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Italian wine exports to the United States rose nearly 17% in the third quarter

Industry groups said the rebound may reflect inventory restocking because U.S. consumption of Italian wine remained down 5.3%

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Italian wine exports to the United States rose in the third quarter, giving producers some relief after about a year and a half of decline, but industry representatives said the improvement does not yet show a clear recovery in underlying demand.

Data published Tuesday, November 10 by L’Informatore Agrario, citing the Italian wine trade group Unione Italiana Vini, or UIV, showed that the value of Italian wine shipments to the U.S. increased by nearly 17% from July through September. Export volumes to the U.S. rose 6.6% in the same period.

That rebound narrowed the decline for the year through September. Italian wine exports to the U.S. were down 6% on a cumulative basis at the end of September, compared with a 14% drop in the first half of the year. The U.S. remains the world’s largest wine market and a key destination for Italian producers, so the improvement carries weight beyond one quarter’s sales figures.

The recovery in the American market also supported broader export performance outside the European Union. In the first nine months of 2026, Italian wine exports showed signs of improvement after a weak start to the year. After a 5.3% drop in the first seven months, exports to non-EU markets rose 8% in value during the third quarter, reducing the cumulative decline to 3%. By the end of September, sales in those markets had reached about 3.3 billion euros, for more than 740 million liters.

UIV said, however, that the crisis should not be considered over. Consumption of Italian wine in the United States remained down 5.3%, according to the group, and the recent increase in imports may have been driven mainly by buyers rebuilding inventories rather than by a real restart in demand. For wine companies and other beverage exporters, that difference could be important because a restocking cycle may lift orders temporarily without signaling a lasting improvement in retail sales. That can affect production schedules, sales planning and inventory decisions in the U.S. market.

Outside the United States, the overall picture in major non-EU markets remained weak, with some exceptions. L’Informatore Agrario reported that exports were still growing in Russia, China and Brazil, even as other leading destinations continued to show limited momentum.

Despite difficulties linked to restrictions introduced by Washington, the U.S. market is still a top priority for Italian wineries. According to a recent UIV survey, nearly 75% of companies said the American market was their main target for promotional spending.

The sector is also watching a U.S. investigation into overcapacity, which examines whether a country is producing far more than its domestic market can absorb. The inquiry includes the beverage sector and could lead to new trade measures against European products, adding another source of uncertainty for Italian wine exporters trying to rebuild sales in the United States.