UK Senders Can Now Deliver Wine and Champagne Gifts Across the US Without Customs Delays

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British families, expatriates and businesses who want to send a bottle of wine or champagne to someone in the United States have long run into the same wall: most carriers will not take it.

Alcohol is among the items Royal Mail prohibits in international post to the United States. Courier services that do accept it typically require commercial import documentation, and recipients can face duty charges, licensing questions and delays at the border. For a gift meant to arrive on a birthday, a Thanksgiving table or a colleague's desk before the office closes for Christmas, the timing risk alone is often enough to put senders off entirely.

DC Wine and Spirits, a Washington, D.C. retailer that has been assembling wine and champagne gift baskets since 2014 and delivered online since 2018, has opened a dedicated ordering route that removes the border from the equation. UK-based customers order online in the usual way, and the gift is picked, packed and dispatched from within the United States. Nothing is exported. Nothing clears customs. No import duty is charged to the recipient.

The route is live now at the company's **send wine gifts from the UK to the USA** page ahead of the autumn and winter gifting season.

Why the timing matters

International posting deadlines for the United States fall in early December each year, and they apply to parcels that can legally be posted at all. A domestically fulfilled gift is not bound by them.

"Every year around late November we get messages from people in the UK who have just realised they cannot post a bottle of wine to their son in New York, or to a client in California, and they are running out of time," said Tom Gera, marketing head at DC Wine and Spirits. "The gift is not really an international shipment. It is a domestic American delivery that happens to be paid for from a British bank card. Once you see it that way, the whole problem disappears."

Gera added: "What we hear most often is relief. People are not looking for anything exotic. They want the thing to turn up, on the right day, without their sister-in-law being asked to pay a customs charge on a present."

What is available

The UK ordering route covers the company's curated gift range rather than loose bottles. Current sets include Veuve Clicquot Brut with Godiva chocolates in a wooden gift box, Dom Perignon paired with a gourmet hamper, Opus One and Silver Oak Napa Valley reds in presentation boxes, and prosecco-and-flute sets for lighter occasions.

Seasonal collections including **Christmas gift baskets** and **Thanksgiving hosting gifts** are available through the same route, as are the company's corporate gifting and bulk ordering services — a practical option for UK firms with American offices, clients or remote staff, who otherwise face the same shipping restrictions multiplied across a recipient list.

The company says the range on the UK page will expand through the autumn.

The rules still apply

DC Wine & Spirits delivers alcohol only where permitted by law. US alcohol shipping is regulated state by state, and a small number of states restrict or prohibit direct-to-consumer wine delivery outright. Recipients must be 21 or over and identification is verified at the point of delivery — a stricter threshold than the UK's 18, and one that catches out British senders who assume the rules travel with them.

Non-alcoholic gift baskets are available for recipients in restricted states or for anyone who does not drink.

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There is a version of this business that just sells wine," said Tom Gera. "The part we actually spend our time on is making sure a gift lands the way the person who sent it imagined — the right day, the right doorstep, no admin, no awkward charge at the other end. That is harder when the sender is three thousand miles and five time zones away, which is exactly why it was worth building properly.

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