

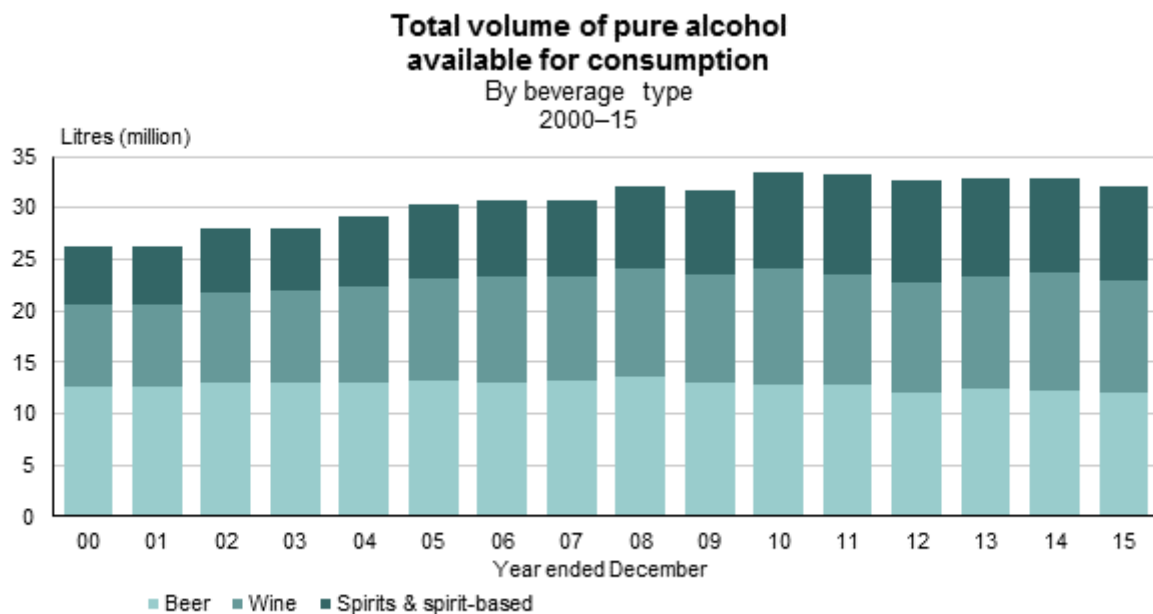
# Alcohol Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2015

Embargoed until 10:45am – 26 February 2016

## Key facts

For the year ended December 2015 compared with the year ended December 2014:

- The total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption fell 0.4 percent, to 455 million litres.
- The volume of beer available showed little change, down 0.1 percent, to 282 million litres.
- The volume of wine available fell 3.3 percent, to 104 million litres.
- The volume of spirits (including spirit-based drinks) available rose 3.0 percent, to 69 million litres.
- The total volume of pure alcohol available for consumption fell 2.2 percent to 32 million litres.
- The volume of pure alcohol available per person aged 18 years and over fell 4.1 percent to 9.2 litres per year. This is equivalent to an average of 2.0 standard drinks per person per day.



Source: Statistics New Zealand

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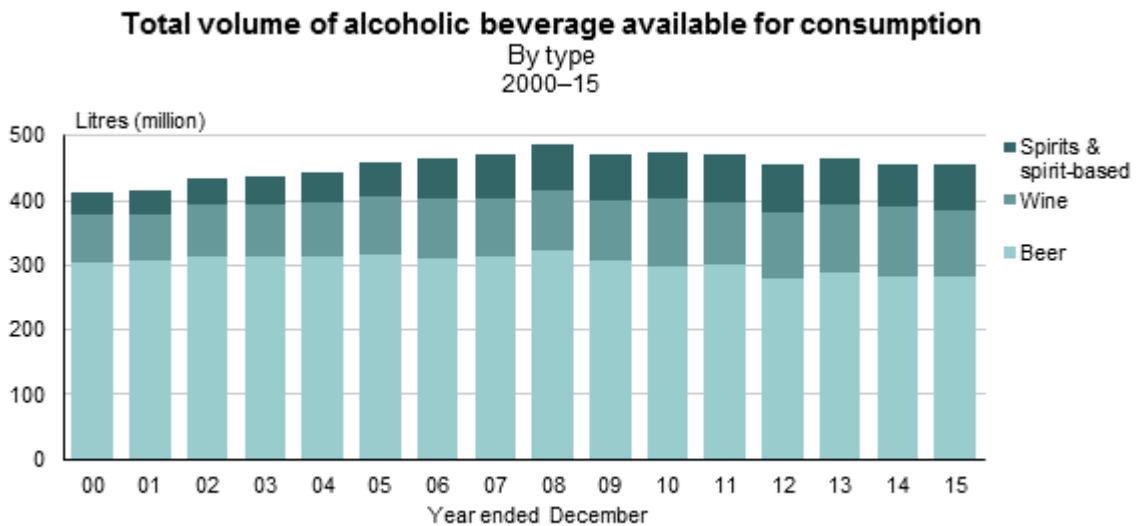
## Commentary

- Total volume of alcoholic beverages volume shows little change
- Beer volume shows little change
- Wine volume down 3.3 percent
- Volume of spirits and spirit-based drinks up 3.0 percent
- Volume of pure alcohol down 2.2 percent
- Standard drinks per person down 4.1 percent

## Total volume of alcoholic beverages shows little change

The total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption in the year ended December 2015 showed little change from 2014, down 0.4 percent (1.9 million litres) to 455 million litres. This follows a 2.0 percent decrease for 2014 year and a 1.9 percent increase for 2013.

The decrease was due to a fall in the volume of wine available, down 3.6 million litres (3.3 percent). This was partly offset by an increase in the volume of spirit-based drinks available, up 2.4 million litres (4.5 percent).



Source: Statistics New Zealand

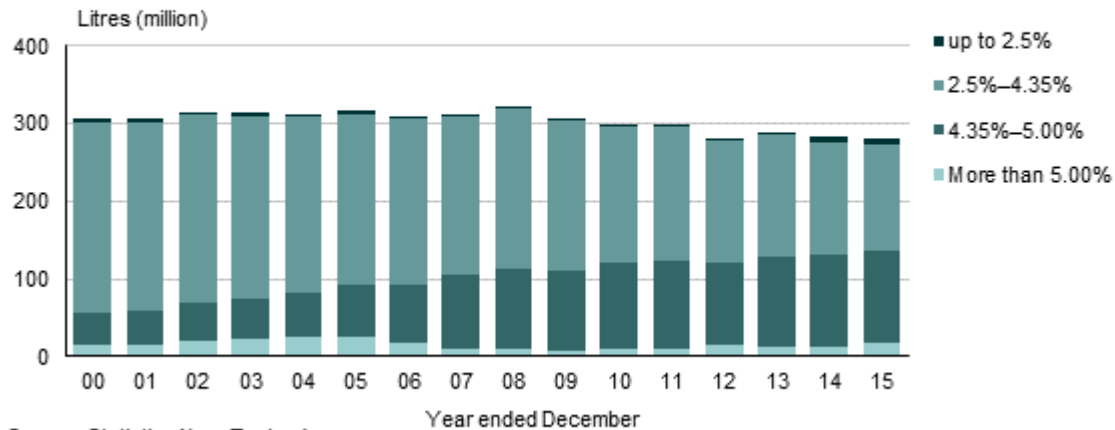
In 2015, alcohol available in the December quarter fell 3.2 percent compared with the same quarter in the previous year. The June quarter also fell, while the March and September quarters rose.

## Beer volume shows little change

The total volume of beer available for consumption showed little change, down 0.1 percent, to 282 million litres.

## Volume of beer available for consumption

By beer strength  
2000–15



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Although the total beer volume showed little change, large movements occurred in the alcoholic content categories:

- up to 2.5 percent alcohol – **rose** 71 percent, to 9.6 million
- between 2.5 and 4.35 percent – **fell** 6.5 percent, to 135 million litres
- between 4.35 and 5 percent – **unchanged**, at 119 million litres
- above 5 percent – **rose** 38 percent, to 18.7 million litres.

As a proportion of the total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption, beer fell from 74 percent in 2000 to 62 percent in 2015. Only a small change occurred from 2014 to 2015.

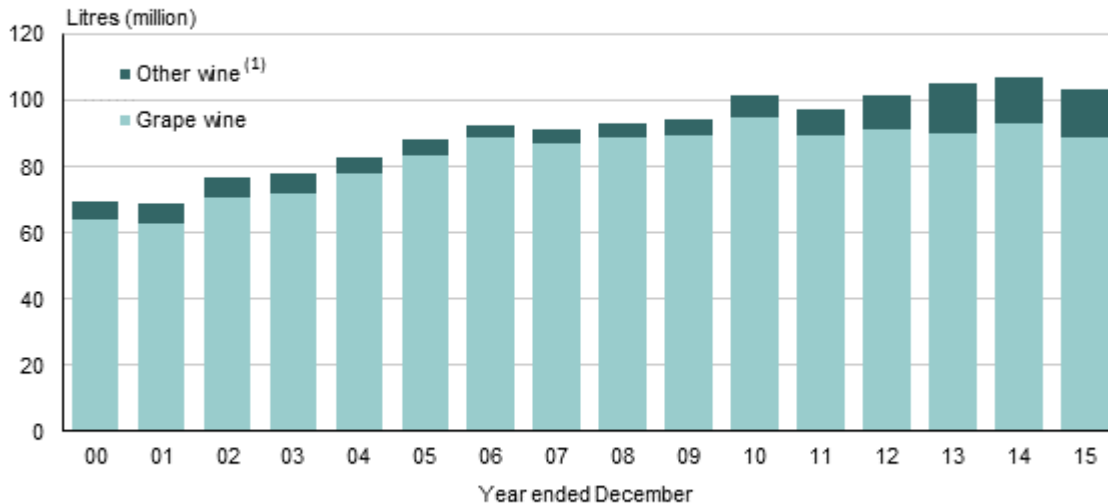
## Wine volume down 3.3 percent

The total volume of wine available for consumption in 2015 fell 3.3 percent (3.6 million litres) from 2014, to 104 million litres. Of the main categories of wine:

- table wine made from grapes **fell** 4.6 percent, to 89 million litres
- table wine made from other fruit and vegetables, or flavoured with other aromatic substances, **rose** 4.5 percent, to 14 million litres (cider is estimated to be 90 percent by volume of all the beverages in this category)
- total table wine (all wine with an alcoholic content up to 14 percent) **fell** 3.5 percent to 103 million litres
- fortified wine (wine with an alcoholic content greater than 14 percent) **rose** 22 percent to 563,000 litres.

## Volume of table wine available for consumption

By wine type  
2000–15



1. Other wine includes table wine made from other fruit and vegetables, or flavoured with other aromatic substances.

Source: Statistics New Zealand

The fall in the volume of table wine made from grapes available for consumption in New Zealand coincided with an increase in the quantity and value of exported grape wine in 2015.

In the December 2015 quarter, the exported volume of table wine made from grapes was more than twice the volume of table wine available for consumption in New Zealand (the combined total of imported wine and local production that is not exported).

As a proportion of the total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption, wine increased from 17 percent in 2000, to 23 percent in 2015. Only a small change occurred from 2014 to 2015.

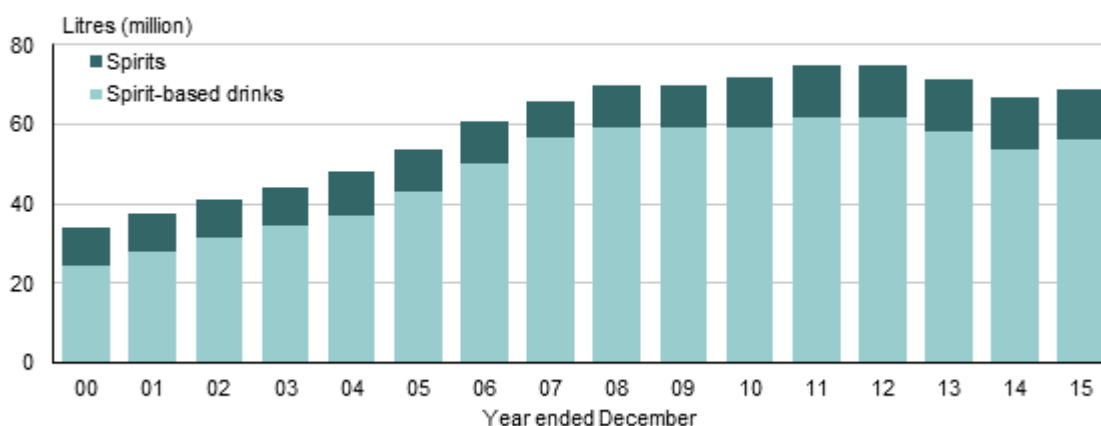
## Volume of spirits and spirit-based drinks up 3.0 percent

The total volume of spirits and spirit-based drinks wine available for consumption in 2015 was 69 million litres, up 2.0 million litres (3.0 percent) from 2014. The changes by volume were:

- spirit-based drinks (with up to 23 percent alcohol) **rose** 4.5 percent (2.4 million litres), to 56 million litres
- spirits (with more than 23 percent alcohol) **fell** 3.7 percent (474,000 litres), to 12 million litres.

As a proportion of the total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption, spirits and spirit-based drinks rose from 8.3 percent in 2000 to 15 percent in 2015. This proportion in 2015 was unchanged from 2014.

## Volume of spirits and spirit-based drinks available for consumption 2000–15



Source: Statistics New Zealand

## Volume of pure alcohol available down 2.2 percent

Pure alcohol available for consumption is a measure of the total alcoholic content of the various alcoholic beverages.

The total volume of pure alcohol available for consumption in 2015 fell 2.2 percent, to 32 million litres. This is a decrease of 718,000 litres from 2014.

Of the main categories of alcoholic beverage, the volume of pure alcohol available from:

- beer – **fell** 0.3 percent, to 12 million litres
- wine – **fell** 5.9 percent, to 11 million litres
- spirits (including spirit-based drinks) – was **unchanged**, at 9.1 million litres

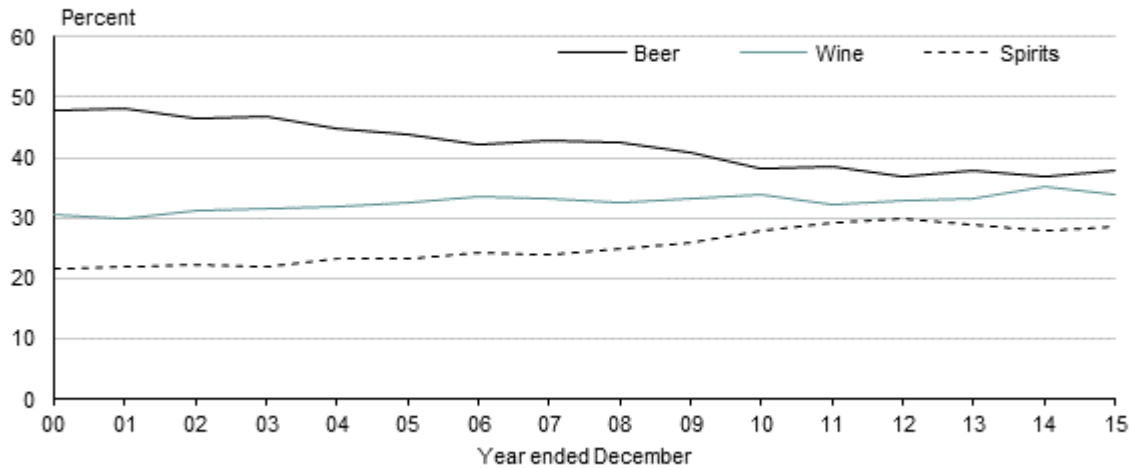
Of the two main categories of spirits and spirit-based drinks:

- spirits (with more than 23 percent alcohol) – **fell** 3.7 percent, to 5.2 million litres.
- spirit-based drinks (with up to 23 percent alcohol) – **rose** 5.3 percent, to 4.0 million litres

The proportions of pure alcohol available for consumption from the different alcoholic beverages have changed over time. Between 2000 and 2015, the proportion available from:

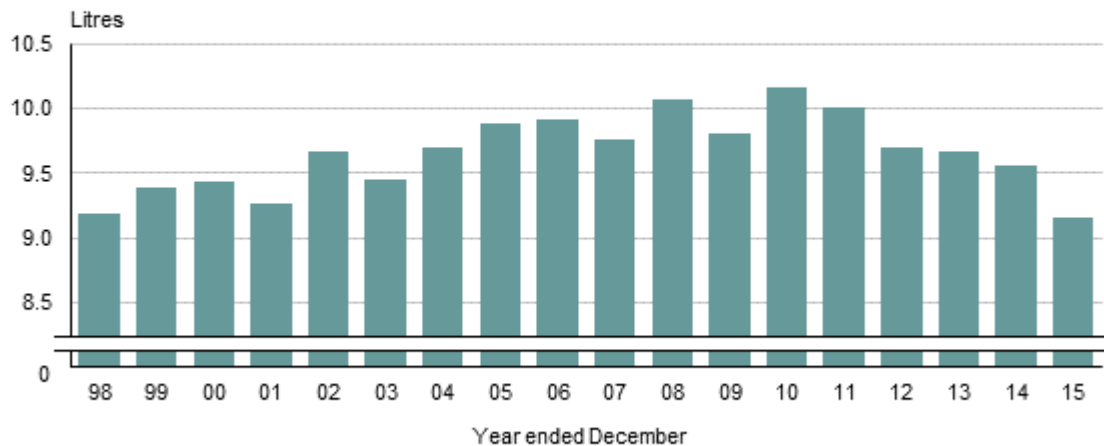
- beer – **decreased** from 48 percent to 38 percent
- wine – **increased** from 31 percent to 34 percent
- spirits (including spirit-based drinks) – **increased** from 22 percent to 28 percent.

### Beverage type as proportion of total pure alcohol available 2000–15



Source: Statistics New Zealand

### Volume of pure alcohol available for consumption Per person aged 18 years and over 1998–2015



Source: Statistics New Zealand

## Standard drinks per person down 4.1 percent

In 2015, the number of litres of pure alcohol available per person was:

- 9.2 litres per person (aged 18+), down 4.1 percent from 9.6 litres in 2014
- 8.7 litres per person (aged 15+), down 4.1 percent from 9.1 litres in 2014

These figures are equivalent to an average of:

- 2.0 standard drinks per person (aged 18+) per day, down from 2.1 in 2014.
- 1.9 standard drinks per person (aged 15+) per day, down from 2.0 in 2014

In 2015, the volume of alcohol available per person aged 18+ (measured by the number of litres or the number of standard drinks) is the lowest in the last 18 years.

For more detailed data see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

## Definitions

### About the alcohol available for consumption statistics

The statistics in this release measure how much alcoholic beverage is released to the domestic market, and therefore available for consumption. The statistics do not measure actual consumption. Information is not available to measure the change in the level of stocks that are held before sale and therefore, not yet consumed. The figures also exclude alcoholic beverages produced by households.

This release includes statistics for beer, spirits, spirit-based drinks, and wine (includes cider).

### More definitions

**Pure alcohol:** ethanol or ethyl alcohol.

**Standard drink:** one containing 10 grams of pure alcohol.

See [What's in a standard drink?](#) for more information.



## **Related links**

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*Alcohol Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2016* will be released in February 2017.

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Overseas Merchandise Trade measures the change in value of New Zealand's imports and exports.

New Zealand Customs Service provides information on excise duty.

## Data quality

- [Data source](#)
- [Accuracy of the data](#)
- [More information](#)

### Data source

The volume of alcohol available for consumption comes solely from administrative data. No direct surveying occurs. We obtain information from two sources: New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS) and Statistics New Zealand's merchandise trade statistics.

NZCS provides figures on beer, spirits, spirit-based drinks, and wine produced for local consumption on which duty is paid; our merchandise trade statistics provide data on imports less re-exports. We exclude domestically produced beer and wine with less than 1.15 percent alcohol content, and alcoholic beverages produced by private individuals at home.

### Accuracy of the data

#### Alcohol per person

We calculate the volume of pure alcohol available per person by dividing year-ended total alcohol volumes by Statistics NZ's quarterly population estimates. Four series are available: for aged 15 years and over, 18 years and over, 20 years and over, and total New Zealand population.

#### Calculating the average number of standard drinks available

According to the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC), one standard drink equals 10 grams of pure alcohol. We use this definition to calculate the average number of standard drinks available for consumption per person per day.

See [What's in a standard drink?](#) for more information.

#### Calculating the volume of alcohol available from beer

We calculate the volume of alcohol available from beer using the five categories NZCS uses to calculate excise duty. To convert the volume of beer available for consumption to the volume of alcohol, we multiply the categories by the following conversion factors:

Volume of alcohol (percent)	Conversion factor
Not more than 1.15	0.0115
More than 1.15 but not more than 2.50	0.01825
More than 2.50 but not more than 4.35	0.04
More than 4.35 but not more than 5.00	0.04675
More than 5.00	0.051

#### Calculating the volume of alcohol available from spirits and spirit-based drinks

The data used to calculate available spirits is expressed in absolute alcohol content. However, spirit-based beverages with an alcohol content of less than 23 percent are expressed in litres.

We calculate the volume of alcohol content in spirit-based drinks according to the five categories used by NZCS to calculate excise duty. To convert the volume of spirit-based drinks available for consumption to the volume of alcohol, we multiply the categories by the following conversion factors:

<b>Volume of alcohol (percent)</b>	<b>Conversion factor</b>
Up to 2.5	0.015
More than 2.5 but not more than 6	0.045
More than 6 but not more than 9	0.08
More than 9 but not more than 14	0.11
More than 14 but not more than 23	0.18

### **Calculating the volume of alcohol available from wine**

We use results of the Study of the Alcohol Content of Alcoholic Beverages (conducted by the then Department of Scientific and Industrial Research between 1976 and 1987) to determine the average alcohol content of table and fortified wine.

To calculate the volume of alcohol available in these wines, the volume of:

- table wine available is multiplied by 0.0527 or 0.11, depending on input classification
- fortified wine available is multiplied by 0.18.

### **More information**

See [Alcohol availability](#) for more information.

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## Tables

See [Alcohol Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2015 - Tables](#) (Excel, 9, 150kB). The following tables are available in Excel format from the 'Downloads' box. If you have problems viewing the file, see [opening files and PDFs](#).

1. Annual alcohol available for consumption, volume of beverage available
2. Annual alcohol available for consumption, volume of pure alcohol available
3. Annual volume of beer available for consumption, by alcohol content
4. Annual volume of wine available for consumption, by type of wine
5. Quarterly alcohol available for consumption, volume of beverage available
6. Quarterly alcohol available for consumption, volume of pure alcohol available
7. Quarterly volume of beer available for consumption, by alcohol content
8. Quarterly volume of wine available for consumption, by type of wine

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Group: **Alcohol Available for Consumption**

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