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Italian Wine Exports to U.S. Plunge 28% in Early 2026 as Tariffs Take Toll

Producers and officials in Rome unveil new strategies to counter falling sales and restore market share ahead of Vinitaly 2026

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Italian wine producers are facing a challenging year in the United States, as new tariffs imposed during the Trump administration continue to impact exports. According to Eurostat data, the first two months of 2026 saw a 28% drop in value compared to the

same period in 2025. The United States remains the largest market for Italian wine outside Europe, accounting for 23% of total Italian wine exports. However, the sector is under pressure from several factors, including tariffs, unfavorable euro-dollar exchange rates, changing consumer preferences, and increased competition from other wine-producing countries.

These issues were at the center of a meeting held today at Palazzo Rospigliosi in Rome. The event was organized by Coldiretti and Filiera Italia to launch new initiatives ahead of Vinitaly 2026, scheduled for April 12-15 in Verona. The meeting brought together dozens of American buyers, Italian institutions, business leaders, international trade representatives, and market experts. Their goal was to analyze current challenges and develop concrete strategies to protect and relaunch Italian wine exports.

The introduction of tariffs has made Italian wines less competitive in the U.S. market. This situation has been worsened by the weak euro against the dollar, which reduces profit margins for Italian producers. In 2025, these combined factors led to a 9% decrease in export value compared to the previous year. At the same time, U.S. consumers are buying less wine overall and showing interest in alternative beverages and wines from other countries.

Geopolitical tensions and high production costs are adding further strain on Italian wine producers. There is also a growing need to strengthen the position of Italian wine throughout its value chain to maintain its reputation and market share abroad.

The Rome meeting featured key figures such as Ettore Prandini, president of Coldiretti; Vincenzo Gesmundo, secretary general of Coldiretti; Francesco Lollobrigida, Minister of Agriculture; Luigi Scordamaglia, CEO of Filiera Italia; Matteo Zoppas, president of the Italian Trade Agency; Riccardo Cotarella, president of Assoenologi; Felice Adinolfi, director of Centro Studi Divulga; Federico Bricolo, president of Veronafiere; Stevie Kim, founder of Italian Wine Podcast and managing partner at Vinitaly; Antonio Rallo, CEO of Donnafugata; Teresa Nicolazzi, general director of Pemac; and Victor Oscar Schwartz, a U.S. importer who played a key role in challenging Trump-era tariffs before the Supreme Court.

The discussion focused on how to overcome current difficulties through entrepreneurial innovation and targeted promotional campaigns. Organizers announced an extraordinary promotional plan aimed at restoring Italian wine’s position in the U.S., with special attention to supporting small and medium-sized producers.

These themes will also be discussed at Casa Coldiretti during Vinitaly 2026 in Verona. A new feature this year is the “Ristorante d’Autore di Campagna Amica - La Casa della Cucina Italiana,” managed by Coldiretti, Campagna Amica, and Terranostra. The restaurant will serve as a showcase for regional Italian cuisine and agricultural products.

The program at Vinitaly will include tastings and events highlighting different aspects of Italian wine culture. On April 12, there will be a tasting focused on sparkling wines such as Prosecco and Trento Doc. April 13 will spotlight young innovators and emerging producers with a focus on Sangiovese wines. On April 14, discussions will center on “Wine and UNESCO Heritage,” pairing iconic foods like Neapolitan pizza and Parmigiano Reggiano with wines from regions such as Prosecco and Langhe. The final day will celebrate Mediterranean traditions and sweet wines from across Italy.

Despite current setbacks in export figures, industry leaders remain confident that Italian wine can recover its momentum in the U.S. market through coordinated efforts between producers, institutions, and trade partners. The upcoming months will be crucial for implementing these strategies and monitoring their impact on one of Italy’s most important export sectors.