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# German wine imports plunge in 2022, U.S. emerges as top global importer

Insights into germany's changing wine import market

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Germany, a significant global player in the wine industry, witnessed a significant decrease in its wine imports in 2022. According to German customs data, the country's wine imports dropped by 9.3% in volume, to 1.34 billion liters, and 4.8% in value, amounting to €2.722 billion. This marks the lowest volume of wine imported by Germany since 2005. Nevertheless, the spending was the second-highest to date,

surpassed only by 2021. The average price surpassed the €2 per liter mark for the first time, with a cost of €2.03/liter, showing a 5% increase.

In a surprising turn of events, Germany was outpaced by the United States as the leading global wine importer in terms of volume. It subsequently dropped to third place in value, following the U.S. and the United Kingdom. From the beginning of the century, German wine imports have grown at an annual compounded average growth rate (CAGR) of only 0.5% in volume and 1.6% in value, transitioning from 1.213 to 1.341 billion liters and from €1.931 to €2.722 billion, respectively. This growth rate is significantly lower than that of global wine trade, causing Germany to lose its share as an importer over the past 22 years.

Further breaking down the import volumes, Germany's import of bulk wine fell by 10.6% in 2022, to 7.27 million hectoliters, following several consecutive years comfortably above 8 million. Bulk wine lost its top position, making up only 54.3% of total imports, followed by bottled wine, with 514.7 million liters, a decrease of 9.3%. This is the lowest volume recorded this century. Sparkling wine follows at a considerable distance, with 69.6 million liters, a 7.5% decrease from a notably successful 2021. The Bag-in-Box (BiB) format gained significance as the only category of wine that saw growth in 2022, reporting its best year to date with 28.8 million liters, a 36% increase.

Despite being significantly lower than bulk wine in volume, bottled wine led the German imports in value with €1.716 billion, which constitutes 63% of the total. This was the only category of wine that saw a decrease in 2022, albeit compared to a record-breaking 2021 of €1.898 billion. Sparkling wine outpaced bulk wine as the second most imported, with €484.7 million, a historic record, followed by the €474.5 million worth of bulk wine. Not since 2008 had Germany spent more on sparkling wine than on bulk wine. The BiB category saw the most growth, a 22% increase, amounting to €46.4 million, surpassing the 2019 record.

In terms of price, sparkling and bulk wines experienced around a 15% rise, reaching €6.96 and €0.65 per liter, respectively. Bottled wine maintained its price at €3.33/l, with BiB seeing a 10.2% decrease to €1.61.

Despite the fall in imports, Germany remains the leading global importer of bulk wine, with over 54% of the country's imports in 2022. The average price per liter stood at a modest €0.65. However, as a supplier, Germany primarily exports bottled wine (73% of the total) and BiB wine (13% of the total), at average prices of €3.23 and €1.57 per liter, respectively.

German wine import data for 2022 shows that imports were made from 73 providers. The purchases are highly concentrated among the top three (Italy, Spain, and France), which collectively account for over 77% of the volume and 80% of the total value. All three saw larger decreases in volume than value, as all prices increased, with France and Spain seeing the most significant rise.

Italy retained its position as the top supplier with 486 million liters, a 9% decrease, marking its worst performance since 2004. Despite this, Italy's value fell by only 8.5% to €1.031 billion, still the second-highest figure on record due to the average price reaching an all-time high of €2.12/liter.

Spain lost its share as the second largest supplier in volume, with 371.5 million liters, a 10% decrease, albeit compared to a record-breaking 2021. Following Spain, France suffered a 16% drop to 183.6 million liters, its worst performance on record. However, Germany made its second-highest spending on French wine, with €818.7 million, a decrease of only 1.3%, as the average price surged by 17.6% to €4.46/liter, the highest price to date.

Despite Spain's slip in volume, it saw a 7% increase in average price, to €0.94/liter, following a historical low in 2021 (€0.88). Over this century, Spain is the only one out of the three leading suppliers that has seen growth in volume in the German market, albeit at considerably lower prices, explaining the lesser growth in value.

Following the top three, the next five suppliers in volume also reported losses in 2022. In order of appearance, these include South Africa (-9.1%), Austria (-1.9%), Australia (-7.8%), the United States (-7%), and Chile (-11.6%), all retaining their rankings from 2021. Hungary rose two spots after a 40% increase in volume, surpassing North Macedonia (+3.7%), which retains its tenth place, and Portugal (-13.4%), which fell two places. In terms of value, Austria secured its fourth place with a 3.4% increase to €90.4

million, a historic record. At a distance, the United States overtook South Africa as the fifth-largest seller, followed by Portugal, Australia, and Chile. Denmark saw a significant increase in purchases, while Greece, New Zealand, and Argentina experienced strong falls.

This deep analysis reflects a significant shift in Germany's wine import trends, which can largely be attributed to evolving global market dynamics and consumer preferences. These changes not only impact Germany but also send ripples across the entire global wine industry.