New Zealand wine exports recover to $220.8m in December despite 15% yearly decline

Read online: https://nzwineexports.com/reports/2023-12

December 2023 · Generated 6 July 2026 · Source: Stats NZ overseas merchandise trade (HS 2204)

Wine exports rebounded to $220.8 million in December 2023, the strongest month since March, though shipments remained 15.0% below the previous December as volume fell more sharply than value.

December shipments climb to nine-month high

New Zealand exported $220.8 million of wine in December 2023, up from $170.3 million in November and marking the highest monthly total since March. The 29.2 million litres shipped achieved an average price of $7.56 per litre across all formats and destinations, with wine reaching 56 destination markets during the month.

The December figure brought the rolling 12-month total to $2.11 billion, down 6.1% on the previous year, reflecting softer demand across multiple markets through 2023.

Volume decline outpaces value drop

December's exports fell 15.0% in value compared with December 2022, when shipments totalled $259.8 million. The volume decline was steeper at 21.2%, indicating that higher per-litre pricing partially offset the reduction in litres shipped. This pattern suggests exporters maintained price discipline even as volumes contracted.

United States dominates as Australia tumbles

The United States cemented its position as New Zealand's dominant wine market, accounting for $114.9 million or 52.0% of December exports, and posting 3.0% year-on-year growth. Canada also performed strongly, surging 42.0% to $11.7 million and claiming a 5.3% market share.

Australia's imports collapsed 49.2% to $26.2 million, reducing its share to 11.9%. The United Kingdom, the second-largest market at $36.5 million (16.5% share), fell 21.0%. Germany dropped 40.1% to $6.4 million, while France declined 50.6% to $1.9 million and Singapore fell 44.7% to $1.9 million.

Belgium emerged as the month's standout performer, soaring 403.0% to $1.9 million. China increased 8.0% to $3.5 million, and South Korea edged up 4.2% to $2.2 million. Hong Kong declined 51.1% to $1.1 million.

Bulk wine accounts for nearly one-third of value

Bottled wine in containers of two litres or less generated $152.6 million in December, while bulk shipments in containers exceeding 10 litres contributed $66.6 million-30.2% of total export value.

The pricing gap between formats remained substantial: bottled wine averaged $10.72 per litre compared with $4.54 per litre for bulk, a differential of 136%. Bulk exports fell 21.8% year-on-year, a steeper decline than the 10.9% drop in bottled wine value, suggesting bulk markets faced particular headwinds during the month.

The continued reliance on bulk exports-nearly one-third of value at less than half the per-litre return of bottled wine-underscores the two-tier nature of New Zealand's export mix, where premium bottled products coexist with commodity-priced bulk shipments.

Provisional data

These figures are drawn from Statistics New Zealand's merchandise trade data for December 2023. Monthly trade statistics are provisional upon initial release and subject to revision as late data and corrections are processed.