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Chilean Wine Exports to U.S. Surge, Showing Promise for 2025

Chilean wines priced between $10 to $20 gain popularity, with quality improvements and strategic focus on premium segments.

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Chilean wine is gaining momentum in the U.S. market, showing promise for 2025 after a challenging period. In 2024, Chilean wine exports to the U.S., the country's third-largest market, saw significant growth. While value-priced bottles remain the main

export, wines priced between $10 to $20 are gaining popularity. This price range is currently the most promising segment in the U.S. wine market.

Chilean vintners faced tough times with U.S. sales declining for eight consecutive years. In 2023, bottled wine sales dropped by over 8.5%, according to Impact Databank. That year, wildfires devastated several regions, and grapegrowers removed vineyards to manage a wine surplus. However, 2024 brought hope with a 12.5% increase in overall wine exports to the U.S., and bottled wine exports surged by more than 25%, according to Chilean customs.

The quality of Chilean wines is improving due to innovative viticultural practices and excellent vintages in 2021 and 2022. Of the wines reviewed in the $10–$20 range, 67% scored 88 points or higher on Wine Spectator’s 100-point scale. At the luxury level, Viña Don Melchor Cabernet Sauvignon Puente Alto 2021 was named Wine Spectator's 2024 Wine of the Year.

Chile faces the challenge of shifting to premium wines. Aurelio Montes Jr., chief winemaker at his family’s company, noted that wines under $10 were still the fastest-growing category in the U.S. in 2024. However, wines priced between $10–$20 showed growth. According to Chilean customs, 81% of Chilean wines exported to the U.S. sell for under $10, while wines in the $10–$20 range make up 17% of volume but nearly 30% of value.

Montes emphasized the need to promote Chile's great wines in the $10–$20 bracket. "We are growing in that category, but we need to keep working on promoting our great wines," he said. "Maybe it is a matter of awareness from the consumer side."

Isabel Guilisasti, vice president of fine wines at Concha y Toro, highlighted that new wine consumers are spending more per purchase. "This is the sweet spot to grab their attention and attract them to wine," she said. Andrés Tauber, president of VSPT Wine Group’s U.S. division, believes Chile's strength with Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc in this price range is crucial. "A significant part of our strategy is focused on consumers purchasing wines in the $10–$20 range," he said.

Guilisasti pointed to Sauvignon Blanc's strong growth, citing Casillero del Diablo Sauvignon Blanc, which retails for $10. U.S. retail sales grew 32% last year. Montes acknowledged challenges ahead, as many U.S. consumers still associate Chilean wine with low prices. "The positioning of Chilean wine in the low price category is too strong," he said. "We need to make an extra effort. It will take time to see real results."