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Italian Sparkling Wine Surpasses Champagne in 2023

2023 wine market: Italy's sparkling surge dethrones french champagne

Friday, January 5, 2024



The international wine landscape witnessed a pivotal shift in 2023, as Italian sparkling wine remarkably outperformed the traditional French Champagne in terms of sales volume. Data from Coldiretti, Italy's leading association of farmers and livestock

breeders, revealed that Italian sparkling wine achieved a staggering sales figure of 936 million bottles last year, more than tripling the global consumption of 300 million bottles of Champagne in the same period.

This phenomenon is not limited to sales volume but is also reflected in the economic value these wines represent. Italian sparkling wine exports surpassed 2.2 billion euros for the first time, marking a 3% increase. These figures, based on projections from the Italian National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) and analyzed by Coldiretti in light of the New Year, indicate a rising preference for Italian sparklers on the international market.

Interestingly, the demand for these wines extends beyond Italy's borders, with over two-thirds, approximately 650 million bottles, finding their way to international markets. The United States, despite a sales decrease of 11%, remains the primary importer. This decline is offset by increased sales in other significant markets, such as the United Kingdom, with a 2% rise, and Russia, witnessing an 18% growth despite the challenges arising from the Ukraine conflict.

Remarkably, French consumers, traditionally loyal to their national product, have increasingly embraced Italian sparkling wines, with sales in France soaring by 26%. This growth positions France as Italy's fourth-largest client in this sector. This shift not only highlights the quality and acceptance of Italian sparklers but also indicates a change in French consumer habits and preferences.

Prosecco, a type of Italian sparkling wine, has been instrumental in this rise. Accounting for 70% of total Italian sparkling wine sales, Prosecco has become a prominent symbol of "Made in Italy" abroad. Its popularity stems not only from its distinctive quality and taste but also from an effective marketing strategy that has positioned Prosecco on the international palate.

The surge of Italian sparkling wine against French Champagne is part of a broader trend in the wine industry. Factors such as consumer taste diversification, the quest for new enological experiences, and the excellent quality-price ratio of Italian sparklers have contributed to this paradigm shift in global sparkling wine consumption.

This landscape presents various challenges and opportunities for both Italian and French producers. While Italy must sustain its quality and innovation to continue leading this segment, France faces the task of renewing and adapting its offerings to regain and maintain its market position. The current dynamics of the sparkling wine market reveal an increasingly competitive environment, where quality, prestige, and adaptability are key to success.