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Georgia’s Tourism Revenue Set to Hit $4.6 Billion in 2025 as Wine Industry Drives Record Growth

Kakheti’s wine tourism boom fuels economic surge, with exports up 7 percent and luxury hotels transforming rural regions

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Georgia is seeing significant benefits from its growing wine tourism industry, with new data showing the sector is playing a major role in the country’s economic development. According to a recent report by investment firm Galt & Taggart, tourism revenue in Georgia could reach $4.6 billion by the end of 2025. This is an increase from their previous estimate of $4.5 billion and reflects strong performance in the first nine

months of the year.

The National Bank of Georgia reported that tourism brought in $3.6 billion from January through September, a 5.1 percent increase compared to the same period last year. The third quarter alone generated $1.7 billion, up 6.6 percent from 2024, indicating that more travelers are choosing Georgia for their summer and fall vacations. Galt & Taggart's analysts say these numbers are based on actual figures and show that demand for travel to Georgia remains high, even as global economic conditions remain uncertain.

Tourism has become a central pillar of Georgia's economy, supporting foreign currency reserves and creating jobs across the country. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the sector has not only recovered but surpassed previous records. In the first half of 2025, tourism earnings reached $2 billion, a 3.8 percent increase over 2024 and a 35.4 percent jump compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019.

Several factors have contributed to this growth. There are now more direct flights from European cities to Georgia, making it easier for tourists to visit. The government and private sector have also invested in marketing campaigns that highlight Georgia's unique blend of Soviet-era history, Silk Road heritage, and Black Sea coastline.

This surge in tourism is part of a broader economic upswing for Georgia. The country's GDP grew by 9.4 percent in 2024, making it one of the fastest-growing economies in the region. Since 2000, per capita GDP has increased by 370 percent, and some forecasts suggest it could rise by as much as 500 percent by 2030 if current trends continue.

Galt & Taggart predicts that specialized forms of tourism—such as eco-tours and cultural experiences—will help sustain growth into 2026 and beyond. In a region often affected by political instability, Georgia's focus on hospitality and peaceful development is attracting steady streams of visitors and investment.

At the heart of this success is Kakheti, located in southeastern Georgia and responsible for producing about three-quarters of the country's wine. Once relatively unknown among international wine lovers, Kakheti is now drawing high-end tourists seeking

authentic experiences rooted in centuries-old traditions.

Wine tourism in Kakheti goes beyond simple tastings. Visitors can explore ancient winemaking techniques using clay vessels called qvevri, tour exclusive cellars that double as art galleries, and participate in hands-on classes led by local vintners. Between 2020 and 2022, several new luxury hotels opened in Telavi—the main town in Kakheti—offering upscale accommodations that blend local character with modern amenities.

Looking ahead, around 20 new high-quality hotels are planned across Georgia between 2025 and 2028. These developments are transforming quiet rural villages into sought-after destinations for both domestic and international travelers.

The growth of wine tourism is closely linked to rising wine exports. In 2024, Georgia exported 95 million liters of wine worth $276.1 million—a six percent increase in volume and a seven percent rise in revenue compared to the previous year. While Russia remains the largest market for Georgian wine, accounting for nearly two-thirds of exports, sales are growing rapidly in countries like the United Arab Emirates (up 80 percent), Turkey (up 62 percent), and the United Kingdom (up 42 percent).

Wine production is now Georgia’s second-largest export sector after mining, with tourism providing an important boost to both industries. Visitors are not just sampling wines; they are engaging with local culture through vineyard tours, traditional winemaking workshops, and shared meals featuring regional cuisine.

Many Georgians express pride in their winemaking heritage—a confidence that appears well-founded as more affluent travelers discover what the country has to offer. Some industry observers believe that Kakheti could soon rival established wine regions like Bordeaux in terms of prestige and visitor experience.

As Georgia continues to invest in its tourism infrastructure and promote its unique cultural assets, wine tourism looks set to remain a key driver of economic growth for years to come.