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For something different

World’s biggest wine barrel unveiled

The biggest barrel in the world, capable of holding 300,000 litres of wine, has been made in the Languedoc.

Twelve metres long, six metres in diameter, weighing 40 tonnes, the barrel required 37 tonnes of oak to complete.

The monstrous creation will now be placed outside the winery and while it is capable of holding hundreds of thousands of litres of wine, it will not be used for this purpose. It will most likely be used for events and may even become home to a wine shop.

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Other Wine Producing Countries

Turkish wine producers

The government represses the industry at home while helping it to sell abroad.

Turkey, a secular but mainly Muslim country of 75m people, is not a nation of big drinkers. At an average of 1.6 litres a year, consumption per head (excluding bootleg booze) is the second-lowest among the 40 member and partner countries of the OECD. Among these, the only drier place is Indonesia, another secular but Muslim-majority country.

The biggest obstacle is not the renewed clashes between security forces and Kurdish insurgents, which are battering the region’s economy; nor even the conservatism of its Muslim majority. It is red tape.

Production, having more than doubled between 2006 and 2010 to 58m litres, has since stalled, as has domestic consumption. Some firms have given up on winemaking, turning instead to grape juice.

Legislation prohibits any sort of promotion of alcohol, including ads, sponsorship deals, product
placement or even wine tastings. "If someone comes to your vineyard, you can’t offer him a glass, because it’s against the law,” says Selim Zafer Ellialti, the boss of Suvla, a winery in the Gallipoli peninsula. “For new wines, it’s almost impossible to create an awareness around your brand.”

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