

Monday, 30 November 2020

Australians drink over 100 million glasses of alcohol in an average week

New data from Roy Morgan, set to be released in the latest Alcohol Report, shows wine is the most popular alcoholic drink, ahead of beer; and younger drinkers are more likely to favour spirits than older counterparts.

The Alcohol Report, powered by Roy Morgan Single Source, draws on tens of thousands of interviews with Australian adults including detailed questions about their alcohol consumption over the previous four-week period.

Currently, an estimated 13.2 million Australians – 66.4% of the adult population – drink alcohol in one form or another in an average four weeks (33.6% don't). The percentage of people consuming alcohol continues to fall, dropping from 73.5% in 2006 and 68.2% in 2015.

When the market is considered in a holistic sense Australians are drinking in excess of 400 million glasses of alcohol in an average four weeks, virtually unchanged on a year ago.

Wine is the most popular choice of alcoholic beverage, with 43.0% of adult Australians drinking wine in an average four weeks, followed by beer at 35.2% and spirits at 30.8%.

There is a distinct split between the sexes with women preferring wine, men preferring beer. 47.4% of women consume wine in an average four-week period, compared to 38.4% of men, and 54.3% of men drink beer, compared to only 17.8% of women.

There are also differences in the most popular beverages across different age groups, with more 18-24 year-olds choosing spirits (37.5%) than other types of alcohol, compared to 35-49 year-olds and 50-64 year-olds, for whom wine is the top choice (41.9% and 47.3%, respectively).

Those who drink alcohol were classified as light, medium or heavy drinkers, based on the number of drinks they had consumed in a four-week period: 1-7 drinks for a light drinker, 8-28 for a medium drinker and 29+ for a heavy drinker. While heavy drinkers represent only 34% of all drinkers, they account for a full 77% of all the alcohol that is consumed. Men are far more likely to drink heavily than women, with 42% of men reporting heavy drinking levels compared to 25% of women.

Roy Morgan CEO, Michele Levine, says:

“Just under two-thirds of Australians enjoy an alcoholic beverage in an average four-week period, down from almost three-quarters who did so 15 years ago.

“The depth and longevity of our data collection allows us to see some interesting changes in terms of choice of beverage. Back in 2006, just 2.1% of drinkers had chosen cider in the previous four weeks. By 2017 it was fashionable enough to peak at 13.4% but as of September 2020 it is down to 9.2%. Spirits, however, have trended upwards, consumed by 25.3% of alcohol drinkers in 2006 and 30.8% now.

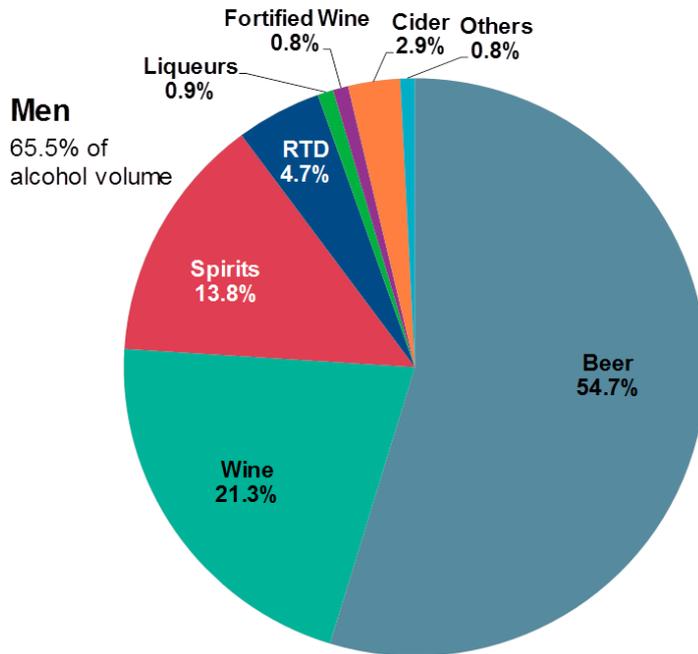
“The majority of alcohol drinkers (66%) drink lightly or moderately, but the disproportionate consumption by those classified as heavy drinkers (29+ drinks in an average four weeks) is striking: just 34% of drinkers are responsible for 77% of all alcohol consumed.”

Michele Levine is available for interview. Phone (03) 9224 5309

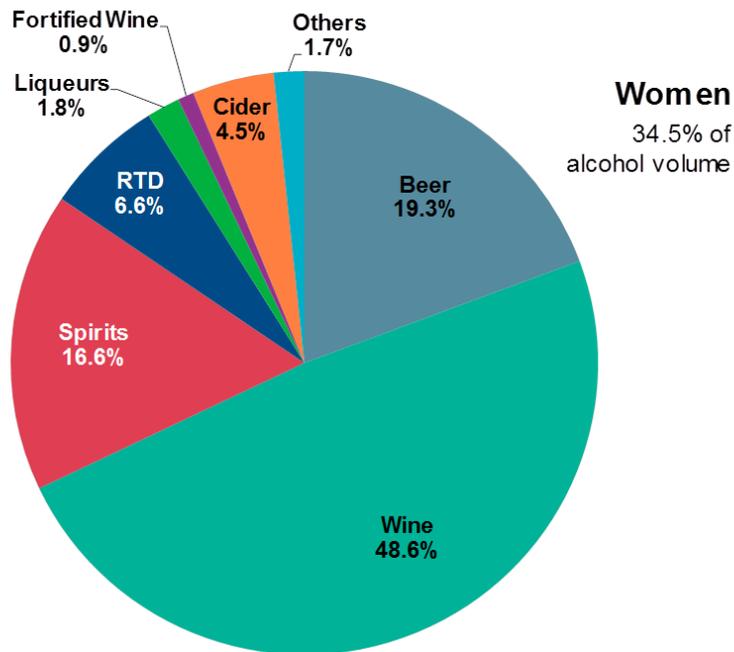
To find out more about Roy Morgan Single Source data or to further explore Australians' consumption of alcohol call (03) 9224 5309 or email askroymorgan@roymorgan.com

Alcohol Share of Volume by Gender: These charts show the percentage of Alcohol Volume consumed by men and women 18+ in an average 4-week period in the last 12 months.

Men consume 65.5% of alcohol by volume in an average 4-week period with Beer comprising a majority of 54.7% of men’s alcohol consumption by volume.



Women consume 34.5% of alcohol by volume in an average 4-week period with Wine comprising a plurality of 48.6% of women’s alcohol consumption by volume.



Volume of Alcoholic beverages drunk in the last 4 weeks by Men and Women.

Source: Roy Morgan Research, Oct 19 – Sep 20; n=27,352. **Base:** Australian Alcohol Consumers 18+.

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About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is the source of the most comprehensive data on Australians' behaviour and attitudes, surveying in a continuous cycle that has been running for two decades. The company has more than 75 years' experience collecting objective, independent information. To go deeper on this or any other subject, ask Roy Morgan.