

## The evolution of the rosé wine market in the main supermarkets from Timișoara

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### Abstract

The increasing trend in wine consumption in Romania has substantially influenced the marketing strategies of leading supermarket chains, resulting in the progressive expansion of their wine departments. These developments have made supermarkets compete effectively with specialized wine retailers with regards to product option and diversity. The study was conducted over three non-consecutive years in three different supermarkets, each representing a distinct retail chain in the city of Timișoara. Across all locations, a consistent year-over-year increase was recorded in both the number of wine products available and the diversity of producers represented. Many wine producers available on supermarket shelves originated from European Union member states; however, products from non-EU European countries and other global regions were also present. Notably, a continuous increase in the presence of Romanian wine producers was observed in all three supermarkets. This pattern reflects the positive outcomes of Romania's national vineyard conversion and restructuring program, which has played a pivotal role in both the expansion of the domestic viticulture sector and the enhancement of wine quality—across both traditional wineries and newer market competitors. Furthermore, the study identified a significant diversity of the varietal wine assortment. The current market options include a diverse range of grape varieties, quality level, and price categories, thereby responding to a broad spectrum of consumer preferences and income level. This diversity demonstrates the growing sophistication of wine retailing strategies, as well as the changing nature of customer demand in Romanian wine market.

**Keywords:** assortment, consumer behavior, local wines, price, wine retail

### Introduction

In recent decades, the Romanian wine sector has undergone a significant transformation, both in terms of production and consumption, in line with global trends of modernization and adaptation to consumer demand [1]. In this context, rosé wines have gained increasing popularity among consumers, being perceived as modern, versatile products that align with contemporary consumption trends, especially among younger consumers and urban demographics [2,3]. The evolution of this specific wine segment can be clearly observed through the distribution channels with the greatest impact – supermarkets, which play an essential role in promoting wines to the public [6]. Timișoara, an important urban, economic and cultural center of Romania, provides a favorable framework for analyzing the dynamics of rosé wine market, especially in terms of the offer available in the main retail chains. Diversification of assortments, price fluctuations, promotional strategies and urban consumer preferences are key factors shaping this evolution [19].

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the evolution of the rosé wine sector in the main supermarkets in Timișoara, focusing on the changes in the structure of the offer, product positioning, marketing strategies adopted, and consumption trends identified among the local population. The study aims to contribute to a better understanding of how the demand and supply of rosé wines influence each other in the Romanian urban context, while reflecting, at the same time, general trends of the national and international market [10].

### Material and Method

The research was conducted in 2024, in three large supermarkets in the city of Timisoara, with the aim of analyzing the assortment of rosé wines sold, to determine the diversity of the offer, the origin of the products (domestic or imported), as well as the way they are distributed and promoted in the sales space. In each supermarket, a complete inventory of the assortments of rosé wines available on the shelves at the date of the visit was carried out, through direct observation and manual recording of the information on the bottle labels. For each rosé wine identified, the following characteristics were noted: wine name, brand/producer, country of origin, wine-growing region (if specified), harvest year, type of wine (dry, semi-dry, semi-sweet, sweet), volume and unit price, presence or absence of promotions or discounts. For each supermarket, the total number of rosé wines available was analyzed, the proportion of domestic versus imported wines (origin depending on the producing country), the diversity of prices and the presence of premium vs. affordable products, the quality characteristics of the wine assortments in each supermarket. Finally, a classification of the wines in each supermarket by price category was made, which reflects the range of consumers it addresses, depending on preferences - and particularly on budget.

### Results and Discussion

Both Romania and non-EU countries contribute to the diversity of the rosé wine market, each with its own particularities related to the grape varieties cultivated, the winemaking techniques adopted and, in non-EU countries, potentially greater legislative flexibility allowing for a wider variety of approaches.

**Table 1. Regional origin of wines**

Trader (Supermarket)	EU countries (No/%)		Non-EU countries (No/%)		Romania (No /%)		Other countries (No / %)		Total (No /%)	
	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%	Nr	%
Supermarket 1	22	80.7	4	19.2	21	76.9	0	0	26	100
Supermarket 2	14	86.6	1	13.3	12	73.3	0	0	15	100
Supermarket 3	18	90.0	2	10.0	17	85.0	0	0	20	100

Table 1 presents the distribution of the number of bottles of rosé wine in three different supermarkets, classifying their origin into "EU Countries", "Non-EU Countries" and "Other Continents". The data include both the absolute number of bottles (No) and their percentage of the total bottles of rosé wine in each supermarket. Regarding the general analysis of the origin of rosé wines, an overwhelming presence of rosé wines originating from European Union countries is evident in all three supermarkets. They represent the majority of the offer, both in number of bottles and percentage. Rosé wines originating from non-EU countries have a much lower share, being present with only a small number of bottles compared to those from the EU [1]. In none of the supermarkets analyzed were rosé wine bottles originating from "Other Continents" identified. This suggests that the local rosé wine market is based almost exclusively on European sources. In Supermarket 1, a total of 26 rosé wine bottles were found. EU countries held 22 bottles, representing 80.77% of the total rosé wines. This indicates a dominant share of European wines in the offer of this supermarket. Non-EU countries, with 4 bottles, representing 19.23% of the total, this proportion, although much lower than that of EU wines, is the highest share of non-EU wines among the three supermarkets. Supermarket 1's rosé wine offer is strongly European but allows for greater diversification with wines from non-EU countries compared to the other two supermarkets [14].

In Supermarket 2, a total of 15 bottles of rosé wine were identified, of which 14 bottles were from EU countries, representing 86.67% of the total. From non-EU countries, one bottle was identified, representing 13.33% of the total. This is the lowest absolute presence of non-EU wines among the three supermarkets. Supermarket 2 focuses almost exclusively on rosé wines from the European Union, with a very limited diversity from outside this area. In supermarket 3, a total of 20 bottles of rosé wine were identified, of which 18 bottles came from EU countries, representing 90% of the total. This is the highest percentage share of EU wines among all supermarkets, reinforcing an almost exclusively European sourcing strategy. Two bottles came from non-EU countries, representing 10% of the total. Table 2 presents a list of 26 different varieties of rosé wines available in Supermarket 1, providing details about the varietal assortment (trade name of the wine/producer), the type of wine (dry, demi-dry, sweet and demi-sweet), the alcoholic strength and the price.

**Table 2. Characteristics of the assortment of rose wines identified in Supermarket 1**

No.	Varietal assortment	Wine category	Price (lei)	Alcohol concentration
1	Pelin Carpatin	Demi-dry	16.40	11.5 % Vol.alc.
2	Sigillum Moldaviae	Demi-dry	18.20	14.0 % Vol.alc.
3	Cotnari Inedit Busuioacă de Bohotin Roze	Demi-sweet	17.99	12.5 % Vol.alc.
4	Chateau Pietro	Demi-dry	18.99	13.9 % Vol.alc.
5	Crepuscul Liliac	Dry	24.90	12.0 % Vol.alc.
6	Schwaben Wein Vin Roze	Demi-sweet	25.0	10.5 % Vol.alc.
7	Mateus Rosé	Demi-dry	29.90	11.0 % Vol.alc.
8	Navigo Compas Roze	Dry	29.90	13.0 % Vol.alc.
9	Domeniile Cuza Vin Roze	Dry	33.90	13.0 % Vol.alc.
10	Individo Roze (Ediție Limitată)	Dry	35.70	12.5 % Vol.alc.
11	Domeniile Davidescu Sorginte Roze	Demi-dry	34.90	13.0 % Vol.alc.
12	Corcova Roze	Dry	35.70	13.5 % Vol.alc.
13	Domeniul Bogdan Roze	Dry	42.30	12.6 % Vol.alc.
14	Caii de la Letea Legendă Roze	Dry	44.20	13.0 % Vol.alc.
15	Roza de Samburesti Roze	Dry	44.70	14.0 % Vol.alc.
16	Vinarte Rozalia Roze	Demi-sweet	47.90	12.5 % Vol.alc.
17	Bristena Busuioaca	Demi-sweet	41.80	12.0 % Vol.alc.
18	Ciumbrud	Demi-dry	34.70	12.5 % Vol.alc.
19	Vin Chocolate Roze	Sweet	37.40	11.5 % Vol.alc.
20	Domeniile Averesti Magnum	Dry	76.20	12.0 % Vol.alc.
21	Domeniile Averesti Busuioaca	Dry	154.00	12.0 % Vol.alc.
22	Domeniile Cuza roze Limited Edition	Dry	159.50	13.0 % Vol.alc.
23	Domeniile Urlati	Dry	34.00	13.0 % Vol.alc.
24	Aerosoli Murfatlar	Dry	39.50	12.5 % Vol.alc.
25	Purcari Vinohora Vin Roze	Dry	72.90	13.0 % Vol.alc.
26	Castel Mimi Tandem	Demi-dry	32.50	12.5 % Vol.alc.

Supermarket 1 offers a wide range of 26 distinct rosé wines, which indicates an intension to cover diverse consumer preferences. Supermarket 1 features numerous renowned Romanian producers (e.g. Purcari, Domeniile Cuza, Caii de la Letea, Cotnari, Corcova, Domeniul Bogdan, Vinarte, Averesti, Liliac, Murfatlar, Urlati, Sâmburești) and at least one well-known international brand (e.g. Mateus Rosé). The presence of limited editions (such as Individo Roze, Domeniile Cuza roze Limited Edition) indicates an attempt to offer premium or niche products.

The offer is clearly dominated by dry rosé wines, with 14 varieties (approximately 54% of the total). This reflects the current market trend and a consumer preference for less sweet, more versatile wines suitable for food pairing. According to Jaud et al. (2025) [12] dry rosé wines have gained increasing popularity in Europe and North America due to their perceived elegance, gastronomic compatibility, and association with modern wine culture.

There is a significant number of semi-dry wines, approximately 27% of the total, which offer a balance between dry and sweet, making them accessible to a wide range of consumers. As observed by Jardas Antičić et al. (2025) [11] semi-dry and off-dry rosé wines are particularly appreciated in Central and Eastern Europe, where consumers often favor wines that are neither too acidic nor overly sweet.

Approximately 15% are semi-sweet wines, including popular varieties such as Cotnari Inedit Busuioacă de Bohotin, Vinarte Rozalia and Bristena Busuioaca, which bring a specific aromatic note and are aimed at those who prefer a rounder and more aromatic wine. There is only one variety classified as sweet, namely Chocolate Roze wine, indicating a very small niche for this type of rosé. This aligns with findings by Cei and Rossetto (2024) [4] who note that sweet rosé wines occupy a niche market, typically associated with entry-level or occasional wine consumers. In terms of alcoholic strength, most rosé wines fall between 12% and 13.5% alcohol by volume, which denotes balanced and structured wines. There are also wines with higher alcoholic strength, such as Roza de Sâmburești and Sigillum Moldaviae with 14% vol. alc., but also wines with

lower alcohol content, such as Schwaben Wein (10.5% volume) and Mateus Rosé (11% volume), making the wines lighter and fresher. This variation is consistent with international trends noted by Kyzas and Papageorgiou (2025) [13] who emphasizes that rosé wines globally exhibit a broad spectrum of alcohol content, often tailored to consumer preference by region and climate.

Regarding prices, they vary significantly, from 16.40 lei (Pelin Carpatin) to 159.50 lei (Domeniile Cuza roze Limited Edition), this diversity allows the supermarket to attract customers with different budgets. Thus, 6 wine assortments were identified in the category priced under 30 lei, 14 assortments in the mid-range (30-50 lei) and the “Premium” segment (over 50 lei), with 6 assortments in this category, including three wines with price over 70 lei (Purcari Vinohora, Domeniile Averesti Magnum, Domeniile Averesti Busuioaca, Domeniile Cuza roze Limited Edition).

This assortment targets not only more demanding consumers in terms of wine but also those with greater purchasing power. However, there are also two assortments that exceed 150 lei (Domeniile Averesti Busuioaca and Domeniile Cuza roze Limited Edition), positioning themselves as luxury or collectible products, indicating an effort to attract high-end customers. Comparable strategies are described by Cenbauer et al. (2015) [5] who note that premium wine placement in retail environments often seeks to appeal to aspirational buyers and brand-loyal consumers willing to pay for exclusivity.

Similar patterns of dominance by regional producers are also observed in other European markets. For example, in France and Italy, supermarkets typically stock over 85% domestic or intra-EU rosé wines, with limited presence from New World countries such as Chile, South Africa, or the United States [8]. Globally, however, retail wine assortments in countries like the USA, Canada, or Australia tend to offer a more balanced mix between local and imported rosé wines, reflecting different consumer preferences and trade relationships [16].

Table 3 presents a selection of 15 rosé wines available in Supermarket 2, providing details on the varietal assortment, wine type, alcoholic strength and price.

Supermarket 2 differentiates itself through a clear strategy of focusing on high-quality rosé wines, predominantly dry ones, with a rich offer from both Romanian and foreign producers. The price range is higher compared to the other two supermarkets, which denotes that this distributor targets a segment of customers with higher purchasing power, who appreciate quality and, possibly, European origin, in addition to premium Romanian products.

**Table 3. Characteristics of the assortment of rose wines identified in Supermarket 2**

No.	Varietal assortment	Wine category	Price (lei)	Alcohol concentration
1	Cramele Recaş - Muse	Demi-dry	77.99	13.0 % vol.alc.
2	Fazi Battaglia - Rosato	Dry	59.99	12.0 % vol.alc.
3	Maison Castel - Côtes de	Dry	59.99	12.5 % vol.alc.
4	Domeniile Averesti - Diamond Selection	Dry	112.90	13.5 % vol.alc.
5	Iconic Estate - Hyperion	Dry	99.98	13.5 % vol.alc.
6	Vinaria Purcari - Magnum	Dry	107.99	13.0 % vol.alc.
7	Domeniile Tohani - Summer Winet	Demi -dry	86.99	12.7 % vol.alc.
8	Crama Bolovanu - Soare	Dry	62.99	12.5 % vol.alc.
9	Iconic Estate - Hyperion	Dry	99.98	13.5 % vol.alc.
10	Jidvei - Mysterium	Dry	44.99	12.5 % vol.alc.
11	Domeniul Coroanei Segarcea	Demi-sweet	99.98	12.5 % vol.alc.
12	Domeniile Tohani - Princiar	Demi-dry	54.99	12.0 % vol.alc.
13	Domeniile Urlați - Saac Cuvée	Dry	43.00	13.3 % vol.alc.
14	Crama Oprişor - Jiana Rose	Dry	52.99	13.0 % vol.alc.
15	Crama Starmina - Prince Mircea	Dry	39.98	12.5 % vol.alc.

Table 4 presents a selection of 20 rosé wine varieties available in Supermarket 3, providing details on the varietal assortment (trade name of the wine/producer), type of wine, alcoholic strength and price. Rosé wine offer in Supermarket 3 is balanced, addressing a wide spectrum of tastes and consumers. Prices cover a wide range, from very affordable options to premium and luxury products. The focus on well-known Romanian producers, along with the presence of special editions, demonstrates a strategy to offer both large quantities of wine at competitive prices and higher quality products for more demanding consumers. Compared

to Supermarket 1, Supermarket 3 has a more compact offer, with a higher share of semi-dry wines and no sweet wines.

**Table 4. Characteristics of the assortment of rose wines identified in Supermarket 3**

No.	Varietal assortment	Wine category	Price (lei)	Alcohol concentration
1	Averesti Nativ (Merlot)	Dry	15.59	12.0 % vol.alc.
2	Tohani	Demi-sweet	17.99	11.0 % vol.alc.
3	Schwaben Wein	Demi-sweet	16.99	11.5 % vol.alc.
4	Sigillum Demisec Bus.Bohotin	Demi-dry	17.49	11.5 % vol.alc.
5	Domeniile Davidescu Sorginte	Demi-dry	16.99	13.0 % vol.alc.
6	Mateus Rose	Demi-dry	26.59	13.0 % vol.alc.
7	Castel Huniade	Demi-dry	26.99	11.5 % vol.alc.
8	Beciul Domnesc Rose	Demi-dry	25.79	11.0 % vol.alc.
9	Jidvei „Grigorescu”	Demi-dry	29.89	11.5 % vol.alc.
10	Vinarte Rose Busuioaca	Demi-sweet	31.99	13.0 % vol.alc.
11	Purcari Vinohora	Dry	34.79	11.5 % vol.alc.
12	Caii de la Letea	Dry	36.79	12.0 % vol.alc.
13	Livia	Dry	39.39	12.5 % vol.alc.
14	Avincis Rose	Dry	43.09	11.5 % vol.alc.
15	Livia Rose (premium)	Dry	54.99	12.0 % vol.alc.
16	Purcari Vinohora (premium)	Dry	59.99	11.5 % vol.alc.
17	Avincis Rose (premium)	Dry	64.99	11.0 % vol.alc.
18	Crama Astrum Cervi	Demi-dry	69.99	12.0 % vol.alc.
19	Astrum cervi black edition	Dry	79.49	13.0 % vol.alc.
20	Domeniile Averesti Magnum	Dry	154.00	13.0 % vol.alc.

Rosé wine offer in Supermarket 3 is well balanced between dry and semi-dry wines, addressing a wide range of tastes. Prices cover a wide range, from very affordable options to premium and luxury products. The focus on well-known Romanian producers, along with the presence of special editions, demonstrates a strategy to offer both large volumes at competitive prices and higher quality products for more demanding consumers.

Compared to Supermarket 1, Supermarket 3 has a more compact offer, with a higher share of semi-dry wines and no sweet wine options. This aligns with findings by Mazurkiewicz-Pizlo, A. (2024) [15] who observed a growing preference for dry and semi-dry wines across European retail markets, driven by health-conscious consumers and changing gastronomic trends.

In terms of categorizing wines by price category, Supermarket 1 placed most of the offer in the mid-price segment, between 18 and 50 lei, complemented by a few low-priced assortments and a reasonable number of wines in the premium/luxury range. This tiered pricing structure reflects the diversified consumer base, like the findings in Dominici et al. (2024) [7] who noted that successful wine retailers tend to provide a spectrum of price points to appeal to different socioeconomic groups.

Supermarket 2 adopts a pricing strategy mainly oriented towards the upper and premium segments. It has a smaller selection of products overall, but a very large proportion of them fall into higher price categories, including a large presence in the price range between 50 and 70 lei, a segment that is absent in Supermarket 1. This premium pricing approach reflects a more selective positioning strategy, consistent with the observations of Núñez et al., (2024) [17] who emphasized the role of perceived wine quality and packaging in justifying higher prices in supermarket environments.

Supermarket 3 has the most balanced price distribution, with a notable presence in the economy segment (wines fewer than 18 lei), a majority shares in the mid-range segment (wines between 18 and 50 lei), a presence in the 50-75 lei segment and a few premium options (wines over 75 lei).

**Table 5. Identification and centralization of rose wines by price category**

Trader/ Supermarket	Wines below 18 lei		Wines between 18-50 lei		Wines between 50-75 lei		Wines over 75 lei		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Supermarket 1	2	7.6	20	76.9	0	0	4	15.3	26	100
Supermarket 2	0	0	4	26.6	5	33.3	6	40.0	15	100

Supermarket 3	5	25.0	9	45.0	4	20.0	2	10.0	20	100
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This strategy targets a broad customer base, from those with limited budgets to those willing to pay more for quality. Similar findings are presented by Gergaud & Livat (2024) [9] who emphasize that a diversified pricing strategy enhances customer loyalty by meeting multiple consumption needs across socioeconomic categories. Moreover, as highlighted by Spence (2024) [18], supermarkets that offer both budget-friendly and premium wines tend to attract a more varied clientele, improving their competitive positioning in saturated markets.

## Conclusions

Rosé wines are currently experiencing increasing market demand, with the consumption of rosé wine being considered a trend among young consumers, who prefer fresh wines, spritzes and those that lend themselves to cocktails. As a result, this trend determines both supermarkets and specialty stores to improve the offer of these wines by introducing both domestic assortments and foreign wines in demand on the Romanian market.

Supermarket 1 positions itself as a distributor with a strong offer of wines at mid-range prices, complemented by a few luxury options. However, it does not target the upper-mid segment of customers wanting wines that fall between 50 and 70 lei. The offer of rosé wines in Supermarket 1 is diverse and well structured, addressing a wide range of preferences and budgets.

Supermarket 2 predominantly targets the higher price and premium/luxury segment. It offers the smallest selection of wines aimed at low and medium-income buyers, namely wines priced between 18 and 50 lei, which denote a marketing strategy of this supermarket oriented towards high-quality rosé wines at considerable prices.

Supermarket 3 has the most balanced pricing strategy, covering all segments, from the economic to the premium. This approach indicates the supermarket's strategy to satisfy the requirements of a diverse range of customers, with different purchasing power.

The assortment of wines found in the three supermarkets is quite extensive, including both wines recognized by their Romanian names (Busuioaca de Bohotin), wines with suggestive names for rosé wines ("Roza de Sâmburești", "Rozalia"), as well as wines from "Limited Editions" and "Magnum" (Domeniile Averesti Magnum), which denotes a marketing strategy to attract attention and offer products with higher value added products.

Overall, the data demonstrates that each supermarket adopts a distinct strategy regarding the pricing of rosé wines, reflecting differences in the demographic profile of customers, marketing policy and market positioning of each retailer.

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