VIKING LINE

Viking Line has a new favourite white wine – Grüner Veltliner overtakes Riesling

Austrian Grüner Veltliner has overtaken perennial favourite Riesling to become the most popular white wine in Viking Line's à la carte restaurants. Viking Line's updated à la carte wine list features more than one hundred wines, including a record 12 alcohol-free options. The list reflects current trends in the world of wine and guests' growing appetite for trying something new.

For years, Riesling has been the white wine of choice among guests in Viking Line's à la carte restaurants. Now there is a new favourite: Austrian Grüner Veltliner has taken the top spot.

Sales of Austrian wines in Viking Line's à la carte restaurants have almost quadrupled since 2023, and Austria has risen to second place behind France in total white wine sales. At the same time, the number of Riesling wines among the ten best-selling white wines has fallen from five in 2023 to three today.

Around 4.6 million journeys are made on Viking Line's vessels every year. With such high volumes in the restaurants, the impact of trends can be seen in gradual changes in consumption patterns.

"Our guests are increasingly keen to try new wines and grape varieties and to ask our knowledgeable waiting staff for recommendations. *Thomas Sattler Grüner Veltliner* has been our house white wine on board for two years, which has certainly helped boost the popularity of Austrian wines. A journey with us is a great opportunity to try high-quality classic wines at reasonable prices," says Viking Line's Restaurant Beverage Manager **Ossi Ruusunen**.

Today, around 40 per cent of guests in Viking Line's à la carte restaurants choose a wine package to accompany their meal.

"A wine package is a great way to sample quality wines at a very attractive price. For example, the wine package for our three-course game menu costs 28 euros."

Chardonnay brings Finnish and Swedish guests together

Chardonnay, traditionally a favourite among Swedish guests, is also gaining popularity among Finns. *Laroche Chablis Saint Martin* from Burgundy in France, made from Chardonnay grapes, is the second best-selling white wine in Viking Line's à la carte restaurants. It is also the most popular wine to accompany one of the ships' classic dishes, the seafood platter.

"Guests come to an à la carte restaurant for the culinary experience, and Finns today are increasingly willing to pay for quality. Our Swedish guests have always been happy to spend money on good food and drink. Their choices also reflect curiosity and a willingness to try something new: if they like what they taste, they will often make their choice spontaneously without giving it too much thought."

Preferences are changing among red wines too, with lighter alternatives gaining ground alongside traditionally robust and full-bodied favourites. For example, a wine made from Pinot Noir has entered the top ten best-selling red wines. Italy remains the most popular country of origin for red wine, followed by Spain and France.

Wine list evolves with the food

The wine lists in Viking Line's à la carte restaurants were renewed at the beginning of October. During the more extensive annual update, new wines are selected first and foremost to complement individual dishes and menus in the restaurants.

"We closely monitor which wines our guests order and what they are looking for. Based on these observations and current wine trends, we seek out new and interesting additions to our lists," says Ossi Ruusunen.

The wine list in Viking Line's à la carte restaurants features more than one hundred wines. At its heart are classic European wines offering excellent value for money, complemented by a selection of New World wines. Interesting new additions include *L'Étoile de Château Puybarbe* (€42) from Château Puybarbe, which is headed by Finn **Riku Väänänen**.

Demand for alcohol-free drinks also continues to grow. The new wine list features a record 12 alcohol-free still and sparkling wines.

"Choosing an alcohol-free drink has become completely normal, regardless of whether or not you otherwise drink alcohol. The quality of alcohol-free wines has improved significantly, and we can now recommend a high-quality alcohol-free wine to accompany every dish."

Most popular wine-producing countries in Viking Line's à la carte restaurants

White wines

- France
- Austria
- Germany

Red wines

- Italy
- Spain
- France

For further information

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