



# DOING BUSINESS IN MAURITIUS

Population 1.3 million | GDP Growth 5% | Wine Imports are about 500k 9L's

Mauritius is a small and relatively wealthy African island nation with three core industries: finance, fishing and tourism. The territory supports a population of 1.3m.

Tourism is vital in shaping trends on the island, as the number of tourists usually outnumbers the local population during the holiday season. Naturally, Mauritius took a massive knock during the pandemic and numbers are only now starting to normalize. The IMF has estimated that GDP grew by 5–6% in 2023. Trends in Mauritius lag several years behind Europe: the gin trend, for example, is just taking hold on the island. (IWSR)

## Wine in Mauritius

### Consumption of Wine

Consumption of wine on the island is high and is mainly driven through the tourism (Horeca) sector. Due to the investment of many hotel groups, you will find many wine educated people in the trade which, in turn, has impacted local wine knowledge as well. There is a fairly strong retail environment for wine which caters either to Expats (of which there are many) and are normally higher priced versus local stores which has mainly lower income consumers.

### Consumption Trends

Sales of imported wine fluctuate according to tourist numbers. Locally produced wine is often consumed by the local population, who tend to favour cheap, sweet-tasting products. Consumers are slowly gaining in wine knowledge, especially younger LDA consumers, who are heavily influenced by social media and packaging.

## Trading Notes for Wineries

### Locally Bottled versus Imported

There are numerous local distilleries and breweries. The main ones are run by International Distillers (Mauritius), Grays Inc and New Goodwill Co. There is also a sizeable local bottling operation for wines and spirits. The tax advantage of bottling locally has been instrumental in putting growth categories such as Scotch and vodka within the reach of local consumers. It has, however, created the perception that all locally bottled wine is of inferior quality and only for lower income groups.

Imported wine is at a disadvantage due to taxation and tariffs but they are needed to service most of the medium to high end tourism establishments due to the better quality. Not all imported wine is taxed equally.

### Segmented Market

The Mauritian market is divided into two categories. Wine that serves the local market and wine that services the tourism trade. For the local market value is very important as exposable income isn't very high. This also explains the popularity of locally bottled products. Some resorts will also fall into this category, but they are at the bottom end of the market. The tourism sector has more potential in that many international hotel groups demand a certain standard and offering for their guests. Guests that frequent these resorts and restaurants have much more to spend and also like more sophisticated wines.

## Market Insights

- Premium wine is mainly sold at high end Horeca and a few wine stores.
- Market is controlled by South Africa (60%) and France (30%).
- SADC and EU have preferred trading agreements on the island and enjoy lower or no import duty.
- Many somms work in the market in various roles. Somms association is also very active and they are a member of ASI.
- All the importers are good operators as importation is necessary for the island's survival.
- Most importers will also sell to the public through their own platforms.
- Resorts prefer to have wines on the list that aren't available in retail. Especially for their "all inclusive" wines as they don't want customers to know the cost.
- Some Indian Ocean Islands like to source from Dubai as logistics are much easier.

## Notable Importers

- Scott&Co
- Grays Inc.
- Oxenham
- Vaulbert
- International Distillers Mauritius

## Taxes, Shipping and Terms

- Mauritius imposes a 15% customs duty on the CIF value plus a specific rate of MUP250 per liter on all wine.
- VAT is 15%
- Shipping from San Francisco to Mauritius is available through all major shipping operators but transshipment is likely either in Europe or South Africa. Cost can range between \$3500-\$4500\* for a full 20ft container.
- Transit time is approximately 5-7 weeks\* from the West Coast. Consider shipping from Europe or Middle East as well.
- Most Importers in Mauritius will be covered by international credit insurers like Coface or CGIC. Terms can be considered as the country is very stable.

Mauritius Potential Market Size	
Price Segment (ex-cellars)	Volume per Year (estimated)
\$1-\$3	Multiple Containers
\$3-\$5	Container
\$5-\$10	10 Pallets to a Container
\$10-\$20	5-10 Pallets
\$20-\$50	1-5 Pallets
\$50+	50-100 cases x6

