

# Alcohol Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2014

Embargoed until 10:45am – 25 February 2015

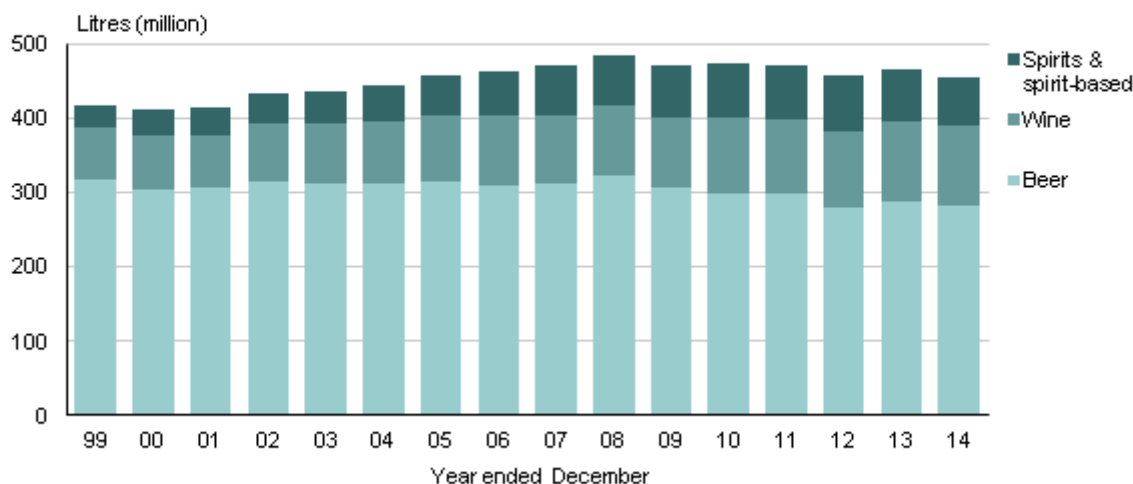
## Key facts

For the year ended December 2014 compared with the year ended December 2013:

- The total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption fell 2.0 percent, to 457 million litres.
- The volume of beer available fell 2.3 percent, to 282 million litres.
- The volume of pure alcohol available for consumption fell 0.3 percent, to 32.8 million litres.
- The volume of pure alcohol available per person aged 18 years and over fell 1.2 percent, to 9.6 litres. This equates to an average of 2.1 standard drinks per person per day.

### Total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption

By type  
1999–2014



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Liz MacPherson, Government Statistician  
ISSN 2230-3278  
25 February 2015

## Commentary

- Total alcoholic beverage volume falls
- Beer volume down 2.3 percent
- Wine volume up 1.5 percent
- Volume of spirits and spirit-based drinks falls 6.3 percent
- Volume of pure alcohol available down 0.3 percent
- Standard drinks per person shows no change

## Total alcoholic beverage volume falls

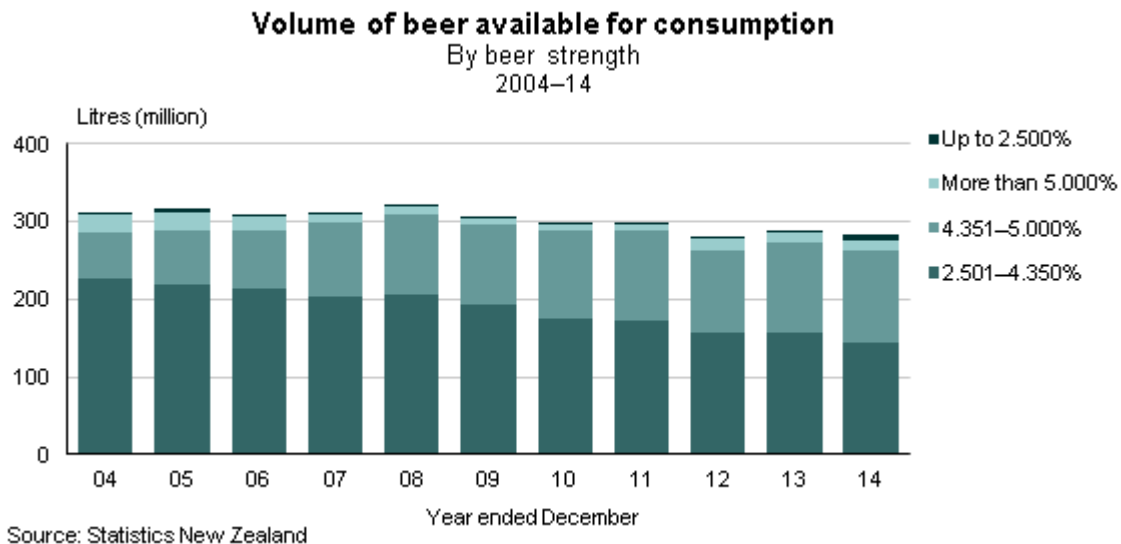
The total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption fell 9.4 million litres (2.0 percent) in the year ended December 2014, to 457 million litres. This follows a 1.9 percent increase for 2013 and a 3.3 percent decrease for 2012.

The decrease was due to falls in the volumes of beer available, down 6.5 million litres (2.3 percent) and spirit-based drinks available, down 4.3 million litres (7.3 percent). These falls were partly offset by a rise in the volume of wine available, up 1.6 million litres (1.5 percent).

In 2014, alcohol available in the December quarter fell 0.2 percent compared with the same quarter in the previous year. Volumes also fell in the March and June quarters, while it rose in the September quarter.

## Beer volume down 2.3 percent

The total volume of beer available for consumption fell 6.5 million litres (2.3 percent) in 2014, to 282 million litres.



As a proportion of the total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption, beer has fallen from 81 percent in 1996 to 62 percent in 2014. This is unchanged from 2013.

The 2014 fall in beer volume available was driven by mid-strength beer (2.501–4.350% alcohol content), but partly offset by rises in low-strength and high-strength beer.

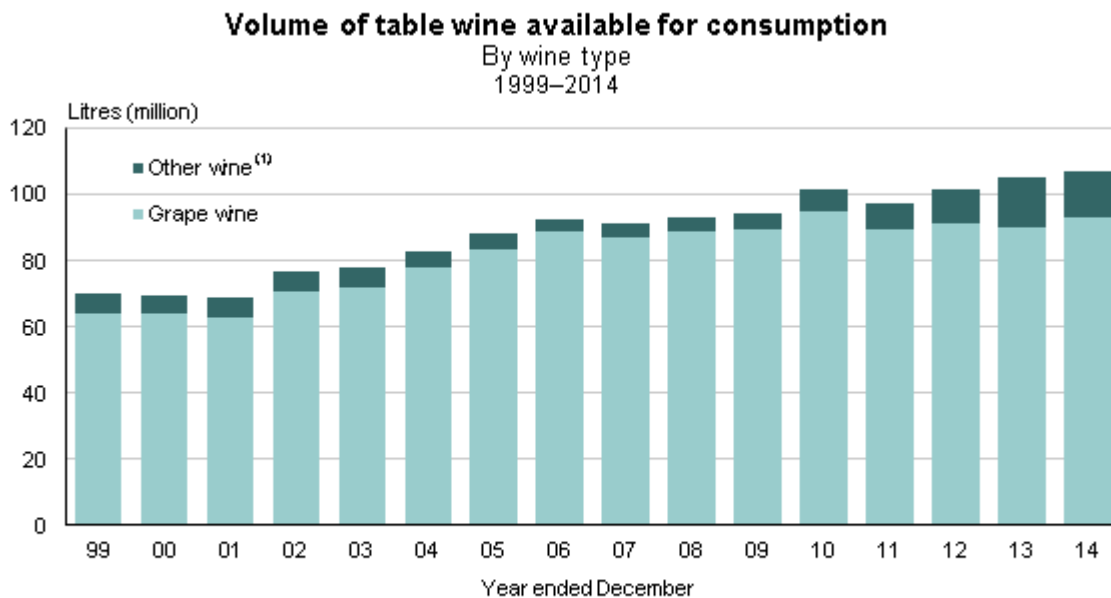
Changes, by beer's alcohol content, were:

- less than 2.501 percent – **rose** 2.2 million litres (66 percent), to 5.6 million litres
- 2.501 to 4.350 percent – **fell** 12 million litres (7.4 percent), to 144 million litres
- 4.351 to 5.000 percent – **rose** 2.1 million litres (1.8 percent), to 119 million litres
- more than 5.000 percent – **rose** 706,000 litres (5.5 percent), to 14 million litres.

## Wine volume up 1.5 percent

The total volume of wine available for consumption in 2014 was 108 million litres, up 1.6 million litres (1.5 percent) compared with 2013.

- Table wine made from grapes increased 3.7 percent, to 93 million litres.
- Table wine made from other fruit, vegetables, or other aromatic substances fell 12 percent, to 14 million litres. Cider is included in this category but its value cannot be separately identified.



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

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Fortified wine (greater than 14 percent alcohol by volume) increased 98,000 litres (27 percent), to 460,000 litres.

Wine contributed 24 percent of the total volume of alcoholic beverage available in 2014, compared with 16 percent in 1996. In 2013, wine contributed 23 percent.

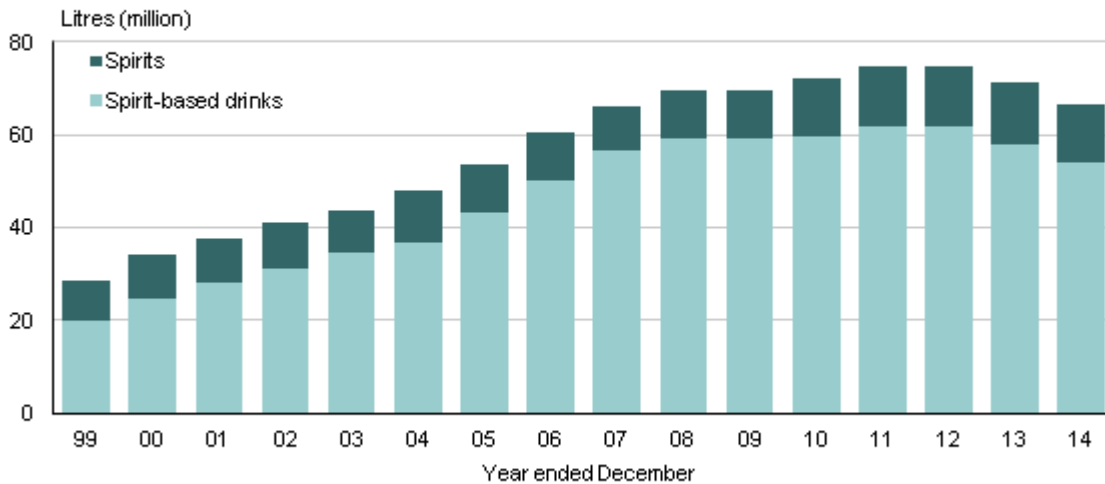
## Volume of spirits and spirit-based drinks falls 6.3 percent

The volume of spirit-based drinks (containing 23 percent alcohol or less) decreased 4.3 million litres (7.3 percent) in 2014, to 54 million litres.

The volume of spirits (containing more than 23 percent alcohol) decreased 235,000 litres (1.8 percent), to 13 million litres.

As a proportion of the total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption, spirits and spirit-based drinks have risen from 3.0 percent in 1996 to 15 percent in 2014. This is unchanged from 2013.

### Volume of spirits and spirit-based drinks available for consumption 1999–2014



Source: Statistics New Zealand

### Volume of pure alcohol available down 0.3 percent

Pure alcohol available for consumption measures the alcohol content of the various alcoholic beverages.

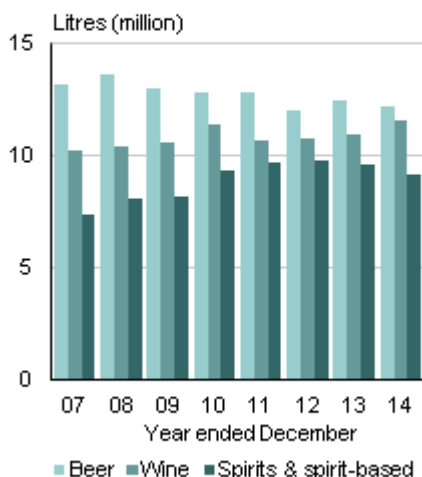
The total volume of pure alcohol available for consumption fell 0.3 percent, to 32.8 million litres in 2014, a decrease of 94,000 litres since 2013.

The volume of pure alcohol available from:

- beer – **fell** 286,000 litres (2.3 percent), to 12 million litres
- spirit-based drinks (not more than 23 percent alcohol content) – **fell** 330,000 litres (8.1 percent), to 3.8 million litres
- spirits (more than 23 percent alcohol content) – **fell** 98,000 litres (1.8 percent), to 5.4 million litres
- wine – **rose** 620,000 litres (5.7 percent), to 12 million litres .

### Total volume of pure alcohol available for consumption

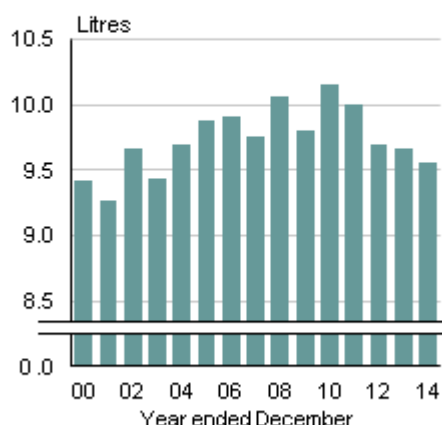
By beverage type  
2007–14



Source: Statistics New Zealand

### Litres of pure alcohol available for consumption

Per person aged 18 years and over  
2000–14



Source: Statistics New Zealand

## Standard drinks per person shows no change

In 2014, the number of litres of pure alcohol available per person was:

- 9.1 litres per person aged 15 years and over (down from 9.2 litres in 2013)
- 9.6 litres per person aged 18 years and over (down from 9.7 litres in 2013).

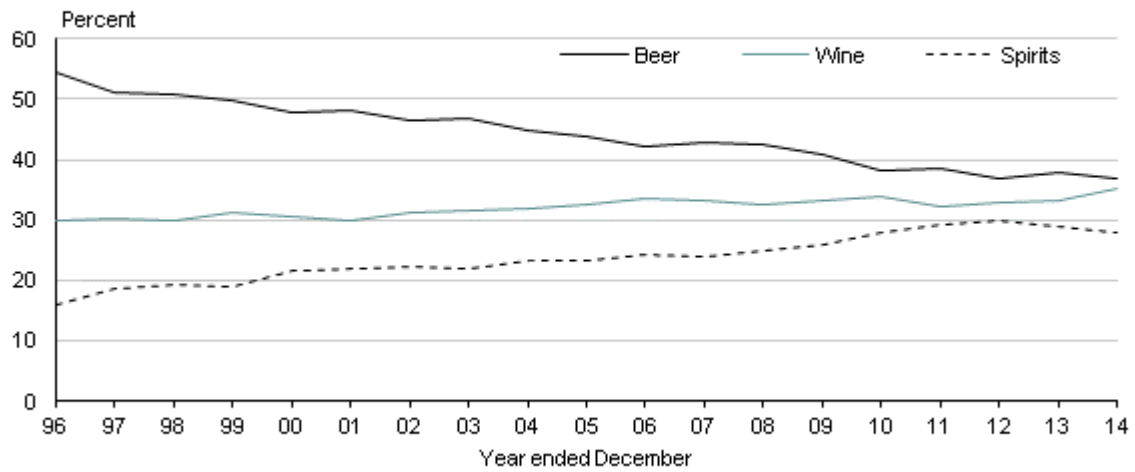
The 2014 figure is equivalent to an average of:

- 2.0 standard drinks per person (15+) per day (unchanged from 2013)
- 2.1 standard drinks per person (18+) per day (unchanged from 2013).

The proportions of pure alcohol available for consumption from the different alcoholic beverages have changed over time. Between 1996 and 2014, the proportion available from:

- wine has **increased** – from 30 percent to 35 percent (up 2.0 percent from 2013)
- spirits (including spirit-based drinks) has **increased** – from 16 percent to 28 percent (down 1.2 percent from 2013)
- beer has **decreased** – from 54 percent to 37 percent (down 0.8 percent from 2013).

### Beverage type as proportion of total pure alcohol available 1996–2014



Source: Statistics New Zealand

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**

### **Upcoming releases**

*Alcohol Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2015* will be released in February 2016.

Subscribe to information releases, including this one, by completing the online subscription form.

The release calendar lists all our upcoming information releases by date of release.

### **Past releases**

See Alcohol Available for Consumption for links to past releases.

### **Related information**

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.

Statistics in this release are produced in accordance with the [Official Statistics System principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics](#) for quality. They conform to the Statistics NZ Methodological Standard for Reporting of Data Quality.

### **Liability**

While all care and diligence has been used in processing, analysing, and extracting data and information in this publication, Statistics NZ gives no warranty it is error-free and will not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the use directly, or indirectly, of the information in this publication.

### **Timing**

Our information releases are delivered electronically by third parties. Delivery may be delayed by circumstances outside our control. Statistics NZ does not accept responsibility for any such delay.

**Crown copyright©**



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand licence. You are free to copy, distribute, and adapt the work, as long as you attribute the work to Statistics NZ and abide by the other licence terms. Please note you may not use any departmental or governmental emblem, logo, or coat of arms in any way that infringes any provision of the Flags, Emblems, and Names Protection Act 1981. Use the wording 'Statistics New Zealand' in your attribution, not the Statistics NZ logo.

## Contacts

**For media enquiries contact:**

Jason Attewell

Wellington 04 931 4600

**Email:** [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz)

**For technical information contact:**

Dinah Mountier

Christchurch 03 964 8700

**Email:** [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz)

**For general enquiries contact our Information Centre:**

Phone: 0508 525 525 (toll-free in New Zealand)

+64 4 931 4600 (outside New Zealand)

**Email:** [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz)

**Subscription service:**

Subscribe to information releases, including this one, by completing the online subscription form.

**Correction notifications:**

Subscribe to receive an email if a correction notice is published for Alcohol Available for Consumption.

Unsubscribe to correction notifications for Alcohol Available for Consumption.

Subscribe to all to receive an email if a correction notice is published for any of our information releases.

Unsubscribe to all if you change your mind.

## Tables

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. Alcohol available for consumption, volume of beverage available
2. Alcohol available for consumption, volume of pure alcohol available
3. Volume of beer available for consumption, by alcohol content
4. Volume of wine available for consumption, by type of wine

## Access more data on Infoshare

Use [Infoshare](#), a free, online database to access time-series data specific to your needs. To access the release time series on Infoshare, select the following categories from the homepage.

Subject category: **Industry sectors**

Group: **Alcohol Available for Consumption**

## Next release

*Alcohol Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2015* will be released in February 2016.