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Spain Remained Tequila’s Second-Largest Export Market Through October 2026

Imports fell 7.5% in 2025 to 7.1 million liters, leaving Spain behind only the United States

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Spain remained tequila’s second-largest export market in 2025 and through October 2026, even as imports slowed from their recent peak, according to data from Mexico’s Tequila Regulatory Council, or CRT.

The regulator said Spain imported 7.1 million liters of tequila in 2025, down 7.5% from 2024. Through October 2026, imports reached 6.6 million liters, keeping Spain ahead of Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany among tequila's foreign markets. Only the U.S. imported more.

The figures show two trends at once. In the short term, growth has cooled after a strong run. In the longer term, Spain is buying far more tequila than it did a decade ago or at the start of the century, making it the leading market in Europe for the spirit and one of the most important destinations for Mexican producers outside the U.S.

CRT data cited by Xataka on Saturday, November 14, show how sharply the market has expanded over time. Spain imported 773,016 liters in 2000. That rose to 2,014,138 liters in 2005, 3,440,321 liters in 2010 and 3,904,484 liters in 2015. Imports were 2,819,095 liters in 2020, then climbed to 7,065,361 liters in 2025. Before the pandemic, Spain imported 3.7 million liters in 2019.

That longer view helps explain why a recent decline has not changed Spain's place in the global ranking. Even with the drop recorded in 2025 and a softer pace through October 2026, the country is still importing roughly double the volumes seen in 2019 and far more than it did in the early 2000s.

The CRT is the industry body that oversees tequila's denomination of origin. It brings together agave growers, distilleries, bottlers and distributors, and it monitors whether the product meets the legal standards tied to tequila's protected geographic origin. According to the regulator, tequila can only be produced in 181 municipalities across the Mexican states of Jalisco, Michoacán, Guanajuato, Nayarit and Tamaulipas.

The rise in Spain has not been limited to import volumes. The CRT has also pointed to a wider presence for tequila in Spain's hospitality market, especially in bars, restaurants and hotels that present the category as more than a party drink or a low-cost shot. Earlier in 2026, the council awarded its Distintivo T recognition to 29 businesses in Spain for promoting tequila culture and meeting quality standards in how they handle and serve the spirit. Internationally, the certification has been granted to a little more than 150 businesses, making Spain a significant share of that total.

That suggests part of tequila’s expansion in Spain is tied to premiumization and a broader cocktail culture, not only to higher shipment volumes. Specialty cocktail bars, Mexican restaurants and venues focused on agave spirits have become easier to find in major Spanish cities, while more brands are trying to position tequila as an artisanal or premium product rather than a mass-market import.

Even so, tequila remains a small category in Spain’s overall spirits market. The latest annual report from Espirituosos de España estimated tequila accounts for about 0.9% of commercialized spirits volume in the country. That is far below whisky at 22.2%, gin at 16.6%, rum at 15.3%, brandy at 6.9%, vodka at 5.2% and anise spirits at 4.8%.

Those numbers show that tequila’s rise has been strong in relative terms, but it has not yet put the category close to Spain’s main spirits segments. The gap also helps explain why even a small gain in tequila’s share can matter for producers and distributors. A market that is still small in aggregate volume can offer room for growth if consumers keep trading into cocktails, premium imports and higher-margin bar offerings.

For the beverage industry, Spain’s position matters because it gives Mexican exporters, Spanish importers and hospitality operators a large market outside the U.S. to watch closely. If the category keeps gaining visibility in bars and restaurants despite the recent import slowdown, companies across spirits distribution and on-trade sales may adjust purchasing plans, brand launches and shelf space around tequila’s ability to keep taking share from more established imported liquors.