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Fine Wine Market Faces Downturn as Major Indices Decline

Bordeaux Legends 40 Index Sees Growth Amidst Broader Market Challenges; Trade Volumes Rise in 2025 with Seller Initiatives

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In February, the fine wine market experienced a downturn, with all major indices showing declines. The Liv-ex Fine Wine 100, a key industry benchmark, dropped by 0.8% to 323.51, yet remains 2.2% above its 2018 peak, which serves as its next support level. The broader Liv-ex Fine Wine 1000 index also fell by 1.1%, closing at 358.8. Interestingly, the Bordeaux Legends 40 index, which tracks the performance of

older Bordeaux vintages, was the only sub-index to see an increase, rising by 0.9%. This contrasts with the Fine Wine 50 index, which tracks the ten most recent vintages of First Growths and fell by 1.4%.

The year 2025 has seen a notable rise in trade volumes, with sellers initiating a larger share of trades. This trend began earlier this year compared to 2024 and from a higher starting point. Trade counts have increased by 17.4%, trade volumes by 31.6%, and trade values by 6.3% compared to the same period last year. This suggests growing pressure on stockholders and tighter budgets for buyers. The average trade price has been decreasing, falling further below the market price since the start of the year. This is happening as both buyers and sellers trigger trades.

In Bordeaux, the 2021 vintages, initially mispriced, now dominate trade volumes. The latest trade prices for these wines are just 3.8% above the ex-chateau price. In Burgundy, there has been a significant rise in trade volumes for regional wines, leading to a 22.2% drop in the average cost per case traded. This increase in Burgundy trade is largely driven by sellers, who initiated 70% of trades in February.

Champagne trade volumes have more than doubled compared to last year. This surge is supported by high-volume trades of brands like Perrier Jouet Belle Epoque 2015. Leading producers Dom Perignon and Louis Roederer have also seen significant increases in trade volumes, up by 158.8% and 68.4% respectively. In Spain, the rise in trade is mainly due to Vega-Sicilia, which has seen a dramatic increase in activity over the past year.

The Burgundy market has seen a shift, with regional wines accounting for 48.2% of trade volumes so far this year, up from 39.4% last year. Grand Cru Burgundy prices have consistently fallen over the past six months, while Premier Cru prices have remained flat, down 23.5% from March 2020 and 44.7% below their peak. Regional Burgundy prices have been more volatile but have not fallen as much, though they did decline in February.

The increase in regional Burgundy trade volumes raises questions about whether buyers or sellers are driving this trend. Since the start of 2025, regional Burgundy has seen a breakout in trade volumes. In February 2024, only 19.4% of trades were for

regional Burgundy, but this has increased significantly. Stockholders seem to be clearing out cheaper regional Burgundy from their cellars before focusing on more expensive wines. The cheapest 20% of Burgundy wines now account for the largest share of any price bucket year-to-date.

Despite the increase in trade volumes, the lower end of the Burgundy market still represents a small fraction of the total trade value. This raises questions about whether clearing out lower-end stock will significantly impact the market. The Liv-ex analysis is based on data from over 620 merchant members worldwide, providing a comprehensive view of fine wine prices and market activity. This data reflects real-time activity and represents the largest pool of liquidity in the world, with £100 million in bids and offers across 20,000 wines.