# Tuk-tuk driver pleads guilty to stealing £24,000 of wine from celebrity-frequented London restaurant



A 61-year-old tuk-tuk driver, Iuliu Kubola, has pleaded guilty to three counts of burglary after stealing £24,000 worth of wine from a well-known London restaurant. The theft took place on 6 May 2025 at Piazza Italiana, a celebrity-frequented venue on Threadneedle Street. CCTV footage captured Kubola brazenly using a crowbar to break into the restaurant, then loading 73 bottles of high-value wine into a wheelie bin before transporting it to his pedicab.

Kubola did not stop there; he returned on 15 June to steal an additional three bottles valued at £680. His activities came to an end when he was recognised by a police officer on 22 June, leading to his arrest. The damage to the restaurant caused by his forced entry was estimated at £1,425. Kubola is scheduled to be sentenced at the Old Bailey in September 2025.

This case points to the ongoing issue of wine thefts in London’s hospitality sector. In a related incident earlier this year, Shahed Ahmed, 41, was jailed for 17 weeks after stealing 13 bottles of wine worth £8,100 from Eataly London. Ahmed’s arrest the day after the offence, aided by distinctive CCTV footage, highlights the vigilance of City of London Police in addressing these crimes.

The substantial value of the stolen wine and the methodical approach taken by Kubola—using a wheelie bin and pedicab—underline the planning behind such burglaries. The City of London Police’s prompt action in identifying and apprehending Kubola demonstrates their commitment to protecting London's dining establishments from costly thefts. The sentencing in September will provide a clearer picture of the legal consequences Kubola faces for these offences.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14944537/video-Moment-thief-steals-24-000-worth-wine-using-wheelie-bin-cart-bottles-vehicle.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/piazza-italiana-burglar-stole-wine-celeb-hotspot-b1240088.html), [[5]](https://www.inkl.com/news/moment-burglar-who-stole-24-000-of-wine-from-london-celebrity-restaurant-is-caught-in-the-act)
* Paragraph 2 – [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/piazza-italiana-burglar-stole-wine-celeb-hotspot-b1240088.html), [[5]](https://www.inkl.com/news/moment-burglar-who-stole-24-000-of-wine-from-london-celebrity-restaurant-is-caught-in-the-act), [[2]](https://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/news/city-of-london/news/2025/july/tuk-tuk-driver-who-took-expensive-wine-pleads-guilty/), [[4]](https://news.sky.com/video/tuk-tuk-driver-plead-guilty-after-stealing-over-20000-of-wine-13401675)
* Paragraph 3 – [[6]](https://www.thecaterer.com/news/thief-stole-wine-eataly-london-restaurant-jailed)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/news/city-of-london/news/2025/july/tuk-tuk-driver-who-took-expensive-wine-pleads-guilty/), [[4]](https://news.sky.com/video/tuk-tuk-driver-plead-guilty-after-stealing-over-20000-of-wine-13401675), [[6]](https://www.thecaterer.com/news/thief-stole-wine-eataly-london-restaurant-jailed)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14944537/video-Moment-thief-steals-24-000-worth-wine-using-wheelie-bin-cart-bottles-vehicle.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/news/city-of-london/news/2025/july/tuk-tuk-driver-who-took-expensive-wine-pleads-guilty/> - Iuliu Kubola, a 61-year-old tuk-tuk driver from Islington, London, pleaded guilty to three counts of burglary after stealing 73 bottles of wine worth £24,000 from a restaurant on Threadneedle Street. The theft occurred on 6 May 2025, when Kubola used a wheelie bin to transport the stolen wine to his pedicab. He was arrested on 22 June 2025 after being recognised by a police officer. Kubola also caused £1,425 worth of damage to the restaurant's external door and locks. He is scheduled to be sentenced in September 2025. ([cityoflondon.police.uk](https://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/news/city-of-london/news/2025/july/tuk-tuk-driver-who-took-expensive-wine-pleads-guilty/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/piazza-italiana-burglar-stole-wine-celeb-hotspot-b1240088.html> - Iuliu Kubola, 61, was caught on CCTV stealing £24,000 worth of wine from Piazza Italiana, a celebrity-frequented restaurant in London. The footage shows Kubola using a crowbar to break into the restaurant, filling a wheelie bin with 73 bottles of wine, and loading them into his tuk-tuk. He returned on 15 June to steal three more bottles worth £680. Kubola was arrested on 22 June after being recognised by a police officer. He pleaded guilty to three counts of burglary and will be sentenced at the Old Bailey on 8 September. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/piazza-italiana-burglar-stole-wine-celeb-hotspot-b1240088.html?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://news.sky.com/video/tuk-tuk-driver-plead-guilty-after-stealing-over-20000-of-wine-13401675> - Iuliu Kubola, a 61-year-old tuk-tuk driver, pleaded guilty to three counts of burglary after stealing 73 bottles of wine worth £24,000 from a London restaurant. He was arrested on 22 June 2025 after a police officer recognised him as a person of interest. The theft occurred on 6 May 2025, when Kubola used a wheelie bin to transport the stolen wine to his pedicab. He is scheduled to be sentenced in September 2025. ([news.sky.com](https://news.sky.com/video/tuk-tuk-driver-plead-guilty-after-stealing-over-20-000-of-wine-13401675?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.inkl.com/news/moment-burglar-who-stole-24-000-of-wine-from-london-celebrity-restaurant-is-caught-in-the-act> - Iuliu Kubola, 61, was caught on CCTV stealing £24,000 worth of wine from Piazza Italiana, a celebrity-frequented restaurant in London. The footage shows Kubola using a crowbar to break into the restaurant, filling a wheelie bin with 73 bottles of wine, and loading them into his tuk-tuk. He returned on 15 June to steal three more bottles worth £680. Kubola was arrested on 22 June after being recognised by a police officer. He pleaded guilty to three counts of burglary and will be sentenced at the Old Bailey on 8 September. ([inkl.com](https://www.inkl.com/news/moment-burglar-who-stole-24-000-of-wine-from-london-celebrity-restaurant-is-caught-in-the-act?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.thecaterer.com/news/thief-stole-wine-eataly-london-restaurant-jailed> - Shahed Ahmed, 41, was jailed for 17 weeks after stealing 13 bottles of wine worth £8,100 from Eataly London. The theft occurred in the early hours of 9 February 2025. Ahmed was arrested the following day, still wearing the distinctive jacket seen in CCTV footage. He pleaded guilty to burglary and possession of class A drugs. The swift arrest and sentencing highlight the commitment of City of London Police to tackling such crimes. ([thecaterer.com](https://www.thecaterer.com/news/thief-stole-wine-eataly-london-restaurant-jailed?utm_source=openai))