



ARMENIA

Wine Market & Economic Overview

Research conducted for California Wine Institute,

By Anna Peker, California Wines Manager Eastern Europe

June 2026

1. Geographic Context

Armenia is a landlocked country in the South Caucasus, bordered by Georgia to the north, Azerbaijan to the east, Iran to the south, and Turkey to the west. With a territory of approximately 29,743 km² and an average elevation of 1,800 meters, it is one of the most mountainous countries in the world. Its landlocked status shapes the entire import environment: the western border with Turkey has been closed since 1993, and the eastern border with Azerbaijan remains politically sensitive following successive military conflicts. The most reliable overland routes run north through Georgia to Black Sea ports, while air freight via Zvartnots International Airport in Yerevan is the dominant channel for premium goods, including wine. The capital Yerevan — home to over 1.1 million people, roughly one-third of the national population — concentrates the bulk of premium retail, hospitality and wine consumption activity, making it the primary target for any market entry strategy.

2. Economic Overview

Armenia is classified as an upper-middle-income country by the World Bank, with a population of approximately 3.07 million and GDP per capita of \$9,474 at market prices in 2025. The economy is driven by private consumption (+10.7%), investment (+15.6%), construction (+21%), and information and communications (+18.6%). Yerevan's expanding urban middle class — increasingly digitally connected and internationally oriented — is driving demand for premium imported goods, including wine.

Key Economic Statistics

Indicator	Value	Year / Notes
Population	~3.07 million	2025; World Bank
GDP Growth Rate	7.2% (actual)	2025; projected 5.3% in 2026 (World Bank)
Trade Balance	Deficit ~\$3.95 billion	2024; Exports \$13.4B, Imports ~\$17.3B
Wine Imports (total)	~\$6.2 million	2024 est.; H1 2024 = \$3.1M / 541K liters
Wine Consumption per Capita	~1.6 liters	2024 domestic consumption
Wine Market Volume	~6.96 million liters	2024 domestic consumption
Wine Market Value	~\$55.2 million	2024; at-home \$41.9M + out-of-home \$13.3M

3. Geopolitical Realignment

Armenia is undergoing one of the most consequential foreign policy pivots in its post-Soviet history — a shift directly relevant to California wine producers assessing long-term market potential. Following Russia's failure to provide security guarantees during the 2020 and 2023 conflicts with Azerbaijan, Yerevan has pursued active Western reorientation. In March 2025, Armenia's parliament formally endorsed EU accession with 64 votes in favor; the inaugural Armenia-EU Summit was convened in May 2026. Trade with EAEU countries* fell 37% to \$8 billion in 2025, while trade with EU countries grew 7% to \$2.5 billion. Russia remains Armenia's largest single trading partner at over 35% of external trade and has warned against simultaneous EU membership and EAEU participation. The Washington Declaration of August 2025 and the subsequent TRIPP initiative (Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity) further embedded Armenia in US-led regional connectivity frameworks. For California wine exporters, this Western alignment is strategically significant: as Armenian institutions and consumer preferences orient toward Europe and the United States, openness to Western premium brands is expected to deepen.

*The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) consists of five full member states: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia

4. Trade Regime & Import Framework

Armenia's trade policy is governed by its membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which it joined in January 2015. Non-EAEU imports — including US wines — face a standard duties:

- Customs duty of 10% on CIF value
- Excise tax of 10% of the customs value but no less than 100 AMD* per liter
- VAT 20%

Example: 1 container of 10 USD CIF wine will result in landed cost per bottle 14,4 USD.

Documentation requirements include a Certificate of Origin, Declaration of Conformity, laboratory analysis of alcohol content; excise labels and stickers with obligatory text in Armenian must be affixed prior to domestic distribution.

*exchange rate is 1 AMD (armenian dram) = 0,0027 USD

5. HoReCa & Tourism: Wine Consumption Trends

Tourism is one of Armenia's fastest-growing economic sectors and an increasingly important channel for premium wine consumption. Armenia welcomed 2.2 million international visitors in 2024 with key source markets including France, Germany, Russia, Iran, and the United States.

Yerevan serves as the epicenter of this activity, featuring a dense and continuously evolving restaurant, cafe, and wine bar scene that has become one of the city's most internationally recognized attributes. The annual Yerevan Wine Days festival draws around 120,000 attendees, including approximately 25,000 international tourists, making it the single most concentrated moment of wine brand exposure in the market.

In autumn 2024, Armenia hosted the UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism, reinforcing Yerevan's position as a recognized wine tourism destination. The World Bank followed in April 2026 with a \$100 million Tourism and Regional Infrastructure Project targeting hospitality development across Armenia's regions.

Within this context, the HoReCa channel — hotels, restaurants, and cafes — represents the most accessible and brand-building point of entry for California wine producers. A structural premiumization trend is evident: consumer spending on alcoholic beverages grew 3.8% in 2024, and Armenia's winery count expanded sixfold from 25 in 2019 to 150 by September 2024, signaling a maturing local wine culture with rapidly rising quality expectations.

This sophistication among Armenian wine consumers — increasingly shaped by international travel and exposure — makes the on-trade segment particularly receptive to premium imported wines. For California producers, entering through hotel wine lists, curated wine bars, and Yerevan's upscale restaurant scene offers the dual benefit of building brand awareness with local consumers while simultaneously reaching the international tourist audience already predisposed to American wines.

6. Wine Market Overview

Armenia's total domestic wine consumption stood at approximately 6.96 million liters in 2024, with a retail market value of around \$55.2 million (Statista) (average litre price 7,93 USD).

Domestic production dominates: Armenian wineries supplied an estimated 84–85% of total market volume, while imported wines accounted for the remaining 15–16%, or approximately 1.08 million liters (annualized from H1 2024 Customs Service data). In value terms at customs (CIF), wine imports totaled roughly \$6.2 million for the year.

Armenia's own wine industry has grown rapidly and local brands command strong price positioning in the mid-range segment. Imported wines therefore compete primarily at the premium and super-premium level, where origin, brand story, and quality differentiation are the key purchase drivers.

Among imported wines, Spain is the clear volume leader, followed by Italy and France. New Zealand and Australia have carved out meaningful positions, reflecting strong varietal branding from the New World.

The United States accounts for 0.5% of import volume — approximately 2,700 liters in the first half of 2024, equivalent to roughly 5,400 liters or \$31,000 at customs value on an annualized basis. There is an opportunity for California wines to grow in the premium import segment where

French, Italian, and Spanish labels currently capture the majority of consumer spending on foreign wine.

Country	Import Volume Share	Notes (H1 2024)
Spain	39.0%	Dominant supplier; mainly Rioja & Tempranillo
Italy	25.7%	Pinot Grigio & Chianti most visible
France	7.9%	Premium segment; Bordeaux & Burgundy
New Zealand	6.5%	Sauvignon Blanc strong brand recognition
Australia	5.2%	Shiraz-led, value positioning
Germany	2.4%	Mostly Riesling
Georgia	2.2%	Regional neighbor; amber wines
India	2.0%	Emerging supplier
Chile	1.7%	Value-tier New World
Argentina	1.5%	Malbec-driven
Portugal	1.4%	Growing presence
Austria	1.3%	Gruner Veltliner niche
USA	0.5%	~2,700 liters / ~\$15,500 in H1 2024
South Africa	0.3%	Minimal presence
Other	~3.7%	Russia, Belarus, misc.

7. Wine Consumption Habits

Armenian consumers are deeply connected to wine through a cultural heritage that stretches back thousands of years, and this connection increasingly expresses itself through sophisticated purchasing behavior.

Red wine dominates domestic consumption, anchored by Areni Noir — Armenia's most prized indigenous grape — which produces pale, transparent wines with fine tannins, high acidity, and aromas of cherry, violet, and peppery spice. Voskehat has emerged as the defining white variety, offering Viognier-like aromatics with a Semillon-like structure, used for both still and sparkling production.

Consumers — particularly the urban, internationally connected Yerevan demographic — are moving away from the semi-sweet styles that defined the Soviet era toward drier, more complex expressions. Alongside this, amber and orange wines made using traditional karas (clay vessel) fermentation are gaining a dedicated following, reflecting a broader pride in Armenian winemaking heritage. Sparkling wine is an emerging category.

A 2022 academic study of Armenian wine consumers found that quality and taste are the primary purchase drivers, followed by brand image, price, and place of origin — a hierarchy that favors premium imported wines positioned on terroir and storytelling. Word-of-mouth remains the dominant discovery channel, followed by wine tourism and social media, making on-trade trial and influencer engagement key tactics for new market entrants.

The share of the off-trade retail in wine sales is approximately 76% of total market value (\$41.9 million of the \$55.2 million total in 2024) and on-trade represents the remaining 24% (\$13.3 million). E-commerce is growing: platforms such as supermarket.am and winesofarmenia.store have expanded the off-trade reach, particularly for younger, tech-savvy consumers. Distribution is overwhelmingly Yerevan-centric.

8. Major Retail Chains

Chain	Ownership	Shops	Wine Profile
Yerevan City	Privately held by MP Samvel Aleksanyan (“Alex Holding” business group); founded 2007	~46 stores (business directory, Jun 2026); mostly Yerevan, plus Hrazdan, Gyumri, Vanadzor, Abovyan and	Armenia’s largest chain by store count; broadest shelf selection of both Armenian and imported wine across all price tiers — the default listing point for volume distribution

Chain	Ownership	Shops	Wine Profile
		other regional towns	
SAS Supermarkets	SAS Group, founded by MP Artak Sarkisyan (1997; consolidated as SAS Group 1998)	~9–10 stores, concentrated in high-income central Yerevan corridors	Armenia’s premium supermarket benchmark; dedicated wine and delicatessen sections skew toward imported, higher price-segment labels for professionals, tourists and affluent households
Carrefour Armenia	Franchised locally by Food Depot LLC since late 2024 (previously operated by Majid Al Futtaim Group, 2015–2024)	2 hypermarkets (Yerevan Mall; Rossia Mall) plus several smaller Carrefour Express convenience stores	International retail format with structured private-label and European import assortments; strong channel for French and broader EU wine brands at mid-to-premium price points
Parma Supermarket	Privately held (est. 1997; managed by Ashot Karapetyan)	7 stores, all in Yerevan	Boutique Italian/European specialist grocer; wine corner is a designed focal point of the format, spanning France, Italy, Spain, Argentina, Chile, Austria, Georgia and the US — targets affluent, imported-goods-focused shoppers

Note: SPAR opened its first Armenian store in December 2019 but no longer appears in SPAR International’s current country network or in current Armenian trade directories, and is not included above as an active chain.

9. Specialized Wine Stores in Yerevan

Beyond mainstream supermarkets, a small cluster of dedicated wine retailers drives premium and imported wine sales in Yerevan. These stores — concentrated in the capital's central districts — are the most relevant first listing targets for a California producer, since they curate imported selections for an educated, quality-focused clientele and often supply the on-trade as well. Notably, Cult Wines and More is currently the only Yerevan retailer built specifically around American wine, making it a natural anchor account.

Store	Description
-------	-------------

In Vino	Armenia's first dedicated wine club, shop and bar, opened in 2012 at 6 Martiros Saryan Street — the venue widely credited with turning Saryan Street into Yerevan's "wine street." Carries roughly 900-1,000 labels spanning Armenian and international producers, with wines available to drink on-site or buy to take away. A well-informed, connoisseur-oriented clientele makes it a strong showcase venue for a new premium import.
Vinovino (Vino&Vino)	One of Armenia's largest importers and retailers of wine and spirits, with a bricks-and-mortar store plus an active e-commerce shop (vinovino.am) offering free Yerevan delivery. Also the official distributor of ARARAT brandy and Pernod Ricard's portfolio, and a major supplier to restaurants, cafes, bars and hotels — making it a relevant volume distribution partner as well as a retail shelf.
Cult Wines and More	A boutique on Ghazar Parpetsi Street devoted exclusively to US wines, showcasing premium, sustainably produced labels from Napa and Paso Robles (Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Zinfandel, Pinot Noir, Rosé and more). Purpose-built for California producers: it is currently the clearest dedicated retail shelf for American wine in Yerevan and a natural first listing target.
Decant Wine Shop	A tasting-room-meets-retail shop in central Yerevan (Moskovyan Street) specializing in Armenian wines from small family producers, alongside a notable Champagne selection. Hosts frequent producer and sommelier tastings, making it a useful venue for on-the-ground brand education events.

10. Wine Importers & Distributors in Armenia

Company	Profile
Artexim / Noyan Tun	Founded in 1996, Artexim is the exclusive Armenian importer for a roster of well-known international wine houses — including Antinori, Miguel Torres, M. Chapoutier, Louis Roederer, Garcia Carrion, Gruppo Italiano Vini, Botter, and notably Robert Mondavi, a California producer. It also distributes ARARAT brandy and premium Armenian labels (Karas, Zorah, Kataro) through its own Noyan Tun specialty retail chain and a nationwide distributor network.
Andaco LLC	Armenia's largest food and beverage distributor, grown from a small family business founded in 1997 into a company covering an estimated 89% of the Armenian market. Andaco imports roughly \$25 million of goods annually

	across 200+ international brands, serving both retail and HoReCa, and also operates its own specialty spirits store and gourmet supermarket.
Vino&Vino (Vinovino)	One of Armenia's largest dedicated wine and spirits importers, and the official distributor of ARARAT brandy and the Pernod Ricard portfolio. Supplies most restaurants, cafes, bars and hotels in Yerevan in addition to its own retail and e-commerce storefront, making it a relevant partner for combined retail and on-trade distribution.
SAS Group	Operator of the SAS Supermarket chain and one of Armenia's leading food and beverage importers, with established supplier partnerships worldwide. Wine is one of more than 30,000 product lines carried across its stores and online shop (sas.am) — a high-volume, broad-distribution route rather than a curated premium listing.
Pernod Ricard Armenia	Local affiliate of the global spirits and wine group, established in 2008 following its acquisition of the Yerevan Brandy Company (maker of ARARAT). Primarily focused on brandy and its own international portfolio, but relevant as the largest multinational beverage operator with in-country logistics and route-to-market infrastructure.

11. Wine Education & Training in Armenia

A small but increasingly professional wine education ecosystem has emerged in Yerevan over the past decade, reflecting the broader premiumization trend described in Section 7. For California producers, these institutions are useful partners for staff training, trade tastings, and building the local expertise needed to sell and serve premium imported wine credibly.

Program	Profile
Armenian Wine School (WSET Armenia)	The only WSET (Wine & Spirit Education Trust) Approved Programme Provider in Armenia, offering in-person Level 1-3 Awards in Wines in English. Founded and taught by Arpine Manukyan, DipWSET — Armenia's first WSET Diploma holder, a Geisenheim-trained enologist, and winner of the 2023 Dom Perignon Golden Vines Master of Wine Scholarship. The clearest existing channel for training local staff, retailers and sommeliers to internationally recognized standards.
EVN Wine Academy (with Geisenheim University, Germany)	Armenia's first dedicated professional wine academy, delivering an 18-month certificate program in Enology and Wine Business in partnership with Germany's Geisenheim University, starting each November. Combines classroom instruction with intensive on-the-job training across viticulture,

	winemaking and wine business — producing a growing pool of industry-trained professionals for wineries, importers and hospitality.
Armenian National Agrarian University - Voskehat Center of Enology	Armenia's academic track for wine training: bachelor's and master's degrees in Fermentation Technologies and Winemaking. The center was modernized in 2018 with new winemaking equipment, tanks and an experimental laboratory, and also provides technical consulting to producers. Represents the pipeline of formally trained winemakers and viticulturists entering the industry.
Vino&Vino - WSET Level 2 courses	Vino&Vino has separately organized WSET Level 2 Award in Wines and Spirits courses (33 hours total, 21 hours classroom) .

12. Why Armenia Is a California Wine Opportunity

Taken together, the findings in this report point to a genuine, if early-stage, opening for California wine in Armenia. The country's economy is growing faster than any IMF forecast anticipated, producing an expanding, internationally minded urban middle class in Yerevan that is driving demand for premium imported goods. At the same time, Armenia is in the middle of its most significant foreign-policy pivot since independence: EU accession is formally underway, trade with the EAEU is shrinking while trade with the EU grows, and frameworks like the Washington Declaration and TRIPP are deepening US-Armenia ties. That Western reorientation is already translating into greater openness to American and European brands, and California wine stands to benefit directly from it.

Wine has a leading role in alcohol consumption. The import wine market is more premium oriented showing growth of spending per bottle. Quality and storytelling are primary decision points opening the room for California premium segment wines.

Tourism reinforces the opening and a fast-growing HoReCa scene create built-in brand exposure. The interest to California wines is growing: Cult Wines and More has built an entire boutique around American labels, Artexim/Noyan Tun already imports Robert Mondavi.

A maturing education ecosystem (WSET-certified Armenian Wine School, EVN Wine Academy) is professionalizing the trade.

Sources

Geography

- [Britannica: Armenia](#)
- [Wikipedia: Geography of Armenia](#)
- [Insightsonindia: Armenia Location & Physical Geography](#)

Economy

- [World Bank: Armenia Country Overview \(June 2026\)](#)
- [World Bank: Armenia Monthly Economic Update \(June 2026\)](#)
- [IMF Country Report No. 25/152 - Armenia](#)
- [ARKA: Armenia GDP grew 7.2% in 2025](#)
- [IMF DataMapper: Armenia](#)
- [Trading Economics: Armenia Trade Balance](#)

Geopolitics

- [EVN Report: Armenia Diversified Partnerships](#)
- [OC Media: Russia expects trade with Armenia to halve in 2025](#)
- [Special Eurasia: EU-Armenia Summit May 2026](#)
- [SLD Info: Armenia Geopolitical Realignment](#)
- [Hague Research: Armenia Between EU and EAEU](#)

Wine Market & Key Statistics

- [Statista: Wine Market Armenia Outlook](#)
- [Finport.am: Armenia exports wine to Russia, imports from Spain & Italy](#)
- [Vardanyan & Partners: Armenia Wine Industry Investment Overview](#)
- [Enterprise Armenia: Winery & Vineyards in Armenia](#)

Trade & Import Regulations

- [US Commercial Service: Armenia Import Tariffs](#)
- [US Commercial Service: Armenia Customs Regulations](#)
- [Vardanyan & Partners: Importing Alcoholic Beverages to Armenia](#)
- [USDA FAS: Armenia Regional Page](#)
- [USDA FAS: Wine Beer and Spirits Commodity Data](#)

Consumer Habits & Distribution

- [Journal of Intl Food & Agribusiness Marketing: Armenian Wine Consumer Behavior \(2022\)](#)
- [Vinography: Kingdom of Wine in Armenia \(Apr 2025\)](#)
- [WSET: A Guide to Armenian Wines \(2026\)](#)
- [ITA: Armenia Distribution & Sales Channels \(Dec 2025\)](#)
- [Vinovino Armenia Wine & Spirits Store](#)

HoReCa & Tourism

- [ITA: Armenia Travel and Tourism Country Commercial Guide \(Dec 2025\)](#)
- [Statista: Armenia Hotels Revenue Outlook](#)
- [Statista: Armenia Travel & Tourism Market](#)

- [World Bank: Armenia Tourism and Regional Infrastructure Project \(Apr 2026\)](#)
- [Enterprise Armenia: Winemaking Sector](#)

Specialized Wine Stores (Vinotek)

- [Cult Wines and More — official site](#)
- [In Vino — official site](#)
- [Vinovino \(Vino&Vino\) — About Us](#)
- [Decant Wine Shop — Facebook page](#)
- [EVN Report: The Wine Bar That Shaped Saryan Street](#)
- [Absolute Armenia: Saryan Street — The Place to Be for Wine Lovers](#)

Wine Importers & Distributors

- [Vinaty: Wine Importers and Distributors in Armenia](#)
- [Noyan Tun \(Artexim\): About Us](#)
- [Andaco LLC: Food and Beverage Distributor](#)
- [Pernod Ricard: Armenia](#)
- [SAS Group / SAS Supermarket](#)

Wine Education & Training

- [Armenian Wine School \(WSET Armenia\)](#)
- [Vinovino: WSET Wine School in Yerevan](#)
- [Wine Travel Awards: EVN Wine Academy's Enology and Wine Business Program](#)
- [World Bank Blogs: Fermenting Wine and Viticulture Knowledge in Armenia](#)
- [Gerard Basset Foundation: Scholar — Arpine Manukyan](#)