



## Imported Wine Drinker Profiles

In a recent survey of the Wine Opinions consumer panel, respondents were asked how often in the past 12 months they purchased imported wines. Among more than 1,500 respondents, 84% were high frequency wine drinkers. Countries of origin included France, Spain, Italy, Argentina, Chile, New Zealand, and Australia.

It was no surprise that Italy led with the most frequent purchases (65% had either purchased Italian wines frequently or made several purchases), as Italy has led imported wine sales in the U.S. for years. France was a fairly close second at 59% making "several" or "frequent" purchases. Spain followed at 50%.

New World producing countries were closely grouped but far behind their European counterparts, with "several" or "frequent" purchases of wines from Argentina made by 33% of respondents, followed by Australia (32%), New Zealand (31%), and Chile (29%).

Of interest were significant differences between male vs. female imported wine purchases and the purchases of those under the age of 40 vs. those over 40.

Males were more frequent purchasers of wines from France, Spain, and Italy. Some 66% of males made "several" or "frequent" purchases of French wines in the past 12 months, compared to 52% of females. Purchases of wines from Italy were made by 68% of males and 60% of females. For Spain, the percentages were 57% of males and 43% of females.

There were only small differences in purchase frequency by gender for wines from New Zealand, Argentina, Chile, and Australia.

Differences in purchase frequencies by age segment were much greater than differences by gender. Respondents under the age of 40 were more frequent purchasers than their elders of wines from every country.

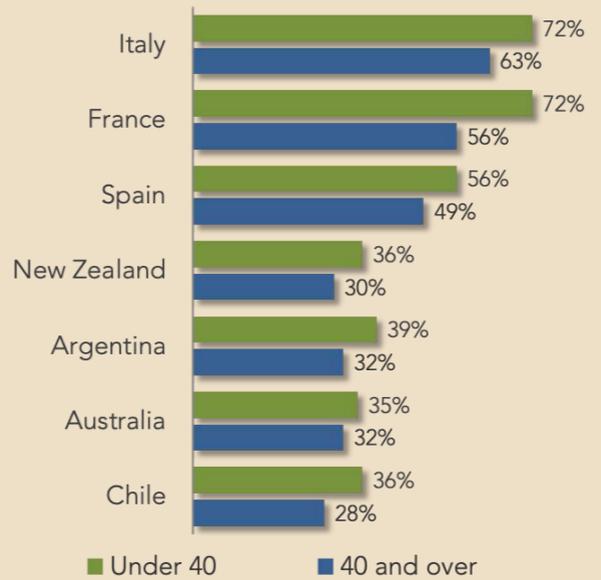
The gap was widest for French wines, as 72% of those under 40 had made "several" or "frequent" past-12-months purchases, compared to 56% of those over 40. For Italian wines, the gap was more narrow (72% of those under 40 making purchases, vs. 63% of those over the age of 40.)

As to the generational disparity among imported wine buyers, we think of it this way: Baby Boomers and the California wine industry came of age together. They have "class reunions" whenever wine o'clock rolls around. Millennials like California wines, too. But they have "studied abroad" and are happily "multilingual" in wine.

**Past 12 Months Imported Wine Purchases**  
(Percent by Frequency)



**Past 12 Months Imported Wine Purchases**  
(Percent by Age Segment)



## The Wine Industry's Weighty Issue

The recent consumer survey also sought insights on awareness and perceptions of heavier-weight bottles. Asked to check a series of statements with which they agreed, uncertainty was apparent.

A slight majority of respondents (52%) agreed that the weight of the bottle does not affect wine quality at all. A plurality (40%) also agreed that shipping wines in lighter glass bottles is one of the best ways a winery can reduce its carbon footprint. And only 10% believe that heavier glass bottles do a better job of protecting wine as it ages.

All of that is good news, but other results are decidedly mixed. For example, among just those who agreed that most really expensive red wine comes in heavier bottles, 48% also agreed that bottle weight does not affect wine quality at all, and only 19% felt that heavier bottles do a better job of protecting wines from aging too quickly.

By contrast, among all those who agreed that "heavy bottles are just a marketing ploy," 74% agreed that bottle weight does not affect wine quality, and 65% believed that shipping wines in lighter glass was the best way for wineries to reduce their carbon footprint. Nevertheless, only 41% of those who think of heavy bottles as a "marketing ploy" indicated they would rather buy wines in lighter glass bottles (given the choice).

It is clear that any real shift by producers to lighter-weight bottles will have to be preceded or accompanied by widespread and effective messaging of the benefits that lighter weight bottles provide.

**Bottle Weight Statements**  
(Percent in agreement)

Haven't noticed bottle weight - light or heavy	28%
Many high quality red wines are in heavy bottles	23%
Bottle weight doesn't affect wine quality at all	52%
Given the choice, I'd always choose lighter bottles	20%
Some of my favorite wines come in heavier bottles	26%
Heavy bottles are just a marketing ploy	25%
Heavy bottles protect wines from aging too fast	10%
Shipping wines in lighter bottles is one of the best ways a winery can reduce carbon footprint	40%
Most really expensive red wine comes in heavier bottles	19%

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