting pressure on household purchasing power, factors that can hurt demand for imported wine even when shipments temporarily improve.

Those risks have particular relevance for the drinks sector because wine producers depend on a long supply chain that includes logistics providers, U.S. wholesalers, restaurants, specialty stores and large retail channels. Any new tariffs or further demand weakness could quickly affect not only export volumes but also margins and pricing across the market.

The group said the latest figures should also be viewed in the context of a very weak full marketing year. On an inflation-adjusted basis, Italy closed what UIV described as the worst recent “marketing year” for wine exports to the United States. The period from Aug. 1, 2025, to July 31, 2026, ended with deflated export value of €1.634 billion, which UIV said was the lowest level since the 2015/2016 marketing year. It said volumes over the same period were also the weakest since then.

Compared with the previous five marketing years, the real decline amounted to -15%, according to UIV. That measure suggests that even with the July improvement, Italian wine sales in the United States remain well below the levels seen before the latest downturn.

The data underscore how much of the current improvement is still partial. A rise in value can reflect higher prices as well as stronger demand, and July’s 1.3% increase in volume was far smaller than the gain in export value. The 8% increase in average price may help producers defend revenue, but it can also make the market more sensitive if U.S. consumers continue to cut discretionary spending.

For Italian wineries, the United States has long been a critical market for premium and mass-market labels alike. A sustained recovery would support cash flow and reduce pressure after a difficult year, especially for producers that rely heavily on exports. But the latest numbers do not yet show a broad return to growth, and UIV’s own comments point to continued caution about the months ahead.

Trade groups and exporters will now be watching the August data closely to see whether the expected improvement holds. Even if it does, the sector will still be measuring the rebound against a period that had already been exceptionally weak, while keeping a close eye on U.S. consumption trends, trade policy risks and the cost pressures that continue to shape the market.