

Georgian wine: Adapted from (<https://www.winesgeorgia.com/>)

The Georgian people were the first to ferment wine 8,000 years ago. Assyrian kings demanded gold tribute to all conquered regions with one exception: the Georgian could pay in wine.

Georgia has more than 500 varieties of indigenous grapes—nearly one-sixth of the world's grape varieties—including endangered vines found nowhere else. Traditional Georgian winemakers used a method of fermenting wine in clay kvevris (or qvevris). Our first bottle was partially fermented in a kvevris while our 2<sup>nd</sup> Georgian wine is bottled in ceramic. Most Georgian wine is produced in Kakheti. While 80 different grape varieties are grown in Kakheti, the two most popular are Saperavi and Rkatsiteli.



Saperavi is a type of teinturier grape that has a deep, inky and opaque red skin and flesh color from high concentrations of anthocyanin. Saperavi grapes have aromas and flavors of dark berries, licorice, grilled meat, tobacco, chocolate and spices.

1. Shumi Winery Kisi quevri amber: 2017 24.99
2. Kakhuri Gvinis Marana Sapervavi Red dry wine: 2017: 24.99

The Primitivo grape (modified from <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/learn-about-primitivo-wine-grape-history-characteristics-and-pairings#what-is-primitivo>)

Primitivo crossed the Adriatic Sea to southern Italy from Croatia, where it originated in the 1700s. An Italian monk named the grape primitivo (from the Latin “early ripening”) because he noticed that it ripened before other grapes in his vineyard. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, primitivo was mainly used as a blending grape to bring alcohol and body to other Italian red wines. In the 1990s, the European government offered many grape growers in Italy financial incentives to pull up their vines to decrease the volume of low-quality wine being made in the EU. Growers were happy to abide as the grapes are difficult to harvest and didn’t produce much income.

DNA analysis showed that the primitivo grape of Italy is genetically identical to the California zinfandel grape. Starting in 1999, Italian producers could legally label their primitivo wines as zinfandel. Plantings of primitivo grapes have increased by about 50% since their low point in the 1990s.

The next four wines are all made from the Primitivo grape:

1. Puglia Zinfandel by Caleo: 2017 11.99
2. Sobon Estate Zinfandel Fiddletown: 2017 22.99
3. Caleo Primitivo Salento: 2018 9.99
4. Sobon Estate Primitivo “reserve”:2017 26.99

Taste – test your skills. Can you match the 4 wines with their descriptions?

- A. Purity and focus in the black-fruit flavors and a powerful structure of tannins and good acidity come together nicely in this big but balanced wine. Blackberries, black plums and a pinch of black pepper give it a delicious classic profile.
- B. Intense purple color, tending towards amber with aging. This wine has a very solid structure due to the elevated alcohol and the balance between soft tannins and acidity. This wine is fruity, with notes of plums cherry marmalade and tobacco.
- C. There are loads of sweet, succulent fruit, and has a velvety-textured, seamless finish. This wine is ideal with red meats and game.
- D. Dense, leathery dark fruit aromas are complemented by powerful flavors of blackberry, currant, spice and a hint of mint. This is a bottle not to be missed. Sustainably farmed.