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Georgia Overtakes Italy as Top Still Wine Importer to Russia – Kommersant

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Bottles of Georgian wine on sale at a Russian supermarket. **Yegor Aleyev / TASS**

The South Caucasus nation of Georgia has become Russia's top importer of still wine, the Kommersant business daily reported Tuesday, citing customs data.

Between January and May, still wine imports from Georgia rose by 63% year-on-year, helping it overtake Italy — which saw shipments rise by 31% year-on-year during the same period — as Russia's top still wine importer.

In the first five months of 2023, Georgian wine producers shipped more than 24.15 million liters of still wine to Russia, compared to 23.3 million liters imported by Italian makers.

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Georgian wine now accounts for just over 19% of Russia's still wine imports — the largest share among all other countries.

Industry insiders told Kommersant that low price volatility and the absence of duties on Georgian wine imports have helped producers in the South Caucasus nation strengthen their position as sanctions on Russia and supply chain bottlenecks caused by the war in Ukraine impede shipments from Western markets.

In August 2022, the chairman of Georgia's National Wine Agency Levan Mekhuzla said that Russia's share in the country's wine exports was expected to decrease to about 40% over the next five years.

However, Georgia's wine exports to Russia increased by 23% last year, amounting to $161 million and accounting for 64% of its total wine exports — the highest figure since Moscow lifted a trade embargo on its southern neighbor in 2013.

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