

# iDealwine update: Organics make their mark at auction

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**‘BORDEAUX VS Burgundy’** is a debate that tends to hog the limelight in auction analysis. The juxtaposition of the world’s most famous fine wine regions is trotted out so often that the fact that Hong Kong buyers opt for Burgundy above all else, that Singapore and France are bastions of Bordeaux, and that the latter continues to struggle in the US, is not new information to most keen collectors.

So, what is new? First, global demand for fine wine has never been so high. Second, the most significant shift in fine wine consumption in the past decade has been towards organic and eco-friendly wine. Performing extremely well at auction, it’s worth taking a closer look at who is buying organic wine, and whether any trends can be identified.

According to France’s Agence Bio, the growing global organic industry was worth €103.5 billion (£87bn) in 2018, and exceeded €112bn just a year

later. If more consumers are opting for organic produce in general, organic wine is positively booming. Consumption of organic wine in French households (where [iDealwine](#) is based) increased by 13% in value between 2019 and 2020, representing €1.1bn in 2020.

Taking a look at the most expensive organic and biodynamic wines at auction in 2021, it reads like a Who's Who of Burgundy: Leroy, La Romanée-Conti, Leflaive, Auvénay, Comtes Lafon. Hammer prices regularly exceed €10,000, stretching to almost €30,000. Organic Rhône Valley wines also generate high bids, namely Hermitage La Chapelle from Jaboulet, as well as the Loire Valley (Saumur-Champigny Le Bourg from Clos Rougeard).

Natural wines also continue to break records at auction: Échézeaux from Domaine Bizot (Burgundy), Domaine des Miroirs and Overnoy-Houillon (Jura) and Selosse (Champagne) included.

### **[iDealwine](#)'s Barometer – Wine Investment Bible**

- An exhaustive guide to the most sought-after names and top bids, in 200 pages of wine-market analysis for every French wine region.
- Complimentary copies available to the first 100 drinks business subscribers
- Simply email: [\*\*international-marketing@idealwine.com\*\*](mailto:international-marketing@idealwine.com)

Are collectors actively choosing more sustainably produced wines? Or are producers determining the kind of wine purchased? Are organic, biodynamic, and natural methods a key factor when it comes to bidding on wine? Or are the high hammer prices simply label-led purchases where it's easy to assume environmentally led decisions?

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For now, it's impossible to calculate the exact share of organic wine at auction – vintages sold at auction often predate the certification of organic and biodynamic viticulture – but we can calculate that approximately 25% of wine sold at auction by [iDealwine](#) in 2021 was produced by wineries that are now certified organic. In 2021, 40% of wine sold at auction was conventionally produced, and 60% was eco-friendly (which includes organic, biodynamic, natural, and all wine with at least some level of environmental certification).

The proportion of conventional wines bought was slightly higher than average in France and Belgium (42%), Germany and Italy (43%), Sweden and South Korea (41%), and slightly lower in Switzerland and the Netherlands (38%). At the other end of the spectrum, Taiwan stands out by a mile, with just 18% of wines bought coming from conventional production. Certified biodynamic wine is in high demand here, too, representing 64% of the wines won at auction.

The UK and China also have high levels of organic purchases, at 73%. UK wine collectors are difficult to pin down, as they generally have much broader tastes, with top winning bids ranging from the bluest of blue-chip names to the trendiest and rarest natural producers. Low demand in China for conventional wines may surprise many but is likely the result of a very well supplied local market for conventional wine. Chinese collectors bidding on a France-based but globally positioned platform like [iDealwine](#) are seeking the hardest to find producers and rare bottles that tend to come with an organic label.

Also leaning into the eco-friendly trend are Hong Kong, Ireland, and Luxembourg, which all bid on less than 35% conventional wine. Bidding patterns in Hong Kong aren't unlike those seen in the UK, with an emphasis on eclecticism and a range of big names. Certainly not universally the case, in Portugal, 61% of bottles bought were conventional, which is fitting given that Bordeaux – which famously favours conventional methods (for many valid reasons) – makes up 60% of bottles shipped there. Estonia and Poland have a pretty even split between conventional and sustainable, with the proportion of Bordeaux again quite high in these countries; 64% and 50% in value respectively. Just under half (48%) of wines sold to Denmark

and Japan are made conventionally. Last but not least, Singapore confirms the link between conventional purchases and a penchant for Bordeaux, with 60% conventional and 50% of acquisitions from the region famous for its first growths.

### **About iDealwine.com**

- Founded in 2000, iDealwine is France's top wine auctioneer and leading online wine auction house worldwide. Specialising in rare and fine wine at auction, as well as traditional fixed-price sales; iDealwine is trusted by 550,000 wine lovers in over 60 countries.
- Based in Paris, and with offices in Bordeaux and Hong Kong, iDealwine sources rare bottles from European cellars, private collections, and direct from wineries before meticulously authenticating and shipping to wine lovers, collectors, and trade customers worldwide.
- iDealwine provides wine-market data and analysis, with over 60,000 price estimates, based on more than three million auction prices.
- If you are keen to sell your wines then check out iDealwine's current auctions, sales, and price estimates at: [www.idealwine.com](http://www.idealwine.com)

### **THE ECO-FRIENDLY TREND IS UNDENIABLE – BUT WHERE TO INVEST?**

While much is still up for debate (including the motivation for these purchases), it is undeniable that wine enthusiasts are (on a sliding scale) leaning towards or actively seeking out “green” wines in as much as those that are produced organically or biodynamically. Read the continued discussion and find exhaustive lists of eco-friendly (and conventional) wine producers with excellent investment potential in iDealwine's Barometer, the online auctioneer's annual publication that dissects market trends and asks what the future might hold for the fine wine sector.