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United Kingdom sets new records: wine imports surpass £4 billion for the first time

Despite decreased volume, wine import value soars by 20.7% in the UK

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In an unprecedented development, the United Kingdom shattered records in its wine purchases, surpassing £4 billion for the first time. The year 2022 witnessed a notable shift in the dynamics of wine imports within the UK. According to information from British customs, there was a 1.6% decrease in the volume of wine imported by the

United Kingdom, reaching 1,299.2 million liters. This milestone marks the first time in 12 years that the volume of wine imports exceeded 1.3 billion liters, demonstrating a significant contrast to the 1,415 million liters recorded in 2020. Notably, in 2020, the country stockpiled wine in anticipation of potential import obstacles due to Brexit, despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

However, despite the decline in volume, the value of wine imports in the United Kingdom surged by 20.7% in 2022, reaching approximately £4.077 billion. This marked the first time that wine imports exceeded £4 billion, signifying a substantial increase in value. Additionally, the average price rose by 22.7% to £3.14 per liter, setting a new historical record by surpassing the £3 mark.

Analyzing the trends since the turn of the century, wine imports in the United Kingdom have experienced a higher compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in value, witnessing a 4.2% increase compared to a 1.7% growth in volume. This can be attributed, in part, to the significant rise in the average price, which surged from £1.85 per liter in the year 2000 to £3.14 in 2022. In terms of volume, imports rose from 896 million liters to 1,299 million liters during this period, while the value increased from £1.662 billion to £4.077 billion. As of the end of 2022, the United Kingdom positioned itself as the third-largest wine importer in the world in terms of volume, trailing behind the United States and Germany, and the second-largest in terms of value, only surpassed by the United States.

When examining the wine categories, it was observed that in 2022, the United Kingdom imported a lesser volume of bottled wine, nearly the same quantity of sparkling and bulk wine, and significantly more bag-in-box wine. Among these categories, only bag-in-box wine experienced a decrease in price. Bottled wine dominated imports with 633.3 million liters and £2.489 billion, accounting for approximately 49% of the volume and 61% of the total expenditure. Sparkling wine also witnessed a growth in value, reaching £1.017 billion, a significant increase of 39.8%. Bulk wine experienced a partial recovery in value compared to 2021, reaching £533 million, a 9.8% increase.

Regarding bag-in-box wine, the United Kingdom witnessed a staggering 157% increase in volume and an 89% increase in value, reaching 23.2 million liters and £37.9 million, respectively. The average price of bag-in-box wine was 26.6% lower, standing at £1.63 per liter.

Historically, bottled wine has been the leading import category in the United Kingdom year after year, although it has lost market share over time. In the year 2000, it accounted for 83.7% of the total imported volume, compared to 48.7% in 2022. Larger volume containers of wine, including bulk and bag-in-box, have gained relevance, rising from 12.4% to 38.3% of the total.

Furthermore, the United Kingdom spent more than ever before on wine from France, Italy, and Spain. Italy witnessed a significant growth in volume, solidifying its leadership in this aspect, although it still lags behind France in terms of value. Spain concluded the year as the third-largest vendor in value and the fourth-largest in volume.