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Sustained surge in japanese wine imports sets new records

2022 marks a notable leap in wine importation with a 31.1% increase in value

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Japan, the leading Asian nation in wine consumption, experienced a significant upsurge in its wine imports in 2022, setting new historic highs both in volume and value, according to data from the Japan Customs Agency.

In 2022, Japan saw a 31.1% increase in the value of imported wine and an 8.9% rise in volume, pushing the average price up by 20.4% to a high of 924.27 yen per litre, a figure that dramatically surpasses the previous record set in 2007 of 871.60 yen. Overall, the Asian nation imported a whopping 265.5 million litres, a record volume since 2019, reaching an unequivocal historical peak in value at 245.429 billion yen, overtaking the previous record from 2019 of 195.731 billion yen.

Translated into Euros at the current exchange rate, Japan imported wine worth approximately 1.744 billion € in 2022, at an average price of 6.57 €/litre, which is significantly higher than the global trade average. For 20 consecutive months, from May 2021 to December 2022, Japan registered outstanding growth in the value of its wine imports, a trend interrupted only in November 2022, which recorded a drop in volume by 13.5%.

A new global position for japan in wine expenditure

Thanks to this growth, Japan consolidated its position in 2022 as the world's fifth-highest wine spender, and unsurprisingly, the top in Asia.

Comparing data from the beginning of the century, Japan's wine imports have grown at a faster Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) in terms of value (+4.9%) than volume (+2.2%), as the average price nearly doubled during this period. This increase in price is attributed to both the price increase across all product categories and the improved performance of higher-value wines.

Breakdown of wine types and their market impact

All types of wine observed significant growth in both value and volume in 2022, with prices rising remarkably compared to 2021, which had already seen price increases across all categories. Packaged wine led Japanese purchases with 166 million litres (+5.9%) and 139.134 billion yen (+28.4%), comprising 62.5% of the volume and 56.8% of the total value. This wine type saw the highest price increase (+21.2%) and reached a historic high in value.

Sparkling wine solidified its position as the second most imported wine type, with 44.4 million litres (+15.1%) and 96.624 billion yen (+35%), accounting for 16.7% of the volume and 39.4% of the total expenditure. Following several negative years, bulk purchases grew in 2022 by 11.4% in volume and 30.2% in value, reaching 39 million litres and 5.660 billion yen. Lastly, the bag-in-box wine reached 16.1 million litres (+20%) and 3.831 billion yen (+38.8%), marking the highest relative growth. Sparkling wines, bulk wines, and bag-in-box wines saw a price increase of just over 15%.

International suppliers of wine to japan

In 2022, Japan imported wine from a total of 62 international suppliers, though the top 11 represented 99% of the total. All 11 grew in value, with the exception of Germany and Argentina, which both saw around a 5% drop in volume. Chile and Spain were the only countries that did not experience a price increase, maintaining stability.

Despite Chile's volume leadership with 68.8 million litres, France was a dominant force in terms of value, receiving 142.338 billion yen from Japan, equivalent to 58% of the total value, while Chile ranked third with 20.924 billion yen (8.5% of the total). This stark difference in market share can be attributed to the average prices: France recorded an unmatched price of 2,260 yen/litre (+24.3%), while Chile, the most economical, was at 304 yen/litre (+19.8%).

Overview of the key players in the market

Among the 15 leading suppliers, Chile (+8.6% average annual) and Spain (+7.9%) have shown the most growth in volume terms so far this century. In terms of market share, Chile has moved from accounting for 6.5% of the total imported in 2000 to 26% in 2022, and Spain from 5% to 17.2%. Conversely, France (34% to 23.7%), the United States (9.9% to 5.2%), and Germany (7% to 1.4%) have lost market share.

2022 marked a notable year for Japan's wine imports, setting new records and indicating a trend of continued growth. As the world's fifth largest spender on wine, and first in Asia, Japan's thirst for wine continues unabated, supporting global wine markets and stimulating economic activity for its key suppliers. This continued growth is an encouraging sign for the international wine industry, suggesting a prosperous outlook

for the years to come.