

Georgian Wines

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Introduction. The vine is central to Georgian culture and tightly bound to their religious heritage. It is common for families throughout Georgia to grow their own grapes and produce wine. Feasting and hospitality are central pillars of Georgian culture, and traditional banquets are presided over by a toastmaster, or Tamada, who offers numerous toasts throughout the meal, and ensures the wine flows liberally.

Materials and methods. Georgia is a land famed for its natural bounty. These days there are over 500 species of grape in Georgia, a greater diversity than anywhere else in the world, with around 40 of these grape varieties being used in commercial wine production. Conditions are well suited for viticulture: summers are rarely excessively hot, winters are mild and frost-free. In addition, the mountains around the vineyards are full of natural springs, and rivers drain mineral-rich waters into the valleys. All this means that Georgian wines have a reputation for being exceptionally pure.

Results. Around 150 million litres of wine are produced each year in Georgia, with around 45000 hectares of vineyards under cultivation. There are 18 Specific Viticulture Areas (a local analogy of the Controlled Appellations of Origin) where the grape variety, planting density and yield per hectare is controlled by Ministry of Agriculture, and where the grape yield per hectare is limited to 8 tons.

Georgian wines fall into several zones: Kakheti and Kartli in the east, and Imereti, Samegrelo, Guria, Ajaria, and Abkhazia in the west. By far the most important of these is Kakheti, which produces 70% of all Georgian wine. The map below shows where these can be found, along with the most important Specific Viticulture Areas [1].

The centre of wine production in Georgia remains Kakheti, with its unique Aloxanskoy valley. Kakheti region has its own special way of wine production. Used for fermentation unusual conical vessels with a capacity of 500 decilitres. They are buried in the ground so that the throat was at floor level. Such an unusual shape provides a stable temperature at 14 degrees Celsius, which is ideal for storage. Homemade wine in Georgia not less popular than corporate and usually can give odds on the quality and originality of the bouquet.

There are such popular Georgian wines:

“Alazani Valley” – semi-sweet red wine made from the grapes “Saperavi”, “odzhapeshi”, “Alexandreuli”;

“Akhasheni” – semi-sweet red wine made from grapes “Saperavi”;

“Kindzmarauli” – semi-sweet red wine made from the varieties of “Saperavi”;

“Kakheti” – dry white wine made from grapes “Mtsvane” and “rkatsiteli”;

“Napareuli” – dry red wine made from grapes “Saperavi”;

“Tbilisuri” – semi-dry white wine made from varieties “Mtsvane” and “rkatsiteli”;

“Hvanchkara” – the basis for this semi-sweet wine is the grape variety “Mujureuli” and “Aleksandrouli”.

Each wine has its own unique flavour and bouquet that will not be confused with any other, even if it is made from the same grape variety.[2]

Conclusions. Wine production is known from ancient times. Georgia is a major manufacture of high quality natural wines and wine for sparkling wines and brandies.

References

1. <http://georgianwinesociety.co.uk/about-georgian-wines>.
2. <http://wineverity.com/gruzinskie-vina>.
3. <http://ua-referat.com>.