

# Georgian Wine Makes Comeback

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russians are once again quaffing Georgian wine en masse, helping it overcome a recently lifted six-year embargo and edge out Spain for third-largest revenues from sales of imported wine.

Georgian wines took 14.1 percent of the total imported wine market behind France and Italy with 19.3 and 14.8 percent, respectively, in the first quarter of this year. Spanish wine claimed 13.5 percent of the market, according to the Federal Tax Service, RBC reported.

This is actually larger than Georgia's share prior to the embargo: in 2005, Georgia held 9 percent of the total import market, which then amounted to 36.4 million liters, or 52 million bottles a year.

The Federal Consumer Protection Service banned imports of Georgian wine in 2006, complaining that six out of 10 wines did not satisfy Russian quality standards. Critics said

at the time that the decision was a response to rising political tensions between the former allies.

About 7.4 million liters, or nearly 10 million bottles, of Georgian wine were imported to Russia between January and March this year. This was 71 percent of Georgia's total wine exports, according to Georgia's National Wine Agency.

When the embargo was lifted last year, experts were skeptical as to Georgian wine's prospects on the market, as cheaper wines from such countries as Spain, Portugal and Latin America had filled the gap.

But Russian consumers evidently had not forgotten their former favorites, and Georgia immediately sprinted into the top 10 of wine importers, winning 5.5 percent of the total imported wine market in 2013.

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