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Italian wine export decline narrowed to 3% through August

August shipments rose 5.1%, with exports to the United States jumping 21.1%, easing losses in Italy’s biggest wine market

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Italian wine exports remained below last year’s level through August 2026, but the decline eased as sales improved in several major markets, according to Istat data analyzed by WineNews.

From January through August 2026, Italian wine exports totaled €4.85 billion, down 3% from the same period in 2025. That was a smaller decline than earlier in the year. Through July, exports were down 5.3%, and at the halfway point of 2026 they were down 6.2%, according to the analysis. The Istat release cited by WineNews did not include volume figures, so the reported changes refer to export value.

August brought a clearer sign of improvement. Italian wine exports worldwide reached €506.8 million in August 2026, up 5.1% from August 2025. The monthly increase did not erase the year-to-date drop, but it narrowed the gap and suggested that demand strengthened late in the summer after a weaker first half.

The United States remained the largest foreign market for Italian wine and showed one of the strongest monthly rebounds. In August 2026, exports to the U.S. rose 21.1% from a year earlier to €112.1 million, compared with €92.5 million in August 2025. For the first eight months of 2026, exports to the U.S. reached €1.1 billion. That was still down 8.3% from the same period in 2025, but it marked an improvement from the 11.2% decline recorded through July.

Germany, the leading European market for Italian wine, also showed a better trend than earlier in the year, although sales were still below 2025 levels. Exports to Germany totaled €701.4 million from January through August 2026, a decline of 5.5%. The United Kingdom imported €479.1 million worth of Italian wine over the same period, also down 5.5%, improving from a 6.3% drop through July.

Other established markets remained weaker than a year earlier. Exports to Canada fell to €265.8 million, down 6.1%. Sales to France slipped to €203.3 million, a decline of 3%. The Netherlands accounted for €159.2 million, down 2.3%. Sweden was broadly stable at €126.5 million and posted a slight increase, according to the WineNews analysis.

In Asia, Japan came close to matching its 2025 level. Italian wine exports there reached €120.8 million through August 2026, down 1.2%. China showed stronger momentum. Exports to China rose 21.7% to more than €51 million, continuing what WineNews described as a positive trend driven mainly by Italian sparkling wines.

Russia was another market with strong growth. Exports to Russia reached €140.6 million in the first eight months of 2026, up 24.2% from the same period a year earlier. That increase stood out against the broader picture of softer sales in many traditional destinations.

The data suggest that Italy’s wine sector is still dealing with a difficult international market, even as the figures improve month by month. The largest three export destinations, the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom, all remained below their 2025 values on a year-to-date basis through August 2026, but each showed better performance than in earlier readings this year.

Wine is one of Italy’s most important agricultural and food exports, so changes in demand in those markets carry significant weight for producers, bottlers and exporters. The latest numbers point to a slower rate of decline rather than a full recovery. Even so, the improvement between the first half of the year and the August reading indicates that stronger summer sales helped limit losses, especially in the U.S., where the month of August delivered a sharp year-over-year increase.

Because the available Istat figures did not include export volumes, the data do not show whether the changes came from shifts in quantities shipped, pricing, or product mix. But in value terms, the pattern through August 2026 was clear: the market remained under pressure compared with 2025, while the shortfall narrowed as several key destinations posted better results and sparkling wine helped lift sales in China.