

Tuesday, 23 November 2021

Australian alcohol consumption increases during 2021 – wine, beer, spirits and RTDs all up on a year ago

New data from [Roy Morgan's Alcohol Consumption Report](#) shows the proportion of Australians who drink alcohol increased by 3.5% points to 69.6% in the 12 months to September 2021 driven by increases in the number of Australians drinking wine, beer, spirits and RTDs (Ready-to-drink).

In the year to September 2021 a total of 13,894,000 Australians (69.6%) aged 18+ consumed alcohol in an average four-week period, up from 13,179,000 (66.4%) a year earlier.

Driving this increase were significant increases for wine, spirits and RTDs, and consumption of beer also increased marginally over the past year. The number of Australians drinking wine increased from 8,539,000 Australians (43.0%) to 9,263,000 (46.4%) – an increase of 3.4% points (+724,000) over the year.

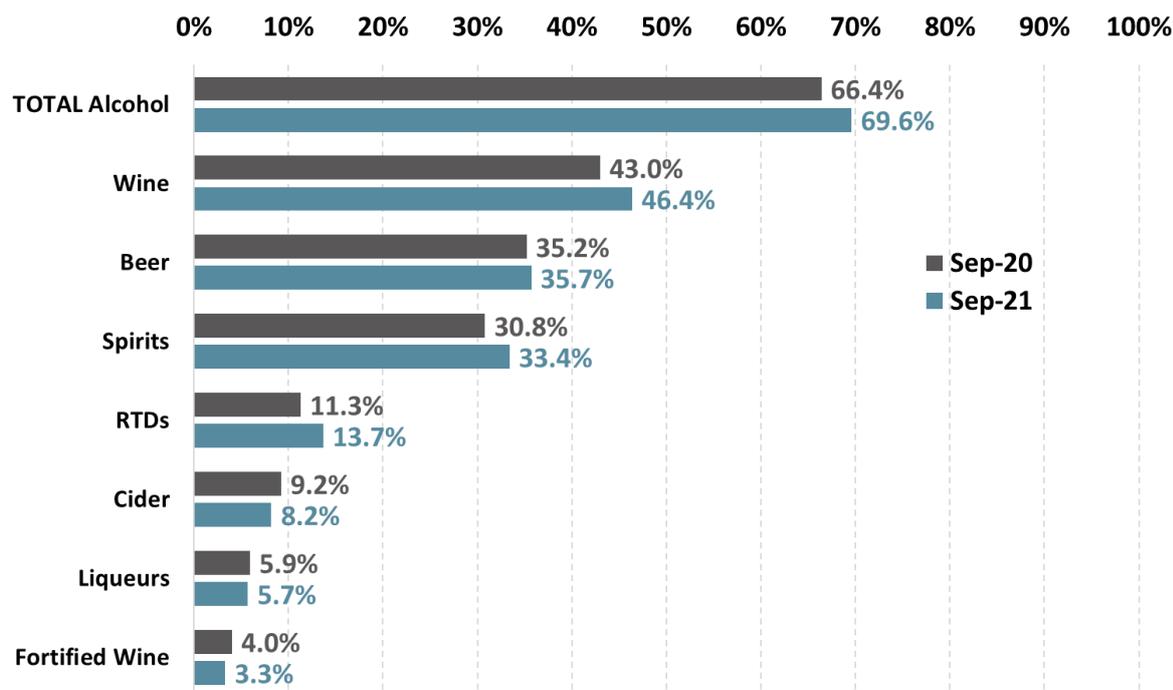
In good news for the beer industry there was a gain in the number of Australians drinking beer – a change from recent years as consumption of beer has slumped over the last decade. There were 7,138,000 Australians (35.7%) drinking beer, an increase of 0.5% points (+147,000) from a year earlier.

In addition, there were 6,670,000 Australians (33.4%) drinking spirits in mid-2021, up from 6,121,000 (30.8%) a year earlier – an increase of 2.6% points. Also increasing was consumption of Ready-to-drinks (RTDs) which increased from 2,243,000 Australians (11.3%) up to 2,745,000 Australians (13.7%).

The results were not as positive for other types of alcohol with fewer Australians now drinking cider, liqueurs and fortified wines compared to a year ago.

The findings are from the Roy Morgan Single Source survey, Australia's most trusted and comprehensive consumer survey, derived from in-depth interviews with over 50,000 Australians each year.

Proportion of Australians who consume alcohol in an average four-week period



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source Australia, October 2019 – September 2020, n=27,352. October 2020 – September 2021, n=63,227. **Base:** Australians aged 18+.

Roy Morgan CEO Michele Levine says the increase in alcohol consumption during 2020-2021 has been driven by higher consumption of all of the leading types of alcohol including wine, beer, spirits and RTDs with 13.9 million Australians (69.6% of adults) now drinking alcohol:

“The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a turnaround in the long-term trend of declining alcohol consumption we have seen consistently over the last 15 years.

“In the year to June 2006 nearly three-quarters of Australian adults, 73.5%, drank an alcoholic beverage in an average four weeks. This incidence trended down and reached a low point of 65.7% during the nation-wide lockdown of the June quarter 2020.

“However, since reaching that nadir, alcohol consumption has trended consistently higher over the last year and is now around 4% points higher at 69.6% of adults in the September quarter 2021. The increases over the last year have been broad-based with all the leading types of alcohol including wine, beer, spirits and RTDs all trending higher.

“Wine has been the big driver of the increase as Australians stuck at home, and without the usual options for domestic or international travel over the last 18 months, have turned to local activities for comfort and entertainment.

“Now well over 9.2 million Australians (46.4% of adults) drink wine in an average four weeks, up 724,000 (+3.4% points) on a year ago. Wine drinking has increased significantly in popularity for both genders with a majority of 50.6% of women now drinking wine, up 3.2% points on a year ago, and 42% of men drinking wine, an even larger increase of 3.6% points.

“By age, those most likely to be drinking wine are aged 50-79, however the largest increases have been for the age groups with school-aged children. Wine drinking for people aged 25-34 is up 5.9% points on a year ago and is up 5.3% points on a year ago for those aged 35-49.

“The other big winners over the last year have been spirits and RTDs (Ready-to-drink). For the first time over a third of Australian adults, 6,670,000 (33.4%), now drink spirits, an increase of 549,000 (+2.6% points) on a year ago and 2,745,000 (13.7%) now drink RTDs, up 502,000 (+2.4% points).

“There is also good news for beer which is now more widely drunk than it was a year ago with 7,138,000 Australians (35.7% of adults) now drinking beer, an increase of 147,000 (+0.5% points) on a year ago.

“The decline in beer drinking over the last 15 years has been more sustained than any other type of alcohol so it will be important for the industry to learn the lessons provided by the pandemic to ensure the increase in beer consumption over the last year is sustained and not a ‘blip’ on the long-term downward trend.

“Roy Morgan will be keeping a keen eye on the developing trends in the alcohol market during the remainder of 2021 and into next year as Australia continues to open up and enters a period of ‘COVID-normal’. The return of a range of leisure options, including travel, will provide a new challenge for the alcohol market that has enjoyed a wave of growth over the last 18 months.”

Related research findings

View the [Alcohol Consumption Currency Report](#), as well as [targeted profiles on Australians based on what alcohol they drink, how much alcohol they drink, where they buy their alcohol from, and much more](#).

For further comment or more information about Roy Morgan’s alcohol data please contact:

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About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is Australia’s largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state, as well as in the U.S. and U.K. A full-service research organisation, Roy Morgan has over 75 years’ experience collecting objective, independent information on consumers.



Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2