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Premium Wine Sales Jump by Double Digits in Latin America as U.S. Consumption Drops to 2.54 Gallons Per Person

Young, affluent consumers and digital marketing drive robust growth in Mexico, Brazil, and beyond amid stagnation in traditional markets

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Premium wine producers are seeing a surge in demand across key Latin American markets, reporting double-digit growth as traditional markets in the United States and Europe show signs of stagnation. Wineries are increasingly turning their attention to regions where young, affluent consumers are driving a new wave of interest in high-quality wines.

For decades, the U.S. was the world’s largest and most influential wine market, with consumption rising sharply from 0.90 gallons per person in 1960 to 2.57 gallons per person by 2010, according to the Wine Institute. However, growth has slowed in recent years. In 2024, Americans consumed 2.54 gallons per person, down from 2.65 gallons the previous year. This flattening trend has made sales less predictable and prompted producers to look for new opportunities abroad.

Latin America has emerged as a promising region for premium wine sales. Kamara Snow, vice president and general manager of Southern Glazer’s Wine & Spirits Travel Retail Sales and Export Division, said there is strong demand for expressive, fruit-forward wines across Central and South America and Mexico. She attributes this growth to evolving consumer preferences, an expanding middle class, and a rising appetite for premium and boutique wine experiences.

Spanish wineries are among those finding success in Latin America. Enrique Murillo, international managing director at González Byass in Jerez de la Frontera, Spain, said that cultural and linguistic similarities make the region attractive for Spanish producers facing declines in traditional markets. González Byass has operated in Latin America since the 1970s and has seen significant sales growth in Chile, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Brazil, and Ecuador over the past five years.

Despite these gains, challenges remain. In Brazil, for example, high tariffs mean imported wines can cost three times as much as local products. This makes it difficult to attract new consumers among the middle class. Still, Murillo notes growing interest in wine culture among younger and female consumers. He is optimistic about future sales as the European Union negotiates free trade agreements with Mercosur countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Sparkling wine brands are also enjoying robust growth in Latin America. Enore Ceola, CEO of Freixenet Mionetta USA and EVP North America, reported double-digit export increases in Mexico, South America, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. He compared current trends to those seen in the U.S. a decade ago when sparkling wines became popular for everyday celebrations.

French producers are also adapting their strategies to tap into Latin American markets. Mathilde Chapoutier, director of global sales at M. Chapoutier, said that while overall sales remain strong globally, emerging markets like Honduras, Ecuador, and Peru present both opportunities and volatility due to political and economic instability. Across Latin America, she sees young consumers and a growing middle class showing more interest in quality wines that offer authenticity.

M. Chapoutier focuses on high-end restaurants in urban centers and tourist destinations such as Mexico City and Riviera Maya to reach affluent customers seeking premium wines. About 70% of their sales in Latin America come from Mexico, Brazil, Panama, Uruguay, and Paraguay.

Digital marketing is playing a key role in expanding wine’s reach among younger audiences. Meliza Jalbert of Hope Family Wines in Paso Robles said that investment in digital storytelling and influencer partnerships has helped drive notable growth in Puerto Rico and Ecuador this year—9.5% and 28% respectively—while Mexico remains their largest market in the region.

Despite these advances, wine remains a niche product compared to beer and spirits across much of Latin America. Producers are targeting affluent consumers through luxury hotels and gourmet restaurants in cities like São Paulo and tourist hotspots along Mexico’s Caribbean coast.

Mexico is emerging as a particularly promising market for long-term growth. Joe Lange of LangeTwins Winery began exporting to Mexico in 2023 and has focused on resort areas such as Los Cabos and Riviera Maya to establish a foothold. He plans to expand into major cities like Monterrey and Guadalajara next year.

Lange emphasized the importance of diversification amid global uncertainty affecting trade flows. He believes that markets with growing young middle-class populations will continue to offer opportunities for producers who can deliver value and authenticity.

As traditional wine markets mature or contract, Latin America’s dynamic demographics—especially its young consumers—are reshaping global strategies for premium wine producers seeking new avenues for growth.