WINE

PASSPORT



FREE SAMPLE · GEORGIA

THIS PASSPORT BELONGS TO

_____

For readers of legal drinking age where they live. Please enjoy wine responsibly.

WINE ACROSS COUNTRIES

WINE PASSPORT · NO. 001

This passport belongs to

NAME

HOME TOWN

STARTED ON

THE FIRST WINE I LOVED

HOW I LIKE MY WINE

MY USUAL GLASS OR BOTTLE SHOP

THE WINE REGION I'M MOST CURIOUS ABOUT

MY WINE GOALS

IF FOUND, PLEASE RETURN TO

SIGNATURE

P<WIN<<WINE<ACROSS<COUNTRIES<<<<<<<<<<<<
SAMPLE<GEORGIA<<ONE<GLASS<AT<A<TIME<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<

For readers of legal drinking age where they live. Please enjoy wine responsibly. Drink responsibly. Never drink and drive. If you're pregnant, don't drink alcohol.

BEFORE YOU GO

How to use your passport

One region, one bottle, one page of notes. Wander the wine world at your own pace.

1. **Pick a stop**
   This sample has one stop: Georgia. The full passport has 13.

2. **Find a bottle from that region**
   A wine shop, a restaurant list or a friend's cellar will do. The passport doesn't recommend or rate any bottle.

3. **Read the left page**
   The region's story, its grapes, where it grows, its climate and land, and its harvest months. Each fact comes from a source named on the page.

4. **Pour it and fill in the right page**
   Write down the wine, the producer, the vintage, where you had it and a score out of 100, then your own tasting notes. There is room for three wines per region.

5. **Stamp it**
   Stick a stamp or sticker in the circle on the right-hand page.

6. **Keep going**
   The full Wine Passport covers 13 regions, with a top-wines page, stamp stickers and a certificate.

Good to know. A region is far bigger than any one bottle: grapes, climate and styles differ from place to place within it. If your wine tastes nothing like you expected, write that down too.

Where the facts come from. Everything on the region pages comes from wineacrosscountries.com, where each fact names its source. The sources are listed at the foot of every page and collected on p. 6.

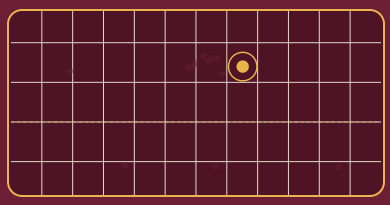
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STOP 09 · EUROPE

Georgia

Clay jars buried in the ground still make wine here, and jar residues point to grape wine around 6000 BC.



GEORGIA · 41.9°, 45.5°

THE STORY

In 2017 a team led by Patrick McGovern reported tartaric acid and other grape-related acids in jar sherds from Gadachrili Gora and Shulaveris Gora, two Neolithic villages about 50 km south of Tbilisi. In PNAS they called it the earliest biomolecular evidence for grape wine in the Near East, dated to about 6,000–5,800 BC.

Some of the jars held over 300 liters and stood nearly 1 meter tall, and clay blobs around their mouths have been read as grape clusters. The authors call their result a working hypothesis and say it is not yet clear whether the grapes were wild or domesticated.

No tree resin turned up in the residues, unlike the resinated jars from Hajji Firuz Tepe in Iran, which held the previous record at about 5,400–5,000 BC. McGovern told National Geographic this may point to early experiments with winemaking.

Sources differ on when the qvevri itself appeared. The PNAS authors date the earliest archaeological evidence for qvevri winemaking in Georgia to the Iron Age, while the National Wine Agency dates the familiar egg-shaped qvevri to about the 3rd millennium BC.

After the Soviet invasion of 1921, vineyards were nationalized and many family grape varieties were replaced with a few, for mass-market wine. A state body called Samtrest took control of Georgian viticulture and winemaking in 1929.

Qvevri winemaking was sidelined commercially for about seven decades, but farmers kept it alive at home, even under the 'dry' laws of the 1980s. From 1990 the church began restoring monastery cellars, and the Alaverdi cellar reopened in 2006.

In 2006 Russia banned imports of Georgian wine, and producers turned to new markets, where qvevri became a selling point. Output fell to 22 million liters in 2009 and had quadrupled by 2014; Russia lifted the ban in 2013.

Georgia's tourism board says 525 grape varieties are unique to the country. In Georgian tradition, God created the vine before people.

GRAPES TO KNOW

- **Saperavi.** Georgia's leading red grape, with about 10% of plantings (over 4,000 ha).
- **Mtsvane Kakhuri.** Its name means 'green Kakheti,' and it is thought to be older than Rkatsiteli.
- **Khikhvi.** A Kakheti grape with only about 1 ha in production nationwide in 2004. It ripens early and is used in the fortified Kardenakhi appellation.
- **Tsolikouri.** A western Georgian grape grown in Imereti and Racha-Lechkhumi.
- **Rkatsiteli.** Native to Kakheti and Georgia's leading white grape, with about 43% of plantings (over 20,000 ha in 2014).
- **Kisi.** A Kakheti grape that nearly disappeared by 2000, after Soviet-era preference for Rkatsiteli; only about 20 ha were planted in 2004.
- **Chinuri.** From Kartli, made as still, sparkling and qvevri wine. It is the main grape of Atenuri, a sparkling appellation.
- **Mujuretuli.** Grown mainly along the Rioni River in the Ambrolauri and Tsageri districts, usually interplanted with Aleksandrouli.

WHERE IT GROWS

Kakheti. The main wine region, in the east, with its best vineyards in the Alazani and Iori basins at 400–700 m.

Imereti. A diverse western region where the qvevri is called churi locally.

Black Sea coastal zone. Guria, Samegrelo, Abkhazia and Adjara, with vineyards from near sea level to about 500 m.

Kartli. Known for European-style and sparkling wines from vineyards along the Mtkvari River at 450–700 m, with grapes such as Chinuri and Goruli Mtsvane.

Racha-Lechkhumi. A small mountain region with few vineyards and rare grapes, mostly on the slopes of the Rioni gorge.

Meskheti. Vines grow at 900–1,700 m, mostly on terraces, which the agency says is probably the highest viticulture region in the world.

MORE ON CLIMATE AND LAND, FROM THE SOURCES

Timing varies by area because sugar levels depend on sunlight.

HARVEST

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

Harvest months: September to December.

Sources: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences; National Geographic; National Wine Agency of Georgia; NPR (republished by KPBS); The Atlanta Journal-Constitution; UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage; Georgian National Tourism Administration (georgia.travel). Full list on p. 6. More at wineacrosscountries.com/regions/georgia/

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MY GEORGIA

Tasting log

Write your own notes: what you poured, who made it, where you were. Pencil works well.

STAMP
OR STICKER
HERE

WINE 1

WINE

PRODUCER

VINTAGE

WHERE I HAD IT

MY SCORE (OUT OF 100)

MY TASTING NOTES

☐ WOULD POUR IT AGAIN

WINE 2

WINE

PRODUCER

VINTAGE

WHERE I HAD IT

MY SCORE (OUT OF 100)

MY TASTING NOTES

☐ WOULD POUR IT AGAIN

WINE 3

WINE

PRODUCER

VINTAGE

WHERE I HAD IT

MY SCORE (OUT OF 100)

MY TASTING NOTES

☐ WOULD POUR IT AGAIN

Harvest months for Georgia: September to December. Every note and score on this page is yours.

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SOURCES

Where the facts come from

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Like it? The full Wine Passport covers all 13 regions.

WINEACROSSCOUNTRIES.COM

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