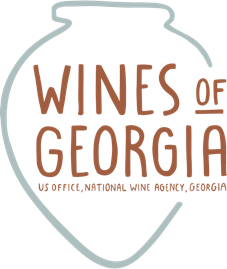
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**Georgian Wine Imports Carry Momentum into 2021**

**with Six Years 30%+ Average Year-Over-Year Growth**

***2020’s Robust 34.5% Growth Lays the Foundation for Another Dynamic Year***

New York, NY / March 25, 2021 – Despite the pandemic rattling last year’s global wine market, imports of [Georgian wines](https://winesgeorgia.com/) to the U.S. continued to thrive. Figures from The National Wine Agency of Georgia show that for six consecutive years, Georgian wine exports to the United States have averaged +31% year-over-year by volume. Average bottle price also climbed each year; in 2020, the average ex-cellars price rose to $5.14. As the American Association of Wine Economists wrote on February 28th: “Georgia has continued its amazing run . . . The value of wine imports from Georgia have continued to surge; with value climbing by 21.4% in 2020 (after 51.3% in 2019).”

“Education will continue to be foundation of growth, as each bottle reflects Georgian wine history, culture, varietals and its 8,000 vintages of winemaking tradition.” explains Levan Mekhuzla, Chairman of Georgia’s National Wine Agency. “Georgia has much to share about its rich winemaking tradition, from its qvevri winemaking method to its leading native varietals such as Saperavi and Rkatsiteli. At the same time, it’s important to share how these traditions continue to flourish and evolve in present Georgian winemaking, from wineries large and small. Merging these two points will allow us to tell the full story of Georgian wines and continue to help wine producers penetrate, broaden, and deepen their U.S. market presence this year.”

From 2016 to 2020, the number of registered wineries within Georgia’s ten wine regions grew from 402 to 1,575, and the number of wineries imported to the U.S. grew from 40 to 150. Both increases coincide with a dramatic rise in acclaim from around the globe. Over the last two and a half years, more than 100 Georgian wines have received 90+ wine scores from publications of prominence like Wine Enthusiast, Decanter, and Wine & Spirits. These honored labels include qvevri wines fermented with skins -- colloquially known as amber or orange wines -- as well as those made using European methods.

Georgian wines available in the U.S. and featured on the Wines of Georgia website, [www.winesgeorgia.com](http://www.winesgeorgia.com), which also includes a [Where to Buy](https://winesgeorgia.com/winery-directory/) directory. The organization’s [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCfCo2DmUTmPGePqsebKSGw/videos) also has individual videos on 60 wineries. Please also follow Wines of Georgia on FB: [@winesgeorgia](https://www.facebook.com/winesgeorgia/), Instagram:[@winesgeorgia](https://www.instagram.com/winesgeorgia/), and Twitter: [@Wines\_Georgia](https://twitter.com/Wines_Georgia).

About Georgian Wines and Winemaking

The country of Georgia (capital: Tbilisi) sits on the eastern edge of the Black Sea, at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. This tiny country – slightly smaller than Connecticut – is a hotspot of bio-diversity, with topography ranging from tropical to alpine. It is about 1,000 km due east of Rome, and is bordered by Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey, and the Black Sea.

Scholars recognize Georgia as the birthplace of wine. In 2015, archaeologists working in Georgia discovered ancient, egg-shaped clay vessels (qvevri) containing the residue of cultivated grapes. Using archaeological, biomolecular, and other methods, researchers dated these artifacts to 6000 BCE, during the Neolithic Period. A [research report](https://www.pnas.org/content/114/48/E10309) published by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences describes the discovery as the earliest evidence of viniculture and winemaking.

Georgians have made wine in qvevri continuously for 8,000 years. These large vessels—often 1,000 or more liters—are buried up to their necks to keep temperatures constant during fermentation and aging. In the traditional method, winemakers ferment the juice and skins together, and the skin contact turns what would otherwise be white wines into amber wines with tannins (today, they are commonly known as “orange wines”). Winemakers use qvevri to ferment red grapes as well as white.

Qvevri are still made by hand by Georgia’s master potters. With the rising popularity of amber and natural wines, the demand for qvevri is on the rise in Georgia and internationally. In 2013, the United Nations added qvevri winemaking to the UNESCO list documenting humanity’s [intangible cultural heritage](https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/ancient-georgian-traditional-qvevri-wine-making-method-00870).

Home to more than 525 indigenous grape varieties, Georgia has deep winemaking roots in every community. In the post-Soviet era, the country’s wine industry has transformed itself from a cottage industry into an artisanal powerhouse, producing some of the world’s most distinctive wines using both traditional Georgian and European winemaking methods.

The National Wine Agency of Georgia works to preserve the country’s qvevri winemaking tradition, control the quality of all Georgian wines, and promote Georgian wines globally.

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*Interviews, samples, and hi-res imagery available upon request.*

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