

# Table Wine in France

Table wine, or **vin de table** (now referred to as **Vin de France**), is a staple of French culture. It is intended for everyday drinking and comes in both **bottled** and **boxed** forms. While not as prestigious as high-end wines, table wines can still offer excellent value and enjoyment for casual drinkers.

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## 1. What is Table Wine?

- **Definition:** Table wine in France refers to simple, affordable wines that are suitable for everyday consumption.
  - **Labeling:** Table wines are typically labeled as **“Vin de France”**, the most basic category in the French wine classification system.
  - **Purpose:** These wines are not region-specific and do not carry strict quality controls like higher-classified wines (AOC/AOP).
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## 2. Types of Table Wine

French table wines are available in two main forms:

### A. Bottled Wine

- **Description:** Bottled table wines are widely available and come in **750ml bottles** or larger formats.
- **Quality:** Bottled table wines can range from decent to quite good, depending on the producer and region.
- **Price:** Typically costs between **€3 and €10 per bottle**.
- **Where to Buy:**
  1. **Supermarkets:** Carrefour, Auchan, Monoprix, and Intermarché.
  2. **Wine Shops (\*Cavistes\*):** Offer curated selections, often with better advice.
  3. **Local Markets:** Sometimes sell affordable table wines from nearby producers.

### B. Boxed Wine (Bag-in-Box)

- **Description:** Boxed wine, known as **“cubi”** in France, comes in a **bag-in-box** format. Sizes typically range from **3L to 10L**.
- **Quality:** Boxed wines are improving in quality and can be an excellent value for money. They are practical for parties, casual drinking, and cooking.
- **Advantages:**
  1. Longer shelf life once opened (the vacuum-sealed bag prevents oxidation).
  2. Lower price per liter compared to bottles.
  3. Environmentally friendly due to less packaging.

- **Price:** Costs approximately **€8–€20 for a 3L box** (equivalent to €2–€5 per bottle).
- **Where to Buy:**
  1. **Supermarkets:** Major chains like Carrefour and Leclerc.
  2. **Wine Cooperatives:** Offer local box wines at competitive prices.

### 3. Levels of Quality

Table wine in France (Vin de France) is the entry-level category, but there are subtle distinctions in quality:

- **Vin de France:** The broadest category, without strict regional or vineyard requirements. These wines can be blends from multiple regions.
- **IGP (Indication Géographique Protégée):** A step above basic table wine, IGP wines must meet certain regional and quality standards but are less strict than AOC/AOP wines.
  1. Example: **IGP Pays d’Oc** (wines from the Languedoc region).
- **AOC/AOP (Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée/Protégée):** While not table wine, some affordable AOC wines can be comparable in price to Vin de France but offer better quality.

#### Summary of Quality Levels:

Category	Description	Example
<b>Vin de France</b>	Basic, everyday wine, no region specified	Supermarket table wines
<b>IGP Wines</b>	Region-specific, affordable quality	IGP Pays d’Oc (Languedoc)
<b>AOC Wines</b>	Higher quality with strict controls	AOC Bordeaux, AOC Côtes-du-Rhône

### 4. How to Buy Good Wine for Good Value

Here are strategies to find good-quality table wine at an affordable price:

#### A. Buy from Supermarkets Strategically

- **Supermarket Selections:** French supermarkets carry vast wine selections, including affordable bottled and boxed wines.
- **Focus on IGP Wines:** Look for **IGP Pays d’Oc** or wines from specific regions like Languedoc or the Loire Valley. These are often great value for money.
- **Seasonal Promotions:** Look for discounts during **“Foire aux Vins”** (Wine Fairs), held in supermarkets twice a year (spring and fall).
- **Price Range:** Wines priced between **€5–€8** often offer the best balance of quality and value.

#### B. Explore Local Wine Cooperatives

- Wine cooperatives sell directly from local producers. You can often buy boxed wine or bottles at

lower prices while ensuring decent quality.

- Bring a reusable container to fill with table wine at a “**Cave Coopérative**”.

### C. Ask for Recommendations

- At wine shops (**cavistes**) or local markets, ask for affordable, everyday wines. Use simple phrases like:
  1. “**Je cherche un bon vin de table à petit prix.**” → \*I’m looking for a good table wine at a low price.\*

### D. Consider Boxed Wine for Value

- Boxed wine offers excellent value, especially for larger groups or casual drinking.
- Opt for brands from well-known wine-producing regions such as Languedoc, Rhône, or Bordeaux.

### E. Look for Lesser-Known Regions

- Wines from less famous regions like **Southwest France** or **Languedoc-Roussillon** often provide better value than wines from prestigious areas like Bordeaux or Burgundy.

## 5. Recommendations for Affordable Table Wines

Here are some examples of table wines you can find in France:

- **Bottled Table Wines:**
  1. **La Vieille Ferme** (IGP Ventoux): A reliable, affordable red, white, or rosé.
  2. **Marius by Michel Chapoutier**: Good value wines from the Languedoc region.
  3. **JP Chenet**: Popular and inexpensive, widely available.
- **Boxed Wines** (Bag-in-Box):
  1. **Roche Mazet**: Affordable red, white, and rosé wines.
  2. **Vieux Papes**: A well-known brand for everyday boxed wine.
  3. **Pays d’Oc Boxed Wines**: IGP wines offering good regional quality.

## 6. Summary

Type	Description	Price Range	Where to Buy
<b>Bottled Wine</b>	Everyday table wine	€3–€10 per bottle	Supermarkets, wine shops
<b>Boxed Wine</b>	Bag-in-Box format, great for value	€8–€20 for 3L	Supermarkets, cooperatives
<b>IGP Wines</b>	Region-specific, affordable quality	€5–€8 per bottle	Supermarkets, wine shops

**Strategy:** Look for IGP wines or boxed wines from regions like **Languedoc** for the best balance of price and quality. Take advantage of supermarket wine fairs (**Foires aux Vins**) for seasonal deals.

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By following these strategies, you can enjoy great table wine in France without overspending. Whether bottled or boxed, French table wines offer a taste of the country's rich wine culture at an affordable price.

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