

Vodka King Buys Into Italian Winemaker

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 05, 2013

The  Moscow Times

Rustam Tariko, the owner of Russian Standard vodka, has increased his controlling share in the Italian winemaker Gancia and is expected to buy out the rest of the company in the near future.

Tariko increased his share in the family winemaker from 70 percent to 94 percent in July for 13.5 million euros (\$18 million), business daily Kommersant reported.

The businessman, who also owns the Polish alcohol company Central European Distribution Corporation, plans to invest another 20 million euros in Gancia's development over the next five years and eventually buy its remaining shares.

Russian Standard's spokesman confirmed that their company had the right to purchase 100 percent control in Gancia, though they did not state deadlines for future transactions.

Gancia was founded in 1850 and now has 2,000 hectares of vineyards in Piedmont, Apulia and Sicily.

It produces a range of brands including the sparkling wine Gancia Asti, Gancia Bianco vermouths and the wine Rivera.

Annual sales are 25 million to 30 million bottles, with 50 million euros of revenue in the fiscal year 2012.

In July, the winemaker announced that it would begin selling its Moscato wines in the U.S. through a partnership with The Wine Group, the third-largest wine company in the world.

Tariko became Gancia's majority owner in December 2011 with a 100 million euro share purchase.

Since then, he has been able to increase the company's presence in the Russian market from 3.9 million liters of wine and vermouth in 2011 to 6.1 million liters in the first half of 2013.

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