



DOING BUSINESS IN ST MAARTEN (Dutch)

Population 47K | GDP Growth 3.5% (*est. 2024) | GDP PC \$46K |
Total Still Wine Imports 129K cs
*Dutch + French side population 80K
*Numbers in report for both territories combined

Economy: Tourism and superyacht charter/provisioning drive growth.
Genuine free port - zero import duty, no VAT. Open border with French
Saint-Martin creates one retail market across both sides. Cruise
arrivals +12.4%, stay-over +3.1% in 2025.

Wine in St Maarten

Total Addressable Market

Sint Maarten Total Still Wine Category 129klt cases (-2%), led by US Wines
with 50K cs(+2%) followed by France 31K cs (+2%) and Chile 21K cs(-6%).

Consumption Trends

Wine consumption skews to tourists and yacht charter guests over the
small resident base.

Still Wine: Selected New World Wine Varietals

000s 9-litre Cases

Category	2024	2025	Market Share 2025	CAGR 2024–25	CAGR 2020–25
- Merlot	9.00	9.16	10.7%	1.8%	15.6%
- Pinot Gris/Pinot Grigio	7.11	7.31	8.5%	2.8%	18.6%
- Chardonnay	6.56	7.17	8.4%	9.3%	18.3%
- Sauvignon Blanc	4.05	4.14	4.8%	2.2%	17.0%
- Malbec	5.69	3.52	4.1%	-38.1%	-14.0%
- Cabernet Sauvignon	3.52	2.69	3.1%	-23.6%	2.1%
- Zinfandel	2.45	2.45	2.9%	0.0%	16.1%
- Shiraz/Syrah	1.80	1.85	2.2%	2.8%	21.1%
- White Zinfandel	1.55	1.60	1.9%	3.2%	17.6%
- Pinot Noir	0.82	1.13	1.3%	37.8%	9.4%
- Other Varietals	43.15	44.48	52.0%	3.1%	1.5%

Source: IWSR

*<https://openfactbook.org/> ; IMF Article IV 2021

Trading Notes for Wineries

Off-premise volume (47% of total) is concentrated on Philipsburg's Front Street (cruise-driven duty-free liquor/wine shops) and cash-and-carry wholesalers like Divico, Prime and large format store Cost U Less serving hotels, restaurants and villas.

On-premise volume (53% of total) spans resort dining and a large yacht/marina provisioning trade - Simpson Bay Marina is one of the Caribbean's biggest superyacht charter bases, especially in the Nov-Apr season.

High import dependency keeps the cost of living elevated; wholesale/bulk buying is common among businesses managing thin hospitality margins.

Market Insights

- Zero import duty and no VAT make Sint Maarten one of the lowest landed-cost markets in the Caribbean.
- The open border with French Saint-Martin means goods and shoppers move freely between sides; price and assortment differences on either side quickly show up as cross-border shopping.
- Yacht provisioning (Connoisseurs Duty Free, Ychtly and similar) is a distinct, high-value channel - charter guests and owners buy premium/luxury labels with delivery direct to the marina.
- Cruise-day retail on Front Street depends on ship schedules and shore-excursion timing rather than steady local demand.
- Hurricane season (Jun-Nov) and Irma's (2017) long recovery still shape hospitality investment and inventory planning.
- Businesses value efficient, well-capitalized importers given the island's small size and few number of distributors.
- St Maarten is also a distribution hub for Anguilla and for some products, St Barths.

Taxes, Shipping and Terms

- Sint Maarten is a de facto free trade zone (IMF, 2021): there is no formal import duty and no VAT on wine or any other goods.
- BBO (Turnover Tax / Belasting op Bedrijfsomzetten)
- 5% of gross revenue, charged at each domestic sale (importer-to-retailer, retailer-to-consumer)
- Cascading - no credit for BBO already paid earlier in the chain
- Not charged at the border; it applies only when goods are actually sold locally
- Excise Taxes
- Limited to motor vehicles and gasoline only - no alcohol or tobacco excise today
- IMF has flagged alcohol/tobacco excise as a future revenue option, citing smuggling risk given the open Saint-Martin border
- Currency: Caribbean Guilder (XCG), pegged at US\$1 = XCG 1.79 (replaced the Netherlands Antillean guilder, March 2025)

Notable Importers

CC1 St Maarten (Prime)
Divico (cash & carry wholesale)
Connoisseurs Duty Free (yacht provisioning)
Caribbean Liquors SXM
The Captain's Duty-Free Shop
ILTT Duty Free (SXM Airport)

Pricing Guidelines for Importers

	USD	XCG
750 ml Bottle Price CIF	\$1.00	\$1.79
Import Duty	\$10.00	\$17.90
Landed Cost (no duty/VAT at import)	\$0.00 (duty-free)	\$0.00
Local Port and Logistics	\$10.00	\$17.90
Landed at Warehouse	\$1.00	\$1.79
Distributor Margin 35% + BBO 5%*	\$11.00	\$19.69
List Price to Retailer	\$4.59	\$8.22
Retailer Margin 30% + BBO 5%*	\$15.59	\$27.91
Consumer Shelf Price	\$5.69	\$10.19
	\$21.28	\$38.09

Tables and Tax information serve as directional reference that are subject to changes and updated by each country throughout the year. Contact your local importer for the most up-to-date information.

Price Tiers

Category	2024 (000s 9L Cases)	2025 (000s 9L Cases)	Market Share	CAGR 2024–25	Price Range HNL\$
Ultra-Premium	0.19	0.18	0%	-5%	72.51 to 127.50
Super-Premium	0.7	0.85	1%	21%	35.81 to 72.50
Premium	28.76	27.51	21%	-4%	22.22 to 35.80
Standard	81.17	80.62	63%	-1%	9.09 to 22.21
Value	18.8	19.66	15%	5%	9.08 and under
Still Wine	129.62	128.82	100%	-1%	

Cultural Awareness and Considerations

- Sint Maarten is one of the most multicultural islands in the Caribbean, with well over 100 nationalities represented in a population of under 50,000 - expect a cosmopolitan, English-first business culture.
- The open border with French Saint-Martin means importers and retailers effectively compete island-wide, not just within the Dutch side.
- Yacht/marina provisioning is a distinct relationship business - reliability and delivery matter as much as price.
- Hurricane resilience (rebuilding since Irma, 2017) is a live topic; confirm partners' storm/insurance planning.

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