drinksbiz

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2026
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NEW ZEALAND INTERNATIONAL WINE SHOW 2026

2026 TROPHY WINNERS

ANNOUNCING THE BEST IN CLASS WINES OF THE 2026 NEW ZEALAND INTERNATIONAL WINE SHOW.



Rapaura Springs Reserve Pinot Gris 2026

TROPHY
Champion Pinot Gris

Crunchy nashi pear, apricot, and melon, with a hint of spice, full of fruit on the palate, medium style, delicious.



Villa Maria Cellar Selection Sauvignon Blanc 2026

TROPHY
Champion Sauvignon Blanc

A burst of passionfruit, juicy grapefruit and fresh lime zest dances with crisp green herbs a hint of tropical guava, with a finish of mouthwatering citrus zing.



Lawson's Dry Hills Marlborough Riesling 2022

TROPHY
Champion Riesling

Delicate aromas and flavours include lime blossom, juicy mandarin and ripe stone with zesty citrus, subtle honeyed sweetness and racy acidity.



Sea Level Home Block Chenin Blanc 2024

TROPHY
Champion Other White Wine Varieties

Ripe pear, golden apple and juicy quince mingle with hints of honey and a gentle waxy richness, all lifted by refreshing acidity and a bright, lingering finish.



Whitehaven Marlborough Gewurztraminer 2025

TROPHY
Champion Gewürztraminer

An aromatic bouquet of Turkish delight, rose petals and ripe lychee leads into a luscious palate of juicy mandarin, exotic spice and fragrant ginger, superb wine!



Champagne Pol Roger Blanc de Blanc Vintage 2016

TROPHY
Champion Champagne & Méthode Traditionnelle

A fine persistent bead with delicate notes of lemon and citrus zest, white florals, dried nuts with a touch of buttered toast. Magnificent Champagne.



Villa Maria Cellar Selection Sauvignon Blanc 2026

TROPHY
Champion Commercial White Wine

A burst of passionfruit, juicy grapefruit and fresh lime zest dances with crisp green herbs a hint of tropical guava, with a finish of mouthwatering citrus zing.



Wairau River Reserve Botrytised Riesling 2026

TROPHY
Champion Sweet Wine

A decadent treat! The flavour profile includes layers of honey, dried apricots, marmalade and toffee - it's simply delicious.



Lindauer Special Reserve Rosé NV

TROPHY
Champion New Zealand Sparkling

With a delicate pink hue, this premium sparkling wine boasts aromas of fresh strawberries and subtle florals, followed by a crisp, refreshing palate.



Barossa Valley Estate Grenache, Shiraz, Mourvèdre 2025

TROPHY
Champion International Red Wine Varieties

This is a luscious wine bursting with bright red berry fruits, spice and soft tannins with a fragrant violet aroma and a flavourful texture on the palate.



Squawking Magpie The Nest 2024

TROPHY Champion Merlot & Predominant Blends

A Merlot dominant Bordeaux Blend, full of plush dark berry fruits and black plums tangled with black cherry. Cassis unfolds with hints of cedar, cocoa & sweet spice.



Villa Maria Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot 2024

TROPHY Champion Cabernet Sauvignon & Predominant Blends

Densely coloured and packed with layers of dark berries and black doris plum, mingling with floral and spice nuances. Rich and concentrated with fine tannins and well integrated oak.



Maude Single Vineyard Poison Creek Pinot Noir 2024

TROPHY
Champion Pinot Noir

Vibrant red cherry and wild berry flavours, delicate floral notes and subtle spice, balanced by silky tannins and a long, elegant finish.



Mudbrick Oscar 2025 Waiheke Island

TROPHY
Champion New Zealand Syrah

Dark berry and plum flavours layered with peppery spice, hints of savoury herbs and plush velvety tannins, finishing soft, smooth and beautifully balanced.



Mudbrick Oscar 2025 Waiheke Island

TROPHY
Champion Syrah

Dark berry and plum flavours layered with peppery spice, hints of savoury herbs and plush velvety tannins, finishing soft, smooth and beautifully balanced.

Huge thanks to all of our 2026 SPONSORS - you are the best.

FIRST GLASS WINES & SPIRITS
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Boutinot NEW ZEALAND

Awarding Wines of the World.

The 2026 New Zealand International Wine Show continues to deliver an outstanding platform for New Zealand and International winemakers to showcase their award-winning winemaking skills. Wines from New Zealand, USA, France, Italy, Argentina, Australia, Portugal and Spain ... all vying to be the best.

The judges have done their work, the Medals have been decided and Trophies presented. The public can now enjoy these great wines from around the world.

The standout class in terms of medals was Pinot Noir, with this important variety awarded 8 double gold medals, 28 gold medals, 63 silvers and 73 bronze medals. Sauvignon Blanc received 7 double golds and 24 gold medals with almost all of these wines produced in the current vintage. Other well rewarded classes were Chardonnay with 26 double gold or gold, Rose with 15, Pinot Gris 14, and the overall golds and double golds in the sparkling classes totaled 22.



Church Road Grand Reserve Chardonnay 2024

TROPHY
Champion Chardonnay

A full bodied, powerful Chardonnay, citrus blossom, ripe golden stonefruits, grapefruit. Beautifully balanced toasty oak, weighty and creamy.



Mt Difficulty Roaring Meg Pinot Noir Rosé 2026

TROPHY
Champion Rosé

Vibrant and expressive and bright pale pink, a dry and refreshing rose with scrumptious notes of strawberries and cream, ripe blood orange and rose florals.



Fox and the Grapes Shiraz Cabernet 2023

TROPHY
Champion Commercial Red Wine

Juicy dark berries and ripe plum flavours, with hints of spice, soft tannins and a smooth, lingering finish.



Lustau Pedro Ximenez San Emilio Sherry

TROPHY
Champion Fortified Wine

Outstanding dessert Sherry! Orange toffee, raisin, caramel, fig and prune with candied walnut. Divine, delicious!



Squawking Magpie The Nest 2024

TROPHY
Champion New Zealand Bordeaux Red Wine

Merlot dominant Bordeaux Blend, full of plush dark berry fruits and black plums tangled with black cherry. Cassis unfolds with hints of cedar, cocoa & sweet spice.



Welland Valley & Valley Barossa Shiraz 2024

TROPHY
Champion Shiraz

Generous dark berry and ripe plum flavours, with hints of black pepper, sweet spice and dark chocolate, wrapped in a rich, full-bodied palate with a smooth, lingering, satisfying finish.

EUROVINTAGE

CHAMPION Wine Company of the Year.

Congratulations to Eurovintage who for the fifth time have taken out the Champion Wine Company title in this, the 22nd New Zealand International Wine Show. This year Eurovintage and associated agencies accumulated two Trophies and multiple Gold and double Gold Medals to cap another outstanding show.



CHAMPION Winemaker of The Show.

Michael Bann

Chief winemaker - Spring Creek Vintners.

Michael produces the most excellent wines under the 'Rapaura Springs' Label. Wines under his control had an outstanding competition collecting, one Trophy, four Double Gold and Seven Gold Medals. Four of these awarded in the important Sauvignon Blanc class.



CHAMPION Wine of The Show

Church Road Grand Reserve Chardonnay 2024

A full bodied, powerful Chardonnay, citrus blossom, ripe golden stonefruits, grapefruit. Beautifully balanced toasty oak. Weighty, rich and creamy.

View ALL 2026 MEDAL WINNERS at: www.nziws.co.nz/awards

Procure WINE MERCHANTS

Constellation Brands

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HANCOCKS FAMILY MERCHANTS

NEGOCIANTS NEW ZEALAND

EUROVINTAGE

RENAISSANCE
BREWING COMPANY
NEW ZEALAND

NEW FROM RENAISSANCE

Renaissance 6-packs are now in 330ml, with Horizon NZ Hazy joining the core range. Premium craft at an accessible $19.99 price point, built for the barbecue, the beach and everything in between.



Available through Brandhouse

0508 468 688 - orders@brandhouse.co.nz

Cheers!
cheers.org.nz



Victoria Wells
Editor – Drinksbiz
victoria@drinksbiz.co.nz

Let's be of good cheer

AS I write my last ed's letter for the year, it's hard not to let out a long breath. (Even knowing that as I write this the general election is just days away and any post-election coalition wrangling will likely be with us for weeks to come.)

2026 has been a tough year. Fuel costs have bitten hard, pushing up prices and forcing businesses and households to examine every part of their spending.

The drinks and hospitality industries haven't been alone in having to do more with less and make some hard calls along the way.

But one of the things I love about this job is that I get to see all the good news that is coming out of the industry too.

Our pages this year have been full of international awards for New Zealand wine, beer and spirits brands, exciting portfolio expansions for distribution companies, and a steady stream of new products from across categories.

One of the things I love about this job is that I get to see all the good news that is coming out of the industry too.

And that's what stands out to me as the year closes: not how hard it's been, but how the industry has responded. With ingenuity, with generosity towards one another, and with a stubborn enthusiasm for making and sharing something good.

And now the busiest time of year is here and we're crossing everything that summer 26/27 is the tonic (and gin?) that everyone needs.

Thank you for your support this year. From the *Drinksbiz* team, all the best for a successful festive and summer season and hopefully a bit of relaxation in amongst it all.

Enjoy the issue,
Victoria.

Got something to share?
We're always on the hunt for new products or product updates to tell our *Drinksbiz* readers about. If you're launching a new brand, adding to your range, or have any other drinks-related news to communicate, we'd love to hear from you. Drop me a line at victoria@drinksbiz.co.nz

My picks

Jules Taylor Blanc de Blancs
This brand-new release from winemaker Jules Taylor is the first sparkling wine in her range. Beautifully presented, it's a rich, complex wine that will find plenty of fans this festive season. Pg 25.

8-Wired Blossom
I love the idea of a beer brewed with flowers and honey, and this new blonde ale from 8-Wired has jasmine, chrysanthemum and rose in the mix. You can almost see the fairies dancing through the brewery. Pg 38.

Clase Azul Ahumado
This tequila might have to go on my Christmas list with its flavours of smoked agave and fresh lemon presented in the most beautiful bottle! Pg 56.



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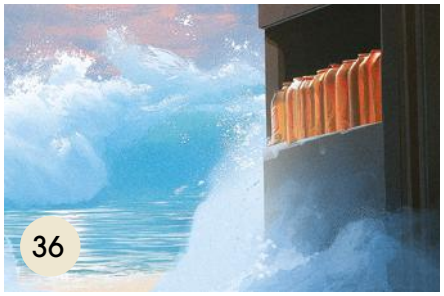


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Distributed by Federal Merchants

More than just drinks

Celebrating the people, partnerships and passion behind Hancocks Family Merchants this summer!



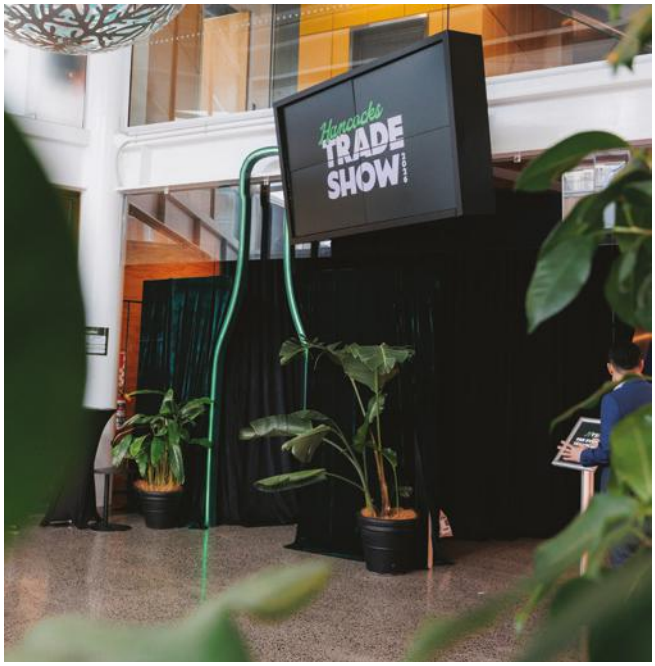
NEW BRANDS, new products and new formats: Hancocks Family Merchants is heading into summer with even more to offer retailers and hospitality venues across its comprehensive portfolio of wine, beer, cider, spirits, RTDs and non-alcoholic beverages.

New spirits releases Jägermeister Orange and Cointreau Spicy, tequila brand Lunazul, premium canned wine range The Uncommon from Marlborough, a handy 6-pack format for Corona Cero 0.0% and a delicious Tropical addition to the Scrumpy Cider line-up are among the new additions coming up for the busy festive and summer season.

They were among nearly 70 different brands showcased at the recent Hancocks annual Trade Show in Auckland, which included iconic global names like Champagne Pol Roger, Teremana and







GET READY FOR SUMMER 2026/27 WITH HANCOCKS FAMILY MERCHANTS



Corona Cero 0.0% 6PK
Corona's popular alcohol-free beer now comes in a handy 6-pack format, opening up even more of life's great moments outside this summer.
330ml bottle 6-pack



The Uncommon
Premium Marlborough wines presented in stylishly packaged lightweight cans that are endlessly recyclable. Wine designed for the way consumers drink today.
250ml cans



Scrumpy Tropical
The latest addition to the Scrumpy Cider range offers a burst of juicy tropical flavour.
1.25L PET



Jägermeister Orange
Tipped to be THE shot for summer, Jägermeister Orange is crafted from Sicilian orange zest for a lighter take on the original (33% ABV) with a fruity, bold flavour.
1L (Available from Feb 2027)









Fever-Tree, and New Zealand's own Scapegrace, Jules Taylor Wines and Epic Beer.

Customer connection

Just over 1,800 attendees streamed into the Viaduct Events Centre to explore the diversity of the Hancocks offering at this year's show – sampling and learning about products, getting to know more about individual brands and the people behind them, and taking a first-hand look at what's coming next in the beverage industry.

Immersive experiences from the Michelob Ultra Golf Simulator, Piper-Heidsieck Beauty Bar and the Fever-Tree Silent Disco brought the brands to life in a memorable and fun way.

"We put a huge amount of effort into making the day both entertaining and commercially valuable, so customers walk away feeling inspired, informed and enthusiastic about what's ahead," says Hancocks Marketing Manager Paul Holmes.

"But beyond the products, it's really about relationships. We get to connect with our customers face to face, understand what their businesses actually need, and help them identify opportunities to grow."

Service with passion

The theme of this year's event was "Service" – one of the company's key pillars – and General Manager of Growth, Jedda Jakicevich says it is at the heart of everything they do as a business. "We pride ourselves on being more than just a beverage distributor. We're a partner to our customers, helping them grow their businesses through great products, strong relationships and genuine support."

With a comprehensive range across wine, spirits, beer, cider, RTDs and non-alcoholic beverages, Hancocks Family Merchants combines the scale of a major beverage distributor with the customer-focused approach of a family-owned business.

"That family feel really sets Hancocks apart and is something that's genuinely reflected in our culture and the way we operate," says Jakicevich. "There's a real sense of pride and personal investment in what we do, and I think that translates into the relationships we build with our customers and brand partners. We've also managed to retain that personal, down-to-earth approach that comes with being a family business.

"We're incredibly passionate about the industry we're part of, and I think our ability to combine that passion with our generational experience, agility and genuine commitment to our customers is what makes Hancocks really special."

> "We pride ourselves on being more than just a beverage distributor. We're a partner to our customers, helping them grow their businesses through great products, strong relationships and genuine support."
>
> – Jedda Jakicevich, General Manager of Growth.



Archie Rose Australian Original Whisky
A collaboration with Archie Rose co-owner Chris Hemsworth, new Australian Original Whisky marries the award-winning Straight Rye Malt & Single Malt Whiskies.
750ml



Cointreau Spicy
The iconic orange liqueur now has a spicy twist! Leaning into consumer trends, new Cointreau Spicy balances its distinctive orange liqueur with spicy notes of chili pepper.
700ml



Lunazul
Premium tequila with its roots in seven generations of tequila craftsmanship. Produced using 100% estate-grown blue agave. Available in Blanco, Reposado and Añejo.
750ml



Fever-Tree
The perfect summer mixer and synonymous with quality – Fever-Tree is one of the world's leading premium mixer brands. Using carefully sourced botanicals and no artificial flavours or sweeteners, the range is designed to complement, not mask, premium spirits. It has earned global recognition as an award-winning, trusted name across the trade.
250ml cans

Winemakers look to India as FTA takes effect

NEW ZEALAND Winegrowers is celebrating improved access for New Zealand wine to one of the world's fastest-growing economies after the India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) came into force in October.

It says the agreement gives New Zealand wine brands greater confidence to build their presence in India, with tariffs reducing progressively over the next decade.

Depending on the wine's value, tariffs on eligible New Zealand wine will reduce over 10 years from 150% to either 50% or 25%.

New Zealand wine exports to India have historically been modest but grew 48% in the last year to just under NZ$438,000.

India's wine market is largely concentrated in three cities: Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru. Together, those cities account for half of the country's wine consumption and are home to around 70 million people. This is a market 13 times the size of New Zealand and is comparable to the United Kingdom.

"India remains largely untapped for New Zealand wine, so our focus is on helping our members assess the opportunity through practical market intelligence and insights, connections with key stakeholders and opportunities in-market to build their brands," says NZ Winegrowers Chief Executive Anishka Jelicich.

NZ Winegrowers recently hosted India's only Master of Wine, Sonal C Holland, as a keynote speaker at its annual Wine Business Forum in Wellington. Her message to the audience was clear: the FTA removes a significant barrier, but long-term success in India will require commitment, patience and strong local relationships.

Anishka Jelicich says that NZ Winegrowers is looking forward to working with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) at ProWine Mumbai in mid-November.

"The major international trade fair will include a 20-strong contingent of businesses showcasing New Zealand wine to the Indian trade. These types of events are incredibly valuable for our members, helping them to build distributor relationships and a pipeline in a growing premium segment."



Jono Willis



Warwick Hooper

Sales leadership change at Lion

LION HAS announced a new National Sales Director for New Zealand with Jono Willis to succeed Warwick Hooper from the beginning of next year.

Hooper is leaving the business after a 16-year career with Lion, which started in 2010 at Lion Dairy & Drinks. He has held several senior sales leadership roles across the business, including Field Sales Manager and National Accounts Director, before being appointed National Sales Director for New Zealand in 2022.

Lion's Chief Operating Officer and NZ Country Director Craig Baldie thanked Hooper for his commitment to Lion, its people and customers over his 16 years with the company.

Lion says that Jono Willis brings broad commercial and leadership experience to the National Sales Director role, having built a diverse career across the company's legal, general management and sales functions.

Willis joined Lion in 2012 as Legal Counsel in New Zealand before moving to Australia, where his role spanned a range of commercial legal matters across the business. He subsequently returned to New Zealand in 2018 and became General Counsel for Lion New Zealand and Little World Beverages. He later combined his legal leadership responsibilities with general management of Lion's coffee business before moving into sales as National Accounts Director and, most recently, Field Sales Director.

Jono Willis will start in his new role from 1 January 2027, while Warwick Hooper will continue with Lion into early 2027 to support the leadership transition.

Indevin partners with EuroVintage

INDEVIN GROUP has announced a strategic partnership with EuroVintage, which has become the exclusive distribution partner for Indevin in selected channels in the New Zealand market.

Under the new partnership, which took effect in early October, EuroVintage will manage day-to-day distribution including ordering, customer activity, pricing and servicing relationships through its nationwide customer team and field sales network.

Indevin will continue to lead brand strategy, commercial direction and portfolio management. The partnership will support Indevin brands including Villa Maria and Esk Valley.



Indevin says it evaluated several options in reviewing its route-to-market model after long-time distribution partner Tasman announced it would cease operations.

"This partnership combines Indevin's portfolio strength, market expertise and our brand investment with EuroVintage's proven distribution capability and reach," says Mark Polaczek, Indevin Group Country Manager NZ.

"Importantly, the Indevin team will continue to lead brand and activation strategy as well as commercial direction, working closely with EuroVintage to ensure delivery in the market. This partnership gives us greater scale and execution capability while allowing our dedicated Indevin sales team to focus on further opportunities in other channels that will drive growth for our brands and customers."

The transition is being implemented in phases, beginning with retail banner groups from October 2026, before expanding distribution responsibilities within independent retail, online retail, and on-premise channels at a later date.



DB completes $30m brewery upgrade

DB HAS completed a major upgrade to its Waitematā brewing and packaging facilities in a $30 million project designed to strengthen its capability and efficiency.

Minister for Small Business and Manufacturing, Hon Cameron Brewer, officially opened the newly modernised facility in September.

DB says it has updated critical equipment across the site, including new, faster can packers that give greater format flexibility; two new tanks to expand batch brewing capacity; and significant improvements to bottle lines including new packers and a new bottle filler.

DB Managing Director Peter Hart says the project is already bringing improvements.

"This upgrade is anchoring DB as a more productive, efficient and competitive business for the long term. The Waitematā brewery is at the heart of our operations. And importantly, we're immediately seeing the productivity benefits. For example, the upgraded NRG bottle line is producing around 30,000 bottles an hour, which is 30% more than before."

DB says the investment supports its focus on improving operational performance and capturing productivity gains from its manufacturing side.

It says it will also increase capability in growing segments of the market, particularly low-carb beer and can formats, with low-carb products remaining the fastest-growing beer segment in New Zealand.

NZ properties among world's best in MICHELIN Keys 2026

NEARLY 30 New Zealand accommodation providers have been recognised amongst the world's best with the announcement of the 2026 MICHELIN Keys.

A MICHELIN Key recognises outstanding accommodation in the same way that MICHELIN Stars recognise outstanding restaurants.

Eighteen New Zealand properties received One Key this year, with a further 10 receiving Two Keys – a significant jump from the 19 New Zealand venues recognised by MICHELIN when the Keys debuted in New Zealand last year.

The global selection now includes 2,832 MICHELIN Key hotels: 155 Three-Key, 657 Two-Key and 2,020 One-Key hotels.

Kristy Phillips, Hospitality NZ Chief Executive Officer, says the growing number of accommodation venues recognised by MICHELIN is a further endorsement of New Zealand's standing as a destination for international visitors.

"Following the MICHELIN Stars, where more than 100 New Zealand restaurants were recognised, the awarding of 28 Keys is another accolade that we hope will encourage people to travel here to experience everything our country has to offer."

The MICHELIN Keys were launched in 2024, honouring hotels in North America, Europe and Asia before expanding to include hotels in other regions – including New Zealand – in 2025.

MICHELIN TWO KEYS 2026

- Blanket Bay (Glenorchy, Otago)
- Delamore Lodge (Waiheke Island)
- Huka Lodge (Taupō)
- The Lindis (Omarama)
- Otahuna Lodge (Christchurch)
- Rosewood Cape Kidnappers (Hawke's Bay)
- Rosewood Kauri Cliffs (Northland)
- Rosewood Matakauri (Queenstown)
- Wallingford Homestead (Wallingford)
- Wharekauhau Country Estate (Featherston)

MICHELIN ONE KEY 2026

- Annandale Coastal Farm Escape & Luxury Villa Collection (Akaroa)
- Azur Lodge (Queenstown)
- Bay of Many Coves (Marlborough)
- The Clements Hotel (Waikato)
- Craggy Range Luxury Vineyard Retreat (Havelock North)
- Eagles Nest (Russell)
- Eichardt's Private Hotel (Queenstown)
- Gibbston Valley Lodge and Spa (Queenstown)
- Hapuku Lodge & Tree Houses (Kaikōura)
- The Hotel Britomart (Auckland)
- Hotel Fitzroy Curated by Fable (Auckland)
- Hulbert House Luxury Boutique Lodge Queenstown (Queenstown)
- The Manse (Maraekakaho)
- Mt Cook Lakeside Retreat (Lake Pukaki)
- Park Hyatt Auckland (Auckland)
- ROKI Collection Queenstown (Queenstown)
- Solitaire Lodge (Rotorua)
- Stoneridge Estate (Queenstown)



Garage Project buys bStudio



Ian Gillespie, Pete Gillespie and Jos Ruffell.

GARAGE PROJECT is buying Hawke's Bay contract brewery bStudio in a deal that sees the Wellington brewery take ownership of a company that has played a key role in its success.

bStudio was established in 2017 to bring high-quality, large-scale contract brewing capability to New Zealand's independent beer industry. The award-winning contract brewing and beverage manufacturing facility is based in the National Tobacco Company Building in Ahuriri, Napier.

Garage Project was bStudio's foundation brewing customer and has remained a major customer ever since. bStudio still brews a significant part of Garage Project's beer and is the production home of its TINY non-alcoholic range.

Terms of the sale are confidential and under the acquisition the brewery assets will transfer to Brewwell Napier Ltd, with the business continuing to trade as bStudio.

Garage Project co-founder Jos Ruffell says the opportunity to take ownership felt like a remarkable full-circle moment. "Simon Gilbertson and Rob Godwin took a big swing when they built bStudio. We were lucky enough to be there from the beginning, and over the years we've watched the brewery grow and become an increasingly important part of Garage Project.

"We know what a great brewery it is, we know the team, and we know what it's capable of. So when Simon decided the time was right to hand bStudio on, it felt pretty natural for us to pick up the torch."

Gilbertson says he is proud of what bStudio and its team have built and confident Garage Project is the right owner for its next chapter. "It was important to me that the brewery continued with new owners who understand what it is and what it can be. Garage Project knows bStudio as well as anyone, and I'm excited to see where they take it from here."

Garage Project says its immediate priority is continuity. bStudio will continue operating under its existing name, with the new owners focused on supporting the brewery's team and customers through the busy summer production period.

Longer term, Garage Project says it plans to progressively invest in and improve the brewery as opportunities emerge.

WHAT'S ON

NOVEMBER

Friday 13 November

2026 Fruit Wine & Cider Awards – Nelson

The awards of the Fruit Wine & Cider Makers Association, recognising excellence across cider, fruit wine, mead, kombucha and alcoholic soft drinks.
fwcma.org.nz

Friday 13 November

2026 Marlborough Wine Show

A celebration of the Marlborough wine industry and presentation of the 2026 Marlborough Wine Show trophies.
marlboroughwineshow.com

Saturday 14 November

New Zealand Cider Festival – Nelson

Now in its 11th year, the New Zealand Cider Festival will be held at Founders Heritage Park.
nzciderfestival.com

Saturday 21 November

Harvest Hawke's Bay

A day with 18 Hawke's Bay wineries and local craft brewers Giant and Brave Brewing.
harvesthawkesbay.com

Saturday 21 November

South Island Beer Festival – Christchurch

A showcase of beers and ciders from craft breweries all over the South Island. Held at the historic Ilam Homestead in Christchurch. (Second date in Feb 2027.)
sibf.co.nz

Friday 27 – Saturday 28 November

Dunedin Craft Beer and Food Festival

Brewers from around the country will offer their beers over two days under one roof at Forsyth Barr Stadium. Features homebrew and emerging brewers competitions.
dunedinbeerfest.co.nz

DECEMBER

Saturday 5 December

Gindulgence – Hawke's Bay

A line-up of distillers showcasing a fabulous selection of gin and other distilled spirits from New Zealand and around the world at Shed 530 Estate in Hastings.
gindulgence.co.nz

Saturday 5 December

South Island Wine & Food Festival – Christchurch

The best of the South's wine, beer and food producers at Hagley Park for a family-friendly day out.
winefestival.co.nz

JANUARY

Saturday 30 January

The Great Kiwi Beer Festival – Christchurch

More than 35 Kiwi breweries at Hagley Park sampling more than 300 beers. The line-up also features workshops and tasting seminars.
greatkiwibeerfestival.co.nz

2026 Young NZ wine industry winners crowned



Kris Godsall of Cloudy Bay and Nick Lamain of Isabel Estate

NZ Winegrowers' Nicky Grandorge wraps up this year's nationwide competitions for the titles of Young Viticulturist and Young Winemaker...

FOLLOWING SEVERAL months of competitions around the country and the national finals held in Martinborough at the end of August, two young men from Marlborough took out the top titles for 2026.

Kris Godsall from Cloudy Bay became the 2026 Ormond Nurseries NZ Young Viticulturist of the Year and Nick Lamain from Isabel Estate the 2026 Tonnellerie de Mercurey NZ Young Winemaker of the Year.

Both were thrilled to lift their trophies: for Kris, a special old vine, and for Nick, a mini barrel.

Congratulations also to Heath Miller from Pask, who came second in Young Viticulturist and Joshua Irving from Lincoln University who placed third. The other Young Vit finalists were Alex Coombs from Craggy Range, Wairarapa, and Braxton Benseman from Mt. Difficulty in Central Otago.

The others competing for Young Winemaker were Aaron Coxhead from Coxhead Wines in Waikato/Bay of Plenty and Joshua Irving from Lincoln University representing North Canterbury. Joshua was the first contestant to compete in both the Young Viticulturist and Young Winemaker national finals in the same year.

There's a real buzz on the finals day as the wine community comes together to stretch and support the wine industry's future leaders. The finalists were tested on all aspects of winemaking and viticulture as well as industry knowledge, leadership skills and a research project in advance. The Young Winemakers' project was on reducing carbon footprint while the Young Vits' focused on reducing costs in the vineyard.

All the finalists won a Fruitfed Supplies field trip next year, while Young Vit winner Kris Godsall received an amazing prize package including an Ecotrellis Travel Grant and Leadership Week. Nick Lamain's prizes included a trip to Burgundy, a role as an Associate Wine Judge, and a guest wine reviewer spot for *Drinksbiz* (see right).

Young Viticulturist New Zealand Wine | Ormond Nurseries Grapevine Propagation Specialists

Young Winemaker New Zealand Wine | Mercurey France



Guest Wine Reviewer – Young Winemaker 2026

Nick Lamain of Isabel Estate in Marlborough recommends three wines for your shelves and lists this summer...

Marathon Downs 2025 Up the Hill Chardonnay

RRP $40

Marathon Downs

Another fantastic release from Jess and Nick at Marathon Downs, sourced from the dry-farmed Escaroth Vineyard in Marlborough's Southern Valleys. A distinct limoncello-esque nose with hints of savoury barrel funk is immediately enticing. Bright citrus leads the palate, followed by crunchy melon, with classic, crunchy Marlborough acidity bringing everything together with excellent poise here. I'd serve this a little cooler than the Chardonnay rulebook suggests to let those pure citrus notes shine. An approachable and friendly Chardonnay that will definitely please the entire spectrum of Chardonnay lovers.

Wrekin Vineyard Pinot Noir "La Carbonique" 2025

RRP $42

Wrekin

For me, this is one of New Zealand's best answers to Beaujolais Nouveau. Wild strawberry, raspberry drops and maraschino cherry leap out of the glass, with a faint hint of chocolate truffle underneath. Kudos to winemaker Margaux Demalle for getting the tannins just right: light and soft, but with enough grip to give the juicy fruit some shape. There's a savoury herbal edge too, almost like chewing on fresh thyme. Racy acidity keeps everything lively, making this wine perfect for serving chilled on those hot summer days.

Atípico 2025 Rapaura Syrah

RRP $50

Atípico

Marlborough Syrah deserves more attention, and wines like this are why. Fellow NZ Young Winemaker of the Year winner Jordan Hogg has gone with 100% whole-bunch, something I'd normally be sceptical about with Marlborough Syrah, but he's pulled it off. White pepper, violets and red plum lead the nose, with plenty of vibrant fruit on the palate. The tannins feel a little wild at first, then settle into a firm but fine framework that holds everything together. While it drinks beautifully now the structure suggests it has more exciting evolution ahead.

Our 'Industry Updates' series spans New Zealand's beer, cider, wine and spirits sectors.



New Zealand Wine
Altogether Unique.

New Zealand Winegrowers

While New Zealand wine is toasted around the world, Anishka Jelicich, CEO New Zealand Winegrowers, explains why the domestic market is crucial...

NEW ZEALANDERS spend more than $1.1 billion annually on wine through supermarkets and liquor stores, with New Zealand wine accounting for around two-thirds of all wine sales by both value and volume, and generating more than $750 million in annual sales.

The domestic market remains critical to many businesses. Nearly half of New Zealand wineries do not export, relying primarily on cellar doors and wine tourism, and strong partnerships with retailers, distributors and on-premise businesses. Success at home matters. It supports brand building, consumer engagement, cash flow, regional employment and long-term business resilience.

The domestic market is operating in a changing environment. Consumers are more deliberate in their spending decisions, competition for share of wallet is intense, and businesses throughout the supply chain continue to balance cost pressures with consumers' expectations for value and choice. This is not unique to wine, but it shapes the commercial reality facing producers, retailers and hospitality operators every day. As the country settles into a new parliamentary term, it is worth considering what helps a domestic market of this scale continue to thrive.

One factor is the policy environment in which businesses operate. Wine excise has increased by around 24% over the past five years under the annual inflation-indexation regime. At the same time, producers, retailers and hospitality businesses have been navigating an intensely competitive market where consumers remain highly value-conscious and pricing power can be limited.

"Nearly half of New Zealand wineries do not export."

New Zealand has generally benefited from an evidence-based approach to alcohol regulation that balances harm reduction objectives with the realities of responsible production, retailing and consumption. Maintaining that commitment to evidence-based decision-making will be important in the years ahead.

Equally important are licensing frameworks and compliance requirements that are practical, proportionate and workable. Businesses understand the need for regulation, but regulation delivers the best outcomes when it is clear, focused and avoids unnecessary complexity or cost.

Maintaining a healthy domestic wine market should be a shared objective for policymakers, producers, retailers, and hospitality businesses.

nzwine.com



FRUIT WINE & CIDER MAKERS ASSOCIATION

The Fruit Wine & Cider Makers Association

Jody Scott, outgoing FWCMA Chair and cidermaker at Peckham's Cidery and Orchard, reflects on his time leading the industry body...

THIS IS my final industry update as Chair of the Fruit Wine & Cider Makers Association, and a chance to reflect on seven years in the role.

The most encouraging change I've seen is in the way people talk about cider. Increasingly, drinkers and the trade are asking a simple question: where do the apples come from?

It matters, because New Zealand cider is finding its identity, and the fruit is helping to define it. This year, ciders made from PURE Blossom, an apple developed here by Cider Apples NZ, won gold, silver and bronze at the Japan Cider Cup. That's a New Zealand apple, grown and made into cider here, winning recognition on the international stage.

"Give apple cider a proper place on your drinks list."

In the UK, the world's largest cider market, the value of cider grew by 2.2% in 2025 even as volumes fell by 2.6%*. Consumers are spending more while drinking less, with quality and provenance playing an increasingly important role.

As I hand over the Chair's role, there are three things I'd ask of the trade:

1. Give apple cider a proper place on your drinks list. One well-made cider by the glass, chosen with the same care as the wine list, does more for the category than a long row of fridge options that nobody explains.

2. Talk about the fruit. Ask your suppliers which apples went in, where they were grown and how the cider was made. Our makers love these conversations, and customers do too.

3. Go and see it for yourself. Cideries and orchards around the country welcome trade visits, and an afternoon among the trees will tell your team more than any tasting note.

November is a great time to start. The 2026 Fruit Wine & Cider Awards are celebrated alongside the NZ Cider Festival in Nelson in November. Both offer a chance to discover the breadth of what New Zealand makers produce, from orchard-led traditional ciders to bright, contemporary styles.

Finally, I'd like to thank the committee, our members and the *Drinksbiz* team for giving cider a regular voice in these pages. After seven years, I'm proud of how far the industry has come, and optimistic about where it can go next.

* Westons Cider Report 2026

fwcma.org.nz



Distilled Spirits Aotearoa

New Chair of Distilled Spirits Aotearoa, Henry Caulton, makes the case for choosing New Zealand spirits...

THE NEXT time you visit your local off-licence or enjoy a drink at your favourite restaurant, consider making one small choice that can have a big impact – choose a locally made spirit.

New Zealand's spirits industry is full of passionate producers crafting exceptional gins, whiskies, vodkas, rums and liqueurs, and behind every bottle is a story of innovation, determination and a commitment to creating something special right here in our own backyard.

But choosing to drink local means so much more than enjoying a great spirit.

You're supporting local distillers, helping small businesses grow, creating employment opportunities and supporting the families and communities that depend on them. The benefits extend well beyond the distillery.

Local growers, packaging suppliers, transport operators, hospitality businesses and retailers all contribute to bringing these spirits to market.

> "New Zealand's spirits industry is full of passionate producers."

Every locally purchased bottle helps keep money circulating within our communities and strengthens New Zealand's economy.

With the outstanding quality and diversity of locally crafted spirits available today, choosing local doesn't mean compromising on taste. It's an opportunity to discover something new, distinctive and proudly Kiwi.

So next time you're browsing the shelves of your off-licence or ordering a cocktail at your favourite restaurant, ask what's made locally.

Drink local. Support local. Celebrate local.

distilledspiritsaotearoa.org.nz



Brewers Guild NZ

As summer approaches, it's time to focus on local, says Brewers Guild Executive Director Melanie Kees...

BY THE time this edition of *Drinksbiz* lands in your hands, we may already know the outcome of New Zealand's election or be on the verge of finding out.

Regardless of which parties ultimately form the next government, our hope for our members and industry is simple: that those in power have the foresight to recognise the pressures currently facing businesses across the country and the courage to consider doing things differently.

For many breweries, hospitality venues and manufacturers, trading conditions remain incredibly challenging. Rising costs, cautious consumer spending and ongoing economic uncertainty continue to create headwinds for businesses large and small. Any steps that provide relief, encourage investment and support growth will be welcomed by industries that contribute so much to local economies and communities.

While we may have limited influence over the decisions made in Wellington, there is something all of us can influence.

As we head into the warmer months, it's the perfect time to support local through your business – who are the breweries in your area? Make the effort to visit in person, discover what's new in their portfolio and engage with the people behind the beer.

Breweries have always been more than places that make great beer. They are gathering places that bring people together, support local jobs and help create vibrant communities.

Whether you're visiting your local neighbourhood brewery or stopping into a taproom while travelling around New Zealand, take the opportunity to be part of that community.

> "Support local through your business – who are the breweries in your area?"

There's never been more choice available in beer, and consumers are increasingly willing to try something new. Alongside an incredible range of beer styles, low- and no-alcohol options continue to grow, and New Zealand makes world-class examples. Take the chance to do some research – ask the brewer or bar staff for a recommendation, sample a tasting paddle and see what you could add to your offering.

The brewing industry has always been built on connection, hospitality and community. Those values matter just as much today as they ever have.

So this summer, support local and embrace the communities around you. Because that's what New Zealand is all about.

brewersguild.org.nz



Brewers Association NZ

Brewers Association Executive Director Dylan Firth has a wish list for 2027 (and half of it depends on the industry)...

WHEN YOU read this, New Zealand will have just formed or be days from choosing its next government. Whoever forms it would do well to start with the facts, which tell a better story than many assume.

Alcohol available for consumption has fallen to 6.98 litres of pure alcohol per person, the lowest on record and 38% below 1986. Hazardous drinking has dropped from 21.3% of adults to 16.6% since 2019/20. Our rate of heavy episodic (binge) drinking sits well below the OECD average (17.5% against 27%), and fewer than half of 15- to 17-year-olds drank in the past year. New Zealanders are drinking less, and drinking better.

That should shape the next government's thinking. An excise system that rises automatically every year, regardless of falling consumption, is overdue for a rethink, and pausing indexation would be a sensible start. Recognising that a pint poured at the local is not the same as a box from the supermarket would support the venues our communities rely on.

"An excise system that rises automatically every year, regardless of falling consumption, is overdue for a rethink."

Licensing reform needs finishing and time to bed in, with consistent conditions and hearing costs across the country. Policy should be built on current New Zealand evidence, not on settings designed for a drinking culture we have already left behind.

But a wish list that only asks things of Wellington is half a list. The sector has its own work to do.

It starts at the bar. If we want people off the couch and into the local, the experience has to earn it. Clean lines, well-trained staff and a properly poured pint are the brewer's job as much as the publican's. Nor can we take our licence to trade for granted. The numbers are heading the right way, but perception lags reality and runs as much on feelings as on fact. We close that gap only by holding ourselves to a higher standard than the rules require. And we are stronger together: big brewers, independents and hospitality agree on far more than we disagree on.

None of this needs Santa. Half of it needs a government that follows the evidence. The other half needs only us.

brewers.org.nz



Spirits New Zealand

Expect to see RTDs climb in popularity again, says Spirits NZ CEO Robert Brewer...

WE ALL know that more and more consumers are choosing to drink less or not at all. We also know that this is for a range of reasons: lifestyle, economics and so on.

One of the core behaviours this choice has created is that drinking has become more about the occasion and the experience. And for spirits, this has meant premium spirits and cocktails have met with some success.

But sometimes there isn't the time to make that cocktail or mix your favourite drink, and that's when the RTD comes in. RTDs have been in the NZ market for decades now and from the beginning they became a category that swiftly grew in popularity.

This popularity saw RTD volumes rise, in spite of COVID, to a peak in about 2023, and then, according to Customs and Statistics NZ data, volumes declined until mid-2025. But against other category trends and consumer habits it's clear more and more drinkers are choosing RTDs again.

This pattern is pretty much reflected in other mature Western markets around the world. In fact, the US reported a 16.4% increase in premium RTD and pre-mix cocktail sales to the year ended 2025.

Although the volume increase in New Zealand since 2025 is more modest (about 5% according to official data), the volume increase appears locked in as consumers understand that premium RTDs and pre-mix cocktails are a strong option for the right occasion.

While still significantly below the peak of 2023 if the trend continues – and there seems no reason why it would not – then volumes will have returned to and perhaps even surpassed the previous high by mid- to late-2027.

spiritsnz.org.nz

"But against other category trends and consumer habits it's clear more and more drinkers are choosing RTDs again."



Pervinder Davies
Pervinder specialises in alcohol licensing law and is a director of Pervinder Davies Law in Christchurch.
pervinderdavieslaw.co.nz

More than a drawing

Getting your floor plan right can make all the difference to your alcohol licence application, says alcohol licensing lawyer *Pervinder Davies*...

WHEN YOU'RE launching a new restaurant, bar, bottle store or other licensed business, there are plenty of demands on your budget before you have even opened the doors.

So, I completely understand when a client says to me: "Why would I spend money on detailed plans or building work when I don't even know whether my alcohol licence will be approved?"

It's a fair question – nobody wants to spend money unnecessarily. But there's a catch.

When you apply for an alcohol licence, the licensing authority needs to properly understand what you are proposing. Under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012, the design and layout of the premises is one of the matters considered when an application is assessed.

That means your floor plan is not simply another piece of paper to tick off the application checklist. It helps define exactly what you are asking the licensing authority to approve.

What does your plan actually say about your business?

Think about your premises from the perspective of someone who has never stepped inside it.

Where will alcohol be sold? Where will customers consume it? What part of the building or outdoor area is intended to form part of the licensed premises? Where are the entrances and exits? Where are the toilets? How do customers move through the premises?

These may sound like straightforward questions, but the answers can become important when an application is being assessed.

Different types of alcohol licences also authorise different activities. An on-licence generally allows alcohol to be sold or supplied for consumption on the premises, while an off-licence generally concerns alcohol sold or supplied for consumption elsewhere.

Your proposed layout therefore needs to make sense alongside the type of licence and business operation you are proposing or currently operate.

Resist the temptation to "sort it out later"

One mistake I see is businesses trying to keep their upfront costs down by providing the bare minimum, with the intention of dealing with the detail once they know whether the licence will be granted.

If your plans do not clearly reflect what you intend to operate, or there are unresolved questions about the proposed layout, you may end up dealing with requests for further information, changes to your proposal, or issues that could have been identified much earlier.

There can also be other regulatory requirements sitting alongside alcohol licensing. Alcohol licensing guidance specifically notes that district plan consent requirements must be met before applying for a licence. Building and planning requirements may therefore need to be considered as part of the bigger picture rather than treating the alcohol licence in isolation.

This is why I encourage clients to think about these issues before they lodge their application.

Spend wisely, not blindly

None of this means I recommend spending a large amount of money before you know whether your business will proceed. Quite the opposite: the goal is to spend wisely rather than blindly.

Before committing to building work, understand what your alcohol licence application needs to demonstrate. Identify any planning or building issues early. Make sure the layout you are proposing works for the business you actually intend to operate. And, where necessary, get the right professional advice before making expensive commitments.

> The design and layout of the premises is one of the matters considered when an application is assessed.

The Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 requires licensing decision-makers to consider a range of matters, not just the applicant and proposed trading hours. These include the design and layout of the premises, along with matters such as the applicant's suitability, the relevant local alcohol policy, amenity and good order, and the systems, staff and training proposed to comply with the law.

So, when I look at a floor plan for a client, I don't see it as "just a drawing".

I see it as part of the story of the application. It helps explain what the business is, how it will operate, where alcohol-related activities will take place, and exactly what the licensing authority is being asked to approve.

Getting that story clear at the beginning can save time, money and frustration later. Sometimes the cheapest option at the start is not the cheapest option in the end.

SHOWCASE

Saverglass: Distinctive by design

IN A world of exceptional wines and spirits, what surrounds the product plays an important role in expressing what makes it special. For Saverglass, the bottle is more than packaging. It is an integral part of the brand story.

On a crowded shelf, differentiation matters. A bottle needs to capture attention, create desire and communicate something about the liquid within before it is even opened. It is why Saverglass continually explores new forms, colours, textures and decorative techniques, opening new creative possibilities for premium wine and spirits brands.

At the heart of this approach is a belief in design as a creator of value.

Duomo is one expression of this design philosophy. Inspired by the flamboyant domes of the Italian Renaissance, the bottle reawakens traditional lines with distinctive horizontal detailing across its shoulders, demonstrating how subtle design elements can give a familiar form an entirely new character.

Set your product apart

Since specialising in luxury glass bottles in 1985, Saverglass has developed deep expertise in creating distinctive packaging for premium and super-premium wines and spirits.



Brands can begin by browsing more than 200 ranges in the Saverglass collection, then build on their brand positioning by personalising an existing design or develop an entirely bespoke bottle conceived as a unique signature for the product.

And the possibilities extend well beyond shape. Colour, embossing and debossing can add character to the glass itself, while high-precision decoration can introduce another dimension through techniques including organic screen printing, hot stamping, coatings, satin finishes, metallisation and Art & Touch® 3D decoration.

For New Zealand wine and spirits producers, this combination of glassmaking expertise, creativity and decoration provides an opportunity to make a brand's identity tangible.

Because truly memorable bottles don't simply hold a product. They help tell its story.

W saverglass.com
P 09 522 2990

A bottle needs to capture attention, create desire and communicate something about the liquid within before it is even opened.



ICON DUOMO

A LESSON IN STYLE... THE ITALIAN WAY

Whilst the Bordelaise ICON is admired for its almost aristocratic elegance, this new variant is irresistible. Suggestive of the flamboyant domes of the Italian Renaissance, DUOMO reawakens traditional lines with shoulders adorned with a magnificent set of horizontal stripes.

SAVERGLASS

Saverglass (NZ) Limited | www.saverglass.com
Tel +64 9 522 2990

Hong Kong bar named world's best again



HONG KONG'S Bar Leone has been named the best bar in the world for the second year running in the annual list of The 50 Best Bars.

The results were announced at an awards ceremony in Italy in October. Now in its 18th edition, The 50 Best Bars awards programme recognises bartenders, bar owners and brands at the forefront of the international cocktail scene.

The 2026 Top 50 list features venues from 26 cities, with Bar Leone crowned Best Bar in Asia and World's Best Bar.

Co-founded by Italian bartender Lorenzo Antinori, Bar Leone is in Hong Kong's Central neighbourhood and draws inspiration from the traditional bars found in Rome's Trastevere district. Antinori and his team have built a drinks programme centred on expertly executed classics, many featuring Italian influences and premium ingredients.

Melbourne's Caretaker's Cottage placed #45 to be Best Bar in Australasia while the ceremony also celebrated Three Horses in Melbourne, ranked #84 in the extended 51–100 list and winner of the One to Watch Award.

Among the other major awards, Edinburgh's Panda & Sons claimed the Best Cocktail Menu Award, while Takuma Watanabe of Martiny in New York was named Bartenders' Bartender.

Schmuck in New York was named Best New Opening, Line in Athens won the Sustainable Bar Award and the Best Bar Design Award went to Saikindō in Abu Dhabi, described as "...one of the most distinctive bar environments in the world".

Globally respected bartender, entrepreneur and mentor Shingo Gokan received the Industry Icon Award.

50 Best Bars 2026 – Top 10

1. Bar Leone, Hong Kong
2. Moebius Milano, Milan
3. Alquímico, Cartagena
4. Bar Us, Bangkok
5. Line, Athens
6. Handshake Speakeasy, Mexico City
7. Zest, Seoul
8. Connaught Bar, London
9. Lady Bee, Lima
10. Bar Mauro, Mexico City

Full results at the50.com

Corona Extra ranked most valuable beer brand

CORONA EXTRA has retained its position as the world's most valuable beer brand, according to a new report by brand valuation consultancy Brand Finance.

The latest *Brand Finance Beers 50 2026* ranking shows that Corona Extra's brand value is up 4% to US$13.9 billion. Heineken ranks second, with its brand value up 7% to US$13.8 billion.

Modelo Especial has strengthened its position in the global top five, with its brand value up 14% to US$8 billion, moving it ahead of Budweiser.

Brand Finance says the performance reinforces the growing importance of Mexican beer brands in the global ranking, with Corona Extra and Modelo Especial both among the world's four most valuable beer brands.

In China, the world's largest beer market, Tsingtao is up 30% to US$4.7 billion and moves from ninth to sixth.



BRAND FINANCE 2026

China hosts first OIV World Congress in Asia

CHINA HOSTED the 47th World Congress of Vine and Wine in October – the first time the OIV World Congress has taken place in Asia.

The event in Ningxia brought together more than 600 participants from 47 countries.

The OIV is a scientific and technical intergovernmental organisation with 51 Member States – countries producing and consuming grapes and wine, which account for 90% of the world's vineyard surface area, 88% of global wine production and 75% of global wine consumption.

New Zealander Dr John Barker is the current OIV Director General.

Organisers say the Congress provided an opportunity to strengthen dialogue between countries and encourage the exchange of scientific knowledge and technical expertise, while showcasing the distinctive characteristics and growing importance of China's vine and wine sector.



Kane Stanford
Kane has worked for 13+ years in liquor marketing in New Zealand at Independent Liquor, Bacardi and Besos Margarita. Now in FMCG, he is also Head Strategy Judge at the 2degrees Auckland Chamber Business Awards. Kane has nominated himself for several marketing awards, but never won.

Maths – but not as you know it

Kane Stanford makes the case for doing everything, everywhere, all at once...

1+1=3.

This isn't generally covered in basic arithmetic, but it's an equation that all good marketers know.

Creative guru Dave Trott knows it and tells us in his book *One Plus One Equals Three.* His thesis is that when you put two things together (like a problem from one category and a solution from another), the result can be something entirely new. Better. More. The magic isn't necessarily in either thing individually. It's in the connection between them.

It's a simple idea, but a useful one for marketers. And one that holds true in many aspects of marketing.

Creativity compounds

Creativity effectiveness platform System1 has been doing some fascinating work on what it calls 'Compound Creativity': the idea that creativity becomes more valuable when brands consistently build on the same creative assets, ideas and associations over time. And the numbers are pretty compelling.

Its research found that the most consistent quartile of brands generated 4.8 times more very large brand effects (things that grow your brand) and 2.2 times more very large business effects (things that grow your business) than the least consistent quartile.

To de-geek that a bit, consistency is a superpower you'd be foolish to ignore.

Brand managers get sick of an ad/slogan/campaign LONG before consumers do and LONG before they've passed their best-before date.

The lesson isn't that marketers should make the same ad forever, it's that creativity doesn't necessarily need to be reinvented every six months.

A character becomes familiar. A distinctive sound becomes recognisable. A tagline gets remembered. A visual device becomes unmistakably yours.

The consumer doesn't have to learn the brand from scratch every time you advertise.

> The important bit is that increasing campaign duration or the number of media channels can increase effectiveness.

I hate the band Train, but I've heard 'Drops of Jupiter' so many times it's familiar and my brain tricks me into thinking I like it now. Then they go and drop bangers like 'Hey, Soul Sister' and 'Drive By' and now I'm hooked. They haven't changed, I have. I've been beaten down by consistency, and I'll be singing their tunes at karaoke. Train: 1. Kane: 0.

Media multiplies

James Hurman and Peter Field's *The Effectiveness Code* makes a similar 1+1=3 point in their research, identifying three components of what they call 'Creative Commitment': how much you spend, how long you run the campaign and how many media channels you use.

The important bit is that increasing campaign duration or the number of media channels can increase effectiveness.

This isn't an argument for TV over TikTok, or radio over Instagram. It's an argument for BOTH.

A TV ad works better if there is a TikTok ad too. And vice versa. As marketers, we get the benefit of each channel AND the benefit of being on both channels. 1+1=3.

Assets amplify

You have logos, slogans, characters, sonic devices, colours, product pics and more. Use them all. Use them again and again.

You don't get to choose the thing that consumers remember about you. Some are visual, some are audio, some relate to smells, experiences – who knows? So throw them all in. And the more consistently you use them, the more powerful they become AND using them together amplifies them more.

Agencies want fresh, new award-winning creative, and brand managers want to make their mark and best the previous person in their seat. I've been both and totally done both. You must resist!

- Consistency pays dividends.
- A multi-channel approach works better than the sum of its parts.
- Brand assets are there to be used. So, use them!
- 1+1=2 is maths.
- 1+1=3 is marketing.

We really should learn this in school. Maybe they could teach it an hour a day…

Ready-to-serve Aperol Spritz arrives



APEROL SPRITZ just got even easier this summer with Campari Group launching a new ready-to-serve 750ml format.

Campari says the new 9% ABV release has been crafted to match the taste of a freshly poured Aperol Spritz.

Nielsen MAT to 28 June 2026 shows that Aperol is one of New Zealand's fastest-growing aperitif brands, with volume up 18.6% year-on-year, significantly ahead of the broader aperitif category, which grew 9.5%.

Phil Restall, Managing Director at Campari New Zealand, says Kiwis have embraced the Aperol Spritz, and the new ready-to-serve Aperol Spritz bottle reflects the growing appetite for premium, easy-to-enjoy drinks that suit modern entertaining.

"It's ready to pop, delivering the iconic Aperol Spritz experience in a format that's convenient, shareable and perfect for spontaneous get-togethers."

Aperol Spritz 750ml RRP $22.99

Campari NZ



Colour-changing can for Scapegrace Black RTD

SCAPEGRACE DISTILLING Co. has put its most popular gin in a groundbreaking colour-changing can, with Scapegrace Black now available in a ready-to-drink G&T format.

Scapegrace Black went viral when it launched as the world's first naturally black gin in 2018, receiving huge domestic and international attention for its black hue, which changes to shades of pink, blue and purple depending on the mixers added.

Scapegrace says the expression has remained New Zealand's number-one-selling gin for eight years and is now available in the country's first-ever colour-changing can.

"Scapegrace Black has always done things nobody has seen before," says Scapegrace co-founder Mark Neal. "When we launched Scapegrace Black, the response was beyond anything we imagined, it sold out in a week and took on a life of its own. That same spirit is what's gone into this can."

He says the can has been created using UV-reactive ink and will subtly change colour when exposed to sunlight.

Scapegrace Black Gin & Tonic RTD (5% ABV) 330ml 10-pack RRP $29.99

Hancocks

Clean Collective heads to Paradise

NEW ZEALAND RTD brand Clean Collective has launched Paradise – a new sub-range of two holiday-inspired RTDs.

Piña Colada and Sunset Citrus are 5% ABV and made in keeping with Clean Collective's core recipe of no sugar, no carbs and natural ingredients. They are also gluten-free, vegan and keto-friendly.

Piña Colada is a blend of juicy pineapple and coconut, while Sunset Citrus is a bright and zesty citrus combination.

Clean Collective's Paradise range is available now and supported by a summer campaign spanning digital, social and outdoor.

250ml 12-pack RRP $33.99

Clean Collective



Tui and chill

TUI IS launching a limited-edition Bourbon & Cola with a DIY chilly bin for summer. Parent company DB says the 500ml RTD (5% ABV) gives a nod to the brand's heritage while catering to demand for spirit-based RTDs. The box has been designed to double as a DIY chilly bin, with a perforated rip line. Tui recommends consumers rip it, line it, and fill it with ice. Available from November for a limited time.

Tui Bourbon & Cola 500ml 12-pack RRP $49.99

DB





Pop the cork

From non-alcoholic options to great-value Prosecco, outstanding local méthode traditionnelle and iconic Champagnes – *Joelle Thomson* suggests some sensational bubbles for the festive season...



Zero-alcohol sparkling

Make sure you're catering to all your customers this festive season with tasty non-alcoholic bubbles too.

Edenvale Sparkling Cuvée

RRP $14.99

Hancocks

This is an impressive alcohol-removed sparkling wine with flavours that taste like "the real thing". Bright fruity aromas, a hint of sweetness balanced by bracing acidity and a long, fresh finish make this a must-try zero-alcohol sparkling wine.

Giesen 0% Sparkling Brut

RRP $18.99

Federal

Giesen was at the forefront of the alcohol-removed wine movement in New Zealand and its 0% sparkling wine remains a crowd favourite with flavours of ripe citrus and hints of white peach in a light-bodied, refreshing and dry bubbly.

Brown Brothers Prosecco Zero

RRP $20

Taylor Brown

A light and lively zero-alcohol Prosecco made from grapes grown in an elevated vineyard in the King Valley in Australia's north-east Victoria. It's fresh and vibrant with aromas of pear, green apple and citrus leading to a fruit-forward palate.

Lindauer Zero

RRP $22.99

Lion

There's a new name for Lindauer's alcohol-free wine: Lindauer Zero replaces Lindauer Free, but it's the same bright and lively offering with fresh aromas of citrus and ripe apples leading into a finely honed alcohol-removed sparkling wine made from Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes.

Lyre's Classico Sparkling

RRP $23.99

Tickety-Boo

While Lyre's award-winning family of non-alcoholic products focuses mainly on 0% spirits, Lyre's Classico Sparkling shows a deft touch when it comes to zero-alcohol wine as well. This sparkling has a light body and fruit-forward flavours of red berry, apple and ripe rockmelon. Fresh, crisp acidity adds zesty appeal to every sip.

RRP $15 – $29.99

Brown Brothers Sparkling Moscato

RRP $16.99

Taylor Brown

Moscato had a surge of global popularity in the early 2010s, and Brown Brothers has done a superb job ever since of marketing this lightly sparkling wine with its distinctive lifted floral and fruity notes: rose, fresh fruit sherbet, raspberries and strawberries all make an appearance in each glass of this low-ish alcohol wine. Well suited to lunchtime or early afternoon sipping in the sun.

Brown Brothers King Valley Prosecco

RRP $18.99

Taylor Brown

Family-owned Brown Brothers was among the pioneers of Australia's Prosecco success story and today it makes one of the best-selling Proseccos available in New Zealand. Grown in Victoria's cool-climate King Valley, the grapes in this wine retain vibrant freshness and lively fruit characters. It's a light-bodied bubbly with fresh flavours of summer in the glass: lemon, green apple and a hint of jasmine.

Dibon Cava Brut Selección NV

RRP $22.95

Vintners

Spain's version of bottle-fermented sparkling wine is typically made with a trio of indigenous Spanish grape varieties: Xarel-lo, Macabeo and Parellada. Each of these brings a distinct character to the wine, from rounded softness (Macabeo) to the crisp, zingy freshness that makes sparkling wine so tasty (Parellada), and an earthy note from Xarel-lo. Dibon is dry in style with lovely elements of complexity. Easily one of the best quality and value sparkling wines available in New Zealand.

Veuve Ambal Méthode Traditionnelle Blanc de Blancs Brut NV

RRP $22.95

Vintners

Founded in Burgundy in 1898, Veuve Ambal models its sparkling wines on the great bubblies from the nearby Champagne region. This Blanc de Blancs Brut is all about Chardonnay and is a dry style with aromas of white flowers and citrus, fine bubbles and a crisp finish. It delivers elegance at a great price.



The Ned Elio is the first sparkling wine under Marisco Vineyards' much-loved label The Ned and is inspired by Prosecco's fruity style.

Bento Prosecco
RRP $22.99
Stone Pony

Made with grapes grown on South Australia's Limestone Coast, this light-bodied, fresh Prosecco combines vibrant citrus and crisp apple aromas with refreshing natural acidity. Inspired by the clean, fresh flavours of Japanese food, its dry, lively fruit characters complement the diverse flavours and textures of sashimi, sushi and tempura.

Lindauer Prosecco D.O.C.
RRP $22.99
Lion

Made in north-east Italy from the Glera grape variety, Lindauer Prosecco D.O.C. combines New Zealand sparkling wine expertise with traditional Italian winemaking through Italy's renowned Famiglia Zonin. This bubbly offers delicate apple and ripe pear aromas in a light-bodied wine with refreshing acidity.

Lindauer Special Reserve Brut Cuvée
RRP $22.99
Lion

Lindauer is New Zealand's most famous sparkling wine and has a long history of over-delivering great flavour at a modest price. This full-bodied wine is made from Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes grown in Gisborne and Hawke's Bay. It's made using the traditional bottle-fermented method and aged on lees for 24 months, which builds creamy and complex toasty aromas into the wine's vibrant framework. A great value option for the festive season (and year-round).

Sari Blanc de Noirs
RRP $22.99
Stone Pony

This bright new addition to New Zealand's sparkling wine shelves is made entirely from red grapes (hence the name 'blanc de noirs' which translates as 'white from black') and with Indian food in mind. Its zesty citrus notes and dry style make it a great match with those flavours.

Mission Fête Brut Cuvée
RRP $23
Mission Estate

Mission Estate's Fête Brut Cuvée showcases Hawke's Bay's ability to produce great sparkling wine. This wine is dry and benefits from partial fermentation in French oak with ageing for more than a year before undergoing its secondary fermentation in tanks. The result is a lively bubbly with body, bright acidity and creamy complexity.

Mission Fête Brut Rosé
RRP $23
Mission Estate

This is a new addition to the Mission Estate offering, just in time for the festive season. Mission Fête Brut Rosé is a pale pink bubbly bursting with crisp acidity. It has aromas of apple blossom and raspberry while ripe notes of nectarine bring depth of flavour.

Matahiwi Estate Blanc de Blanc NV
RRP $24.99
Matahiwi

Hawke's Bay Chardonnay grapes bring complex layers of creamy flavour with ripe lemon and a vibrant, long finish to this wine.

The Ned Elio
RRP $24.99
Lion

This is the first sparkling wine under Marisco Vineyards' much-loved label The Ned and is inspired by Prosecco's fruity style while keeping a distinctly Marlborough personality. Ageing on lees following a cool fermentation in stainless steel preserves fresh fruit purity and brings light creamy notes to balance the vibrant citrus acidity. A great-value, food-friendly light bubbly for Kiwi celebrations this summer.

Matahiwi Estate Brut Rosé NV
RRP $29.99
Matahiwi

Pinot Noir shows its sparkling side in this bold and vibrant Rosé made entirely from grapes grown in the cool-climate Wairarapa region. This wine reflects the region's long sunshine hours, free-draining soils and reputation for expressive Pinots with aromas of raspberry, strawberry and a lush stone fruit note. A fresh, summery sparkling wine.



RRP $30 – $49.99

2017 Tohu Rewa Blanc de Blancs

RRP $37.99

Kono

Taking its cue from the best vintage Champagnes, this wine is aged on lees for an extended period of six years, developing complex creamy aromas, retaining fine vibrant bubbles and capturing rich depth of flavour. Aromas of green apple, toasted hazelnut and honey are held in a dry, creamy and beautifully structured bubbly made from Chardonnay grown in Marlborough's Rapaura area.

2018 Tohu Rewa Rosé

RRP $37.99

Kono

This full-bodied sparkling Rosé is made from Pinot Noir grown in Marlborough's cool Awatere Valley, with freshness in every sip. Extended lees ageing of six years brings complex aromas of toasty sourdough and rich hazelnut flavours to balance the fresh red berry notes. Superb value for money.

2020 Diamond Heart Waihopai Cuvée

RRP $39.99

Lion

This Pinot Noir–Chardonnay blend is a commanding wine with layered complexity, showing why it won the International Wine Challenge's 2026 New Zealand Sparkling Wine Trophy with 95/100. It also won a silver medal and 93/100 at this year's *Decanter* World Wine Awards, putting Marlborough's Waihopai Valley firmly on the high-quality sparkling wine map. Extended lees ageing brings a creamy texture and layers of toasted flavours to balance the lively acidity and long, elegant finish.

Jules Taylor Blanc de Blancs

RRP $39.99

Hancocks

This is the first sparkling wine from Jules Taylor: a superb Blanc de Blancs made entirely from Marlborough-grown Chardonnay. Inside the exceptional packaging is a wine that is rich, creamy and deep with citrus purity and complex layers of flavour in a dry style. This is an outstanding newcomer to the sparkling wine shelves in Aotearoa.

Villa Maria Reserve Méthode Traditionnelle NV

RRP $39.99

EuroVintage

This polished New Zealand sparkling wine is made using the same methods as classic Champagne. Hand-picked grapes (85% Chardonnay and 15% Pinot Noir) were gently pressed to capture only the purest free-run juice before cool fermentation in stainless steel, which preserves freshness and varietal purity. Creamy textures and aromas from a nicely integrated portion of malolactic fermentation bring breadth to the palate, while the inclusion of reserve wines adds depth. A complex, characterful, dry bubbly. Great value for money.

Nautilus Marlborough Cuvée Brut NV

RRP $45

Negociants

Nautilus has carved a name for itself with its regular releases of freshly disgorged sparkling wines. This one has spent an impressive five years ageing on lees, making it even more complex while retaining incredible freshness. Aromas of fresh sourdough intermingle with vibrant citrus in a wine that is modelled on Bollinger and, like that excellent Champagne, driven by elegance, vibrancy and outstanding depth.

No 1 Rosé Marlborough Méthode Traditionnelle NV

RRP $49

No.1 Family Estate

This exceptional méthode traditionnelle Rosé has great richness of flavour underpinned by a creamy nuance and silky texture. A full-bodied, dry bubbly with elegant aromas of dried red berries, which express the Pinot Noir grapes used in its creation. A top wine that won gold and 95/100 at the 2026 *Decanter* World Wine Awards.

RRP $50 – $79.99

2022 Spy Valley Echelon Méthode Traditionnelle

RRP $50

Red + White Cellar

Spy Valley Echelon is a traditional-method sparkling wine made from Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grown in Marlborough's Waihopai Valley, where the grapes benefit from the cool nights and long ripening season. Fine bubbles frame aromas of crisp citrus, pear and white peach, alongside beautifully integrated brioche and pastry flavour notes. Fresh, elegant and balanced, it combines creamy texture with vibrant acidity and a long finish.

2023 Spy Valley Echelon Rosé Méthode Traditionnelle

RRP $50

Red + White Cellar

Spy Valley's Echelon Rosé is an elegant wine with fresh pastry aromas and vibrant citrus notes. It balances richness with acidity, delivering depth, finesse and impressive value.

2018 Juvé & Camps Gran Reserva Cava

RRP $53.99

EuroVintage

One of Spain's leading sparkling wine producers, Juvé & Camps makes this certified organic Gran Reserva from the traditional Spanish trio of sparkling wine grapes, namely Xarel-lo, Macabeo and Parellada. The Mediterranean warmth shines through in this full-bodied, top-quality Cava, which was aged for more than three years on lees and boasts complex aromas of toasted almond and fresh pastry, balanced by citrus notes.

H. Lanvin & Fils Champagne

RRP $64.99

EuroVintage

Produced by the family-owned H. Lanvin & Fils house in Épernay, this consistently impressive Champagne is a blend of 40% Pinot Meunier, 40% Pinot Noir and 20% Chardonnay. Aged in bottle before release and disgorged in mid-2025, it has a moderate 9g/L dosage, which strikes an appealing balance of freshness and generous richness in a finely textured, elegant wine. H. Lanvin & Fils Champagne delivers character at a remarkably accessible price.

No.1 Reine Cuvée Reserve Marlborough Méthode Traditionnelle NV

RRP $67

No.1 Family Estate

Sparkling wine specialist Daniel Le Brun and family produce this great Marlborough méthode traditionnelle, which is named in honour of his mother, Reine Vautrelle Le Brun. A blend of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier, it spends more than four years on lees and is bottled with a low dosage of 2.8g/L, which gives this wine its elegant dry style. Rich aromas of brioche, buttered toast and white peach flow into a seamless palate.

RRP $80 and above

2019 Quartz Reef Méthode Traditionnelle Vintage Blanc de Blancs

RRP $85

Vintners

One of New Zealand's finest sparkling wines, this biodynamic Central Otago Blanc de Blancs is aged for five years on lees and is a showcase of the precision and purity of cool-climate sparkling winemaking. Freshly baked pastry aromas are captured harmoniously in a wine of delicate but creamy complexity that culminates in a long, focused finish.

H. Lanvin & Fils Champagne delivers character at a remarkably accessible price.

Piper-Heidsieck Cuvée Brut NV

RRP $89.99

Hancocks

Founded in 1785, Piper-Heidsieck is one of Champagne's best-known producers and this Cuvée Brut remains a benchmark for non-vintage Champagne. It's a blend of the region's three signature grapes (Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay) and offers vibrant white peach and citrus freshness with fine bubbles, a light note of creamy texture and lively acidity.

2021 Quartz Reef Méthode Traditionnelle Vintage Rosé

RRP $110

Vintners

This is the second Quartz Reef vintage Rosé and it's a beautiful wine that highlights Pinot Noir with bubbles. Balanced acidity and richness show the many facets of Pinot Noir, in this case made with grapes from the winery's Bendigo estate. Three years on lees brings savoury depth and a light touch of fresh bakery aroma to this taut, dry and finely structured wine. It's an elegant, quietly powerful Rosé that shows Quartz Reef winemaker Rudi Bauer's focus and precise winemaking.

Pol Roger Brut Réserve

RRP $120

Hancocks

Pol Roger's Brut Réserve opens with powerful dry citrus, pear, white floral aromas, and a full body. The palate is taut, creamy and impeccably balanced, showing Épernay's elegance and delicacy.

2013 No.1 Cuvée Rémy Marlborough Méthode Traditionnelle

RRP $129

No.1 Family Estate

Named for Rémy Le Brun, son of No.1 Family Estate founders Daniel and Adele Le Brun, this bubbly is a collector's release made only in exceptional vintages and first created to celebrate Rémy's 21st birthday. Made from a blend of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier, this 2013 vintage spent over four years on lees followed by extended bottle maturation, building complexity and layers of freshly baked sourdough, roasted hazelnut, citrus peel and ripe stone fruit. This is a top wine from a great family-owned winery.

Ⓓ For distributor details see the Distributor Index on page 66.



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Rosé season

Crisp Rosé on a summer's day is always a popular choice for customers – *Joelle Thomson* recommends a range of delicious options...



2024 B&G Reserve Rosé
RRP $17.99
EuroVintage

This cheeky little French Rosé from the Languedoc offers exceptional value at under $20 and delivers a dry taste and juicy mid-palate fruit character, thanks to a blend of 80% Grenache (offering succulence) and 20% Syrah (offering depth and structure). The label's Art Nouveau theme adds to the shelf appeal.



2026 Tohu Nelson Pinot Rosé
RRP $18.99
Kono

This wine is a bright, medium-pink expression of Nelson's natural affinity with Pinot Noir. It opens with a luscious spectrum of red berry aromatics: strawberry, raspberry and a hint of watermelon. The palate is medium-dry with lifted red fruit flavours, carrying to a long, mouthwatering finish. At $18.99, it's a vibrant Rosé with charm, offering shoppers great value for money.



2026 ME by Matahiwi Estate Pinot Rosé
RRP $19.99
Matahiwi

Pretty pink in colour and positively overflowing with lively aromas of strawberries and raspberries, this Rosé comes from Matahiwi Estate in the northern Wairarapa. Cool mornings and sunny, warm days bring ripe fruity appeal and softness, as well as a fresh citrus twist.



2025 Rosabel Rosé
RRP $19.99
EuroVintage

If anyone can do beautiful packaging for Mediterranean Rosé, it's the French, and here is a fabulous example at an outrageously affordable price. Rosabel is a dry wine revealing the beauty of classic southern French blends of Grenache (juicy and fresh) and Syrah (adding structure). Aromas of red berries lead into delicious fresh flavours in this clean, fruit-forward wine. Serve as a light lunchtime, afternoon or pre-dinner glass, year-round.

2025 Rosabel Rosé is a dry wine revealing the beauty of classic southern French blends of Grenache and Syrah.



2025 Kōparepare Marlborough Pinot Rosé
RRP $21
Whitehaven

Every bottle of this wine sold is a win for the environment, as a portion of the proceeds goes towards the non-profit LegaSea to help restore New Zealand's marine life. The wine is also a win for Rosé fans with melon, strawberry and floral aromas combining in a package that overdelivers on flavour.



2026 The Ned Rosé
RRP $21
Lion

The Ned Rosé has a soft pink hue and tastes like summer in the glass – it opens with lifted aromas of red berries, watermelon and bright citrus notes leading into a dry wine with a light body and charm. Lively, fresh and great value for money from the Marris family, one of Marlborough's most experienced winemaking families.



2025 La Vieille Ferme Rosé
RRP $21.99
Vintners

This is a classic southern French Rosé named in homage to its older sibling, La Vieille Ferme ("the old farm") Rouge, which is one of the most reliably good-value French reds on the market. This juicy, dry, light-bodied blend of Grenache with Syrah offers fresh red berry aromas, spice and structure.



2025 Main Divide Rosé
RRP $21.99
EuroVintage

Main Divide Rosé is dry, vibrant and full of juicy berry flavours with a refreshing snap of acidity, giving the wine its sense of energy and generosity. Aromas of bright red berries, pomegranate and citrus keep this light-bodied wine fresh and interesting.



2025 Bento Rosé
RRP $22.99
Stone Pony

As the name suggests, this wine is made with Japanese food in mind. The Bento Rosé is fresh and light-bodied, crafted to match the cuisine's zesty flavours. Dry with bright acidity and gentle fruit aromas, this wine echoes the clarity and finesse of sashimi, tempura and other lightly seasoned dishes with its citrus taste and vibrant character.



2024 Costières de Nîmes Rosé
RRP $24.99
Stone Pony

Rosés from the Costières de Nîmes region in France's southern Rhône Valley are typically blends of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre, producing subtle savoury notes alongside bright red fruit flavours, which are all present and accounted for in this light-bodied wine. Redcurrant, pomegranate and raspberry all bring a crispness and crunch.

Rosé is the newest addition to the beautifully packaged Maretti range.



2026 Čuvar Iris Rosé
RRP $24.99
Mineral

A lively dry Rosé for Syrah devotees, this Hawke's Bay wine is made with grapes from the Cornerstone Vineyard in the Gimblett Gravels district. A portion of the wine (18%) was fermented in French oak barriques to bring texture and a softening influence to this fresh new release with its dried red fruit flavours and zingy finish.



2025 Whitehaven Marlborough Pinot Noir Rosé
RRP $25
Whitehaven

This expression from Whitehaven is one of Marlborough's best Rosés. Opening with aromas of dried strawberries, the wine has dry, delicate flavours with a gentle cranberry note carrying through to purity of fresh fruit and a light to medium body. It's made with lightly pressed Pinot Noir grown on two estate-owned vineyards in Marlborough. Minimal skin contact creates the pale pink hue and a suggestion of dryness in every sip.



2025 Maretti Italia Rosé
RRP $25.99
Stone Pony

Rosé is the newest addition to the beautifully packaged Maretti range, offering aromas of wild berries and a whisper of dried strawberries and rockmelon. Trust the Italians to come up with such a ripe, red berry-tasting Rosé that's dry and smooth and offers great value for money.



2026 The Jules Rosé
RRP $27.99
Hancocks

Winemaker Jules Taylor's The Jules Rosé is a smooth, dry, medium-bodied wine with bright and delicately perfumed red fruit aromas of berries and fleshy ripe plums, along with a subtle suggestion of spice. This Merlot-based Rosé drinks well now with its zesty citrus notes and firm structure adding depth to each lingering sip.



2025 Matahiwi Estate Pinot Rosé
RRP $29.99
Matahiwi

Matahiwi Rosé is a bright mid-pink colour with full, fleshy flavours of strawberry, raspberry and watermelon leading into a lively wine with a creamy softness that makes it feel both refreshing and moreish. Sourced from the stony, cool Matahiwi Home Vineyard, the fruit was harvested in stages for layered freshness, gently pressed after brief skin contact and cool-fermented to lock in purity.



2025 Novum Rosé Marlborough
RRP $32
Mineral

Novum Rosé is a dry-farmed expression of Pinot Noir, given minimal skin contact for a touch of colour. Grown on 30-year-old vines, the fruit is hand-picked and a portion is saignée ("bled" off) from Pinot Noir tanks to build intensity. Winemaker William Hoare ferments the juice cool to preserve the vivid berry aromatics. The result is a crisp, dry Rosé layered with strawberry and redcurrant freshness and a clean, succulent and mouthwatering taste.

SOHO's Westwood Rosé puts Waiheke Island's freshest foot forward in this newly released 2026 wine.



2026 SOHO Westwood Rosé
RRP $32
SOHO

Westwood Rosé puts Waiheke Island's freshest foot forward in this newly released 2026 wine. Light in colour and dry, this is a flavoursome blend of Syrah and Merlot with dried red fruit aromas, flavours of fresh watermelon and a twist of citrus on the finish. The grapes in Westwood Rosé were grown on SOHO's Onetangi Vineyard. This is a polished, summery Rosé with clean lines, vibrant aromas and a long finish.



2024 Misha's The Soloist Pinot Rosé
RRP $33
Negociants

The Soloist Pinot Rosé is crafted from Pinot Noir grown on Misha's meticulously managed, elevated vineyards overlooking Lake Dunstan. The Soloist puts forward dry flavours and bold aromas of wild strawberry, dried cranberry and juicy plum. This is a memorable southern Rosé that glides across the palate with succulent acidity delivering lingering flavours.



2024 Valli 'The Real McCoy' Pinot Gris Orange
RRP $45
Valli Wine

The Real McCoy rocks a Rosé-like vibe but is actually made from skin-fermented Pinot Gris grapes that are fermented to dryness and deliver layers of plush fruit. Nearly a month on skins followed by ageing in seasoned oak brings a softness and smooth texture to this wine, with its aromas of apricot, ripe mandarin and orange zest supported by savoury notes on the finish. This wine drinks beautifully now as a lively daytime or aperitif style and is ideal served with a great cheese platter.



2024 By.Ott Rosé
RRP $48.99
EuroVintage

This pale pink Rosé from Domaine Ott is a classic Provençal blend led by Grenache, with Cinsault, Syrah and Mourvèdre bringing lifted berry fruit aromatics and structure. It is dry, but it's the bold raspberry, candied strawberry and stone fruit that carry the flavours. Its silky texture adds a luxe mouthfeel and the flavours linger long after the last sip.



2024 Château Cavalier 'Cuvée Marafiance' Côtes de Provence Rosé
RRP $49
Wine Diamonds

Winner of Best in Show for Rosé at the 2025 *Decanter* World Wine Awards, Marafiance Rosé is made with grapes grown in the foothills of the Massif des Maures in Provence. This sunny corner of southern France brings ripe berry aromas and fleshy fruit-forward flavours, which balance the wine's taut structural freshness and bright citrus notes. Made with fresh seafood and summery flavours in mind, this wine is a dry, complex blend of Grenache, Syrah and Cinsault, among others.

For distributor details see the Distributor Index on page 66.



TOHU

Manaaki Pinot Rosé,

NELSON, NEW ZEALAND.

Sam Kim Wine Orbit Review
2026 — 5 Stars/ 94 points

Cameron Douglas MS
2026 — Premium / 91 points

JoelleThomson

This wine is a bright, medium-pink expression of Nelson's natural affinity with Pinot Noir. It opens with a luscious spectrum of red berry aromatics: strawberry, raspberry and a hint of watermelon. The palate is medium-dry with lifted red fruit flavours, carrying to a long, mouthwatering finish. At $18.99, it's a vibrant Rosé with charm, offering shoppers great value for money.

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Joelle Thomson
Journalist, wine writer and author
joellethomson.com

To age or not to age?

Will the presence of MICHELIN rankings in New Zealand set a new tone for wine in our restaurants? *Joelle Thomson* has some thoughts...

HOW MANY restaurants across the motu have a wine cellar from which to offer their customers outstanding older bottles? And will the inaugural *MICHELIN Guide New Zealand 2026* awards spur restaurant owners on to invest more courageously in great wines for future drinking? If so, it's an opportune moment to do so.

This year marks the release of wines from 2024, which is shaping up to be one of the best vintages in this country. And whether a restaurant was awarded a MICHELIN Star or not, the global awards have been helpful for business in the food and wine trade.

As Steve Logan of Logan Brown in Wellington (awarded one MICHELIN Star this year) says, the win brings confidence to the restaurant trade by increasing consumer interest, which has a trickle-down impact on the range of food and wine able to be offered.

Case in point: the 2024 Ata Rangi Pinot Noirs released by winemaker Helen Masters, who celebrates 20 years of winemaking with these wines.

The Ata Rangi Pinot Noirs include three single vineyard wines from the McCrone Vineyard, Kotinga Vineyard and Masters Vineyard as well as the winery's flagship Ata Rangi Pinot Noir (a blend of vineyards). These wines are listed by the glass in Auckland at Onslow and The French Café, while Gilt Brasserie was pouring the 2024 Ata Rangi Kotinga from magnum on Fridays.

This is the third year all four Pinot Noirs have been made and Masters says she has been waiting to get these wines in the right spot to release them. "We like them to be in bottle for a year before release and these were bottled in September 2025," she explains.

So it's early days. But since the Ata Rangi team bravely chose not to make any Ata Rangi Pinot Noir from the challenging 2023 vintage, new Ata Rangi Pinot Noirs are a welcome release.

In an era where immediacy is often valued more than patience, these wines remind us why cellaring is one of the most rewarding rituals that great wines offer us.

In an era where immediacy is often valued more than patience, these wines remind us why cellaring is one of the most rewarding rituals that great wines offer us. Masters has long believed that Pinot Noir reveals its best slowly and gradually and her decision to hold wines in bottle prior to release is part of that philosophy.
The 2024 growing season in Martinborough produced smaller bunches of grapes, which bring concentration and a beautiful architectural framework to these new Pinot Noirs. They drink well now but these wines are built for cellaring and will reward anyone doing so.
In the same vein, the recently announced 2024 Gimblett Gravels Annual Vintage Selection is a list of wines that remind us of the virtues of patient ageing.

This is the 17th year of this annual selection and the wines I've tasted from it so far bode well for the long haul. Time to make room in the cellar – check out two from this year's Selection below.

Try these

2024 Trinity Hill The Gimblett
RRP $45
Hancocks

An exceptional red blend at the best of times and even more impressive in this outstanding year; 2024 follows on from two challenging vintages by expressing the concentration and balance with great wine. This is a fine drop now, modelled on the best of Bordeaux. It has poise, structure and complexity and will be even more superb in a decade.

2024 Villa Maria Cellar Selection Syrah
RRP $24.99
EuroVintage

Great value for money and with plenty of depth. Spicy, ripe layers of dried plum with excellent structural framework thanks to nicely balanced tannins. Superb now and can age for five to six years, potentially longer.

NZ's top somms

THE COUNTRY'S best wine professionals have been recognised in the Top 100 Sommeliers New Zealand 2026.

It is the second list for New Zealand and is overseen by drinks industry platform Sommelier Edit, with judging led by Master Sommelier Cameron Douglas.

Matthew Aitchison, GM of The French Café and Cassia in Auckland, topped the 2026 list. His award comes just a couple of months after he received the Sommelier Award in the *MICHELIN Guide New Zealand 2026*.

The 2026 Legend Award was presented to Scott Wilson for a long-standing contribution to wine service and hospitality, while Stephen Wong MW was presented with the 2026 Inspiration Award in recognition of his passion, commitment and advocacy for the sommelier community.

Top 5 in the Top 100 Sommeliers NZ 2026

Matthew Aitchison – General Manager, The French Café and Cassia (Auckland)

Andrea Martinisi – Beverage Director, Normanby (Akld)

Aleksandr Shchepetkin – Director, Ground Wine Bar (Akld)

Liz Buttimore – Owner Operator, Arbour (Blenheim)

Tim Ogle – Director/Owner, Cellar Door (Christchurch)

Ⓦ See the full list at sommelieredit.com



NZ first for Spicy Jalapeño Sauvignon

INVIVO X, SJP has launched New Zealand's first Sauvignon Blanc naturally infused with jalapeño.

Invivo says the new release was inspired by the social media craze of dropping fresh jalapeño slices into a glass of wine and turns the global trend into a ready-to-pour format.

Rob Cameron, Invivo co-founder and winemaker, says they worked closely with brand partner Sarah Jessica Parker to translate the "hack" into a balanced, premium wine expression. "The idea was to build on the familiar flavour cues in Sauvignon Blanc and introduce a gentle, complementary heat on the palate. Jalapeño was a natural fit, thanks to its fresh, green notes."

Invivo X, SJP Spicy Jalapeño Sauvignon Blanc is RRP $19.99.

Ⓓ EuroVintage

AMW announces 2026 Sauvignon Blancs

APPELLATION MARLBOROUGH Wine (AMW) has announced its Annual Collection for 2026. First launched in 2022, the initiative celebrates a benchmark selection of certified Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc that showcases the diversity, quality and authenticity that define its region.

This year's judging panel included New Zealand's Liz Wheadon, Matthew Aitchison and Benji Smith, joined by Hong Kong-based Master of Wine Jennifer Docherty.

The group blind-tasted 107 AMW-certified Sauvignon Blancs to arrive at the final 12 wines in this year's collection.

2026 AMW Collection

- Astrolabe Awatere Valley Sauvignon Blanc 2026 | Awatere Valley
- Bladen Five Barrels Sauvignon Blanc 2024 | Central Wairau
- Catalina Sounds Sauvignon Blanc 2026 | Wairau Valley
- Catalina Sounds Sound of White Classic Sauvignon Blanc 2025 | Southern Valleys
- Cloudy Bay Te Koko 2024 | Wairau Valley
- Duck Hunter Sauvignon Blanc 2026 | Marlborough
- Eva Pemper Wines Sauvignon Blanc 2026 | Lower Wairau
- Rapaura Springs Bull Paddock Single Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc 2026 | Lower Wairau
- Rimapere Sauvignon Blanc 2026 | Central Wairau
- The Loop Sauvignon Blanc 2026 | Coastal Awatere & Blind River
- Two Rivers Convergence Sauvignon Blanc 2026 | Marlborough
- Walnut Block Collectables Sauvignon Blanc 2026 | Central Wairau

Ⓦ appellationmarlboroughwine.co.nz



Radburnd Cellars buys historic Hawke's Bay winery

HAWKE'S BAY winery Radburnd Cellars has a new permanent home after buying the historic Stonecroft Winery on the Gimblett Gravels from Fistonich Family Vineyards.

The purchase marks the fourth site from which the winery has operated since its inception in 2017, including the loss of Radburnd Cellars' original winery during Cyclone Gabrielle.



Winemakers and directors, Kate Radburnd and daughter Penelope Radburnd.

Radburnd Cellars Winemaker and Managing Director, Kate Radburnd, says the purchase holds particular significance for her and her family as she has spent nearly 45 years making wine in Hawke's Bay, much of that time working with fruit grown on the Gimblett Gravels.

The sale relates to the Mere Road Winery and Vineyard property and does not include the Stonecroft wine brand, which remains owned by Fistonich Family Vineyards and continues to be made by the Fistonich family in Hawke's Bay.

Radburnd Cellars opened the doors to its new home over Labour Weekend.

NZ joins global Coravin wine guide



WINE-BY-THE-GLASS TECH pioneer Coravin has launched its digital guide in New Zealand to showcase restaurants, bars and hospitality venues with extensive by-the-glass lists.

New Zealand is the latest addition to The Coravin Guide, which features more than 600 venues worldwide, across cities including London, New York, Sydney and Amsterdam.

The free guide, which is also open to venues not using the Coravin system, is designed to help consumers discover new wines, regions and styles by promoting wine-by-the-glass culture.

Coravin says its international research points to growing demand for wine by the glass, with more than half of 1,000 independently surveyed wine drinkers from the UK and Australia saying they were ordering more wine by the glass than two years earlier.

guide.coravin.com



On the Down Low

THERE'S A new local addition to the lower-in-alcohol scene with the launch of Down Low – a 3.8% ABV wine from Peter Lorimer and Clive Dougall of Deep Down Wines in Marlborough.

The pair experimented with the 'piquette' method – an ancient French technique that reuses pomace (grape skins) to naturally create a low-alcohol version of wine – 70% lower in alcohol compared with standard wine. Down Low is currently available in Blanc, with a Rosé in development for 2027. Certified organic and B Corp certified. RRP $26.

Deep Down Wines

Trophies announced for NZIWS 2026

CHURCH ROAD, Spring Creek Vintners and EuroVintage were the big winners when the major awards for this year's New Zealand International Wine Show were announced in Auckland.

The gala event in mid-October revealed the Champion Wine for 2026, which went to Church Road Grand Reserve Chardonnay 2024.

Michael Bann of Spring Creek Vintners was named Champion Winemaker and EuroVintage was awarded Champion Wine Company of the Year, with both awards presented by *Drinksbiz* publisher Alefiah Tolani.

The 2026 award was EuroVintage's fifth Wine Company of the Year title and recognises the combined performance of wines entered from across EuroVintage's brand portfolio.

EuroVintage secured the title on the strength of four individual wine trophies, 12 Double Gold medals and 14 Gold medals.

Medal results had been announced in the lead-up to the awards event, with Pinot Noir described as the "stand out class" for 2026 after winning eight Double Gold medals and 28 Gold medals, followed by Sauvignon Blanc with seven Double Golds and 24 Golds.

NZIWS Trophy Winners 2026

Champion Pinot Gris: Rapaura Springs Reserve Pinot Gris 2026

Champion Sauvignon Blanc: Villa Maria Cellar Selection Sauvignon Blanc 2026

Champion Riesling: Lawson's Dry Hills Marlborough Riesling 2022

Champion Gewürztraminer: Whitehaven Marlborough Gewürztraminer 2025

Champion Chardonnay: Church Road Grand Reserve Chardonnay 2024

Champion Other White Wine Varieties: Sea Level Home Block Chenin Blanc 2024

Champion NZ Sparkling: Lindauer Special Reserve Rosé NV

Champion Champagne & Méthode Traditionnelle: Champagne Pol Roger Blanc de Blancs Vintage 2016

Champion Sweet Wine: Wairau River Reserve Botrytised Riesling 2026

Champion Commercial White Wine: Villa Maria Cellar Selection Sauvignon Blanc 2026

Champion Rosé: Mt Difficulty Roaring Meg Pinot Noir Rosé 2026

Champion Pinot Noir: Maude Single Vineyard Poison Creek Pinot Noir 2024

Champion Merlot & Predominant Blends: Squawking Magpie The Nest 2024

Champion Cabernet Sauvignon: Villa Maria Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot 2024

Champion Syrah & Predominant Blends: Mudbrick Oscar Syrah 2025

Champion Syrah: Mudbrick Oscar Syrah 2025

Champion Shiraz & Predominant Blends: Welland Valley & Valley Barossa Shiraz 2024

Champion International Red Wine Varieties: Barossa Valley Estate Grenache Shiraz Mourvèdre 2025

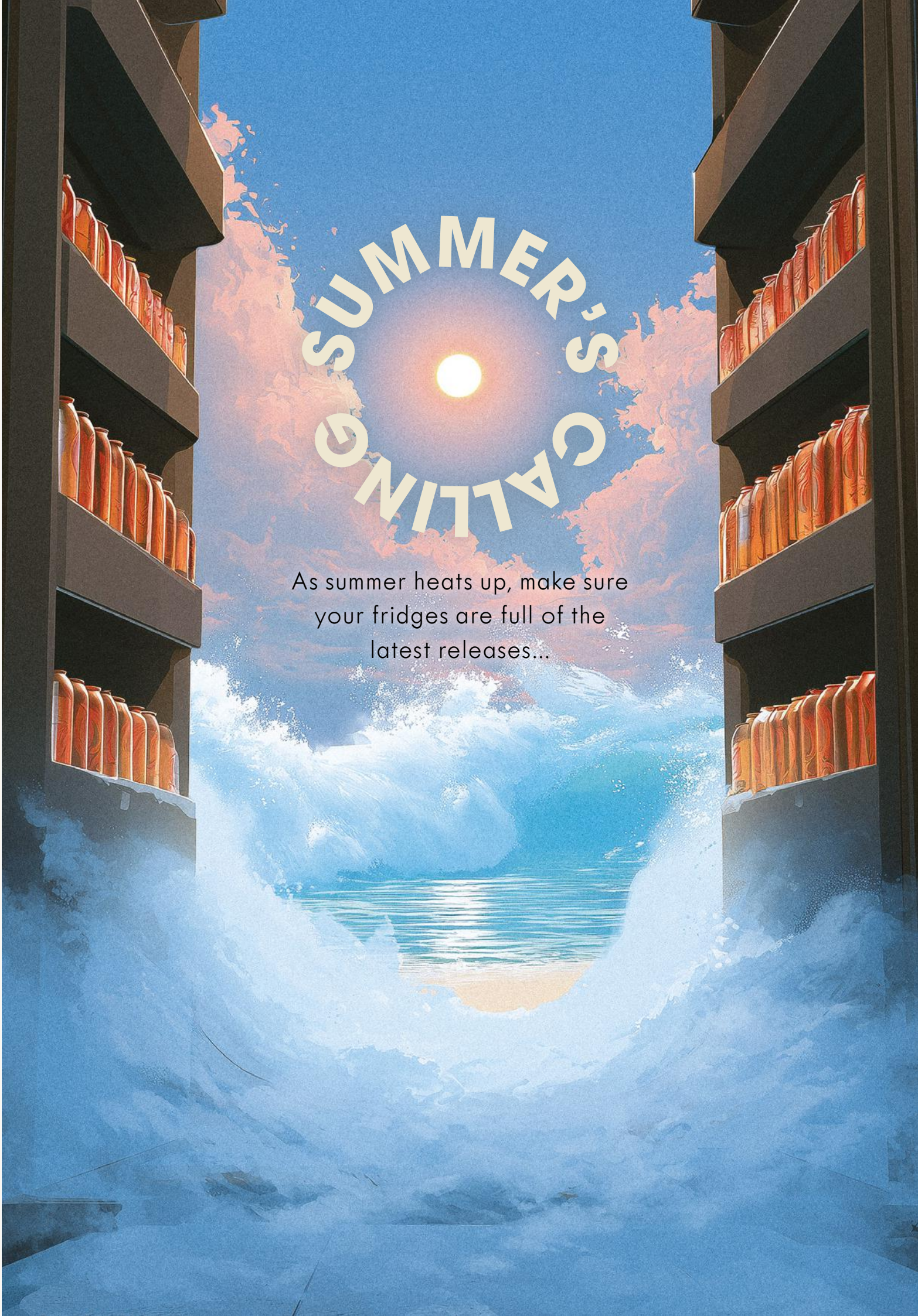
Champion New Zealand Bordeaux Red Wine: Squawking Magpie The Nest 2024

Champion Commercial Red Wine: Fox & The Grapes Shiraz Cabernet 2023

Champion Fortified Wine: Lustau Pedro Ximénez San Emilio Sherry NV

See the full results at nziws.co.nz


DECANTER'S BEST
SAUVIGNON BLANC
2026
Decanter
WORLD WINE AWARDS
97
POINTS
BEST IN SHOW
ROHE
BLIND RIVER
SAUVIGNON BLANC
MARLBOROUGH
ROHE means territory. Demonstrating the diversity of Marlborough through its unique and distinct sub-regional locations. Crafted by Michael Bann, the Winemaker of the show at the New Zealand International Wine Show.
BY RAPAURA SPRINGS


SUMMER'S CALLING
As summer heats up, make sure your fridges are full of the latest releases...



Note: Beers and ciders are listed by order of ABV

Monteith's Zero Pale Ale

<0.5% ABV – keg only

DB

A smooth zero-alcohol pale ale brewed using a cold contact fermentation process. Light cereal notes, restrained bitterness, medium body, subtle stone fruit (ripe apricot) and citrus hop notes.

Altitude Brewing Thirst Aid Grapefruit Radler

2.4% ABV, 440ml RRP $7.99 – also in keg

Altitude

A seriously refreshing summer release, this Radler leans heavily into juicy ruby grapefruit without becoming overly sweet. Bright citrus aromas lead into a light-bodied palate where the fruit and beer components sit comfortably together, finishing clean and thirst-quenching. The low alcohol makes it a great option for long afternoons outdoors.

Crimson Badger Pineapple Ginger Bear

4% ABV, 330ml 10-pack RRP $31.99

Federal

Queenstown craft brewers Crimson Badger have put a tropical twist on their classic Ginger Bear with this new Pineapple release. Expect a juicy pineapple hit alongside the ginger bite.

Garage Project Berg Lake Lite

4% ABV, 330ml RRP $4.50

Garage Project

Simple doesn't have to mean boring, and Berg Lake Lite proves the point. Crisp, clean and highly refreshing, Berg Lake Lite is a Canadian style lite lager that delivers exactly what a light lager should: subtle grain character, gentle bitterness and exceptional drinkability. Brewed with Canadian-grown barley and a touch of rice.

Two Bays Japanese Rice Lager

4.2% ABV, 375ml RRP $6.99

Garage Project

Rice lagers live and die on their ability to refresh, and this crisp, low-carb, gluten-free example succeeds admirably. The rice contributes a delicate body and ultra-dry finish, while restrained hopping allows the lager character to shine.

Medusa Air

4.5% ABV, 500ml RRP $6

Medusa

New to the New Zealand market, this beer from Indian beer brand Medusa is an easy-drinking, sessionable mild lager brewed with barley malt and rice for a light, crisp character, balanced with hops for a vibrant aroma.

Renaissance Horizon NZ Hazy

4.5% ABV, 330ml 6-pack RRP $19.99

Brandhouse

Soft and smooth on the palate, this approachable hazy pale ale delivers bright tropical fruit, white grape and stone fruit notes courtesy of Nelson Sauvin and Rakau hops. The modest alcohol level and juicy hop character keep things sessionable.

Steinlager Pure Gold

4.5% ABV, 330ml can 6-pack RRP $15.99 and 330ml bottle 12-pack RRP $30.99

Lion

Steinlager's easy-drinking new release for summer hits all the classic Steinlager notes and ups its local credentials with an added twist of native mānuka and kawakawa. Pure Gold pours golden in the glass and is refreshing, light-bodied, crisp and 99% carb-free.

Renaissance Obsidian Path Dark Lager

4.7% ABV, 440ml RRP $9.99

Brandhouse

Dark lagers can sometimes feel caught between two styles, but Obsidian Path strikes an appealing balance. Aromas of toasted malt, fresh coffee and dark chocolate lead into a remarkably smooth palate, with crusty bread notes adding depth before a crisp lager finish cleans everything up. Rich enough to satisfy darker beer fans yet light enough to remain highly drinkable, it's an excellent reminder of how versatile the style can be.

Steinlager Pure Gold hits all the classic Steinlager notes with an added twist of native mānuka and kawakawa.



Southern Alps Low Gluten Lager

4.8% ABV, 330ml 12-pack RRP $27–$30

Moa Brewing

At first glance, this drinks like a classic premium lager with a clean malt profile, gentle bitterness and a crisp, refreshing finish. The impressive part is what isn't there: gluten levels have been reduced to below 10ppm without compromising flavour. Brewed with New Zealand malt and the world's southernmost hops, it's an accessible option for drinkers looking to limit gluten without giving up the lager experience. Awarded Bronze at the World Beer Awards 2026.

Altitude Persistent High Hefeweizen

4.9% ABV, 440ml RRP $9.99 – also in keg

Altitude

This is a returning favourite from Queenstown brewers Altitude, and it pours with the classic cloudy appearance while aromas of banana bread, spice and fresh wheat rise from the glass. The palate is soft and creamy, with enough restraint to remain highly drinkable. A natural partner for grilled sausages, pretzels or any sunny afternoon.

8-Wired Blossom

5% ABV, 440ml RRP $8.99

8-Wired

Aromatic without becoming perfumed, Blossom is a blonde ale that layers delicate floral notes over a light malt base, with honey adding a subtle sweetness. Jasmine and rose show through gently on the palate before a squeeze of lemon-like brightness lifts the finish. An elegant and distinctive summer release.

8-Wired Life's A Peach

5% ABV, 440ml RRP $8.99

8-Wired

Fruit beers can sometimes overplay their hand, but Life's A Peach keeps things nicely balanced. Gentle, juicy peach notes complement rather than overwhelm the crisp lager base, resulting in a refreshing, easy-drinking beer that feels tailor-made for warm weather.

Duncan's Coconut & Pineapple Smoothie Sour

5% ABV, 440ml RRP $12

Duncan's

Pouring with plenty of body and fruit intensity, this tropical Smoothie Sour delivers exactly what the name promises. Pineapple provides a bright acidic lift while coconut cream contributes a rich, velvety texture. Decadent yet refreshing, it's a convincing beer-world take on a piña colada.

Duncan's Feijoa Crumble Ice Cream Sour

5% ABV, 330ml RRP $6

Duncan's

Unmistakably Kiwi, this release captures the distinctive character of fresh feijoas remarkably well. Vanilla and cinnamon add a comforting dessert-like quality, while the underlying sourness stops things becoming overly rich. A must-try for feijoa fans.

Duncan's Lemon Meringue Ice Cream Sour

5% ABV, 330ml RRP $6

Duncan's

The aroma alone instantly evokes the dessert that inspired it. Sharp lemon curd flavours provide the initial burst before softer vanilla and biscuit notes emerge underneath. Importantly, the sweetness never becomes cloying, with a bright line of acidity carrying the finish.

Duncan's Plum Waffle Pastry Sour

5% ABV, 330ml RRP $6

Duncan's

Rich plum character drives the experience here, supported by vanilla and maple syrup, which bring unmistakable waffle-inspired flavours. It sits at the indulgent end of the sour spectrum, yet enough acidity remains to keep everything balanced and surprisingly refreshing.

Duncan's Raspberry Ripple Ice Cream Sour

5% ABV, 330ml RRP $6

Duncan's

Raspberry and vanilla is a classic pairing for good reason. Bright berry notes cut through the creamy sweetness, creating a beer that is playful and dessert-like without becoming heavy. It's easy to see why this remains one of the brewery's signature Ice Cream Sour releases.

Awarded World's Best International Lager at the World Beer Awards 2026, Bavik Super Pils is bound to be a hit with Kiwi beer fans too.

Bavik Super Pils
5.2% ABV, 330ml RRP $6.99
Q Liquid

Awarded World's Best International Lager at the World Beer Awards 2026, this Belgian Pilsner is bound to be a hit with Kiwi beer fans too. Bright citrus and light tropical fruit sit alongside a firm, old-school bitterness that feels increasingly rare in modern lager. Crisp, and refreshing, this brew is likely to find fans well beyond the lager faithful.

Parrotdog Limited Release 45 Italian Pilsner
5.3% ABV, 440ml RRP $7.99
Parrotdog

Italian Pilsners are really having a moment, and this limited release shows why. Brewed with German pilsner malt (including Italian-grown barley) and a blend of German and Czech hops, it opens with fresh citrus aromatics (yuzu, lemongrass) and subtle herbal spice before presenting a crisp palate that's both elegant and refreshingly bitter. A touch of dry hopping adds complexity without distracting from the style's clean character.

Garage Project Antebeer
6% ABV, 440ml RRP $10.50
Garage Project

Wildly colourful and unapologetically over-the-top, Antebeer drinks more like a tropical dessert than a traditional beer. Coconut, banana and lychee combine to create an intensely fruity profile, while the addition of ube (purple yam) gives colour and depth. Brewed in collaboration with Deep Field Games, creators of *Abiotic Factor*, as part of Garage Project's Kiwi Game Studio collab bundle, celebrating creativity and innovation in the New Zealand games industry.

Altitude Free Fall Hazy IPA showcases the specialty pESH hop from family-owned Eggers Hops in the Moutere Valley.

Garage Project Jumbo Pickle Beer
6% ABV, 440ml RRP $8.50
Garage Project

Fans of Garage Project's iconic Pickle Beer will want to try this new 'sweet & sour' edition. The naturally soured strong beer is infused with cucumber, dill and pickle spice and then sweetened with a touch of lactose. The sweet-and-sour interplay keeps the beer engaging rather than gimmicky. Adventurous drinkers will find plenty to discuss in every sip.

Garage Project Bush Bash Bright IPA
6% ABV, 440ml RRP $10.50
Garage Project

Bush Bash hits a sweet spot between modern hazy IPA fruit expression and traditional IPA drinkability. Notes of citrus and tropical fruit sit over a clean malt base, while the finish remains bright and refreshingly crisp. Garage Project is donating $2 from each can sold to Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari in the Waikato, the world's largest fenced eco-sanctuary and home to over 730 New Zealand native species.

Medusa Premium
5.9% ABV, 500ml RRP $6
Medusa

Indian brewery Medusa's flagship brew is a crisp, zesty strong lager brewed with barley malt and a touch of rice for a clean, smooth finish. Refreshing, with full-bodied character.

Sprig + Fern Thunderbolt Cold IPA
5.9% ABV, 440ml RRP $8.99 and 888ml RRP $13.99 – available 2 December
Sprig + Fern

A crisp and punchy Cold IPA that the team at Sprig + Fern says is "built to electrify the senses". Bright citrus and tropical fruit aromas are backed by a clean malt profile and a bold hit of hop bitterness. Crisp and refreshingly dry.

Altitude Free Fall Hazy IPA
6.7% ABV, 440ml RRP $10.99 – also in keg
Altitude

This beer showcases the specialty pESH hop from family-owned Eggers Hops in the Moutere Valley. There's no shortage of aromatic intensity here, with ripe pineapple, feijoa and tropical fruit immediately making themselves known. The body is soft and pillowy without becoming heavy, while a bright citrus edge and sherbet-like finish keep everything lively. A superb showcase of contemporary New Zealand hop character.

Altitude Built For Speed WCIPA
6.7% ABV, 440ml RRP $11.99 – also in keg
Altitude

West Coast IPA fans should find plenty to like here. Clear, crisp and assertively hopped, it delivers bright citrus, pine and tropical fruit flavours over a lean malt backbone. Despite the intensity, the bitterness remains balanced and inviting, making each sip feel surprisingly moreish. One of the Top 25 in this year's New World Beer & Cider Awards.



8-Wired Shadow State
6.8% ABV, 440ml RRP $10.99
8-Wired

Soft haze, expressive hops and plenty of tropical fruit make for a very appealing package. Driven by Luminosa hops, candied citrus and ripe fruit dominate this hazy IPA early, while subtle floral notes emerge as the beer warms. The texture is plush and rounded, helping the generous hop character remain approachable throughout.

Garage Project Chance, Luck & Magic 2025
8% ABV, 375ml RRP $29 and 750ml RRP $55
Garage Project

A fascinating expression of Garage Project's Wild Workshop programme. Complex and contemplative, this is a blend of five years' worth of 100% spontaneously fermented beer that rewards slow drinking. Tart fruit notes, oak and subtle funk unfold gradually across the palate, while the remarkably dry finish draws you straight back for another taste.

8-Wired Superconductor
8.8% ABV, 500ml RRP $9.99
8-Wired

A throwback in all the best ways, this is a return of the fan-favourite double IPA – even down to the 500ml format and original artwork from 2010. Superconductor is a livewire that proudly embraces old-school American hop character. Pine, grapefruit rind and resin arrive in force, supported by caramel malt that helps carry the beer's considerable strength.

CIDER

Sprig + Fern Breeze Tropical Cider
4% ABV, 440ml RRP $7.99 and 1.25L RRP $14.49 – available 16 November
Sprig + Fern

This limited release from Sprig + Fern was launched at the NZ Cider Festival 2026 in Nelson and created for radio station The Breeze. It's full of juicy blood orange, peach and tropical pineapple flavours with a refreshing, crisp finish.

Morningcider Black Cider
4.5% ABV, 330ml RRP $4.25
Hancocks

Morningcider's cult seasonal release makes a welcome return, bringing together blackcurrant, blackberry and Black Doris plum with a crisp apple cider base. Deep berry aromas lead into juicy dark fruit flavours that feel rich and generous without becoming overly sweet, while the apple backbone provides freshness and balance through the finish. The result is fruit-forward but surprisingly easy-drinking, with enough tartness to keep things lively. Inspired by the street art that colours Auckland's Morningside neighbourhood, this cider has plenty of personality both inside and outside the can.

True to its name, Morningcider Ultra Dry puts crisp apple character and a clean finish front and centre.

Zeffer Classic Alcoholic Lemonade
5% ABV, 330ml 10-pack RRP $31.99
Cassels

This is lemonade with a distinctly grown-up edge. Fresh lemon aromas leap from the can, followed by bright citrus flavours that strike a pleasing balance between sweetness and acidity. Made in Hawke's Bay using crisp apple cider and fresh lemon juice, the cider base adds depth and texture without distracting from the star attraction: vibrant, lip-smacking lemon character. Unfiltered for extra flavour, it finishes clean, refreshing and highly sessionable.

Morningcider Hard Ginger Beer
6% ABV, 440ml RRP $7.99
Hancocks

There's plenty of ginger character on display here, but it arrives with more balance than bite. The fiery spice is softened by Morningcider's crisp apple cider base, creating a refreshing and highly approachable take on the style. Bright, zesty and full of flavour, it delivers enough warmth to satisfy ginger beer fans while remaining clean and easy-drinking.

Morningcider Ultra Dry
6% ABV, 440ml RRP $7.99
Hancocks

True to its name, Ultra Dry puts crisp apple character and a clean finish front and centre. There's very little sweetness to distract from the fresh fruit notes, allowing the cider's dryness to shine through from start to finish. The result is bright, refreshing and highly drinkable, with enough body to carry its 6% ABV comfortably. Built for barbecues, beach days and packed chilly bins, this is for those who prefer a more traditional, less sugary cider.

For distributor details, see the Distributor Index on page 66.





NEW ZEALAND'S EASIEST DRINKING BEER?

Cheers!
cheers.org.nz



Michael Donaldson
Beer Writer of the Year, journalist and author
beernation.co.nz

So long, farewell

Michael Donaldson pens his last column for *Drinksbiz* and reflects on what's changed in beer over the years...

THIS IS my last dispatch for *Drinksbiz* after eight years popping up with various opinions on this, that and the other when it comes to beer – what's good, what's on-trend, what's interesting or new.

Curiously, my debut here pretty much coincided with the rise and rise of hazies – a beer style that, overall, has been a blessing for the industry.

In my 16 years writing about beer, the advent of hazies was one of the most significant developments I witnessed.

I'm generalising a little here, but before hazies came along, craft beer was besotted with IPA and the evolution of that style towards increasing bitterness.

It had got to a point where IPA had nowhere else to go. We'd tried all the colour variations (Red, Brown, Black, White) and the cultural variations (English, American West Coast, Belgian, New Zealand), and the bittering wars had reached a détente with punters' palates.

And then out of nowhere came hazies, with their counterpoint to everything we'd been trending towards with IPA.

First, they were cloudy, hazy, unfiltered (or whatever term you want to use), so they immediately looked different to the clear beer we'd been raised on.

Photogenic, they had a ready home on Instagram just as that social media app was really accelerating.

They favoured sweetness over bitterness, making themselves more appealing to a wider range of customers, and they delivered the kind of flavours people love: sweet citrus, tropical fruit juice, peaches and cream.

This style pushed craft beer out of a stalled niche into a wider audience – when the mainstream craft brands (Mac's, Monteith's and Boundary Road) started pushing hazies it was obvious the industry had not just turned a corner but was in a whole new neighbourhood.

The proliferation of hazies also impacted other styles of beer. I don't think smoothie sours or dessert sours would have found the same audience if hazies hadn't paved the way in terms of look, texture and fruit-accented flavour.

> The hill I will die on in these final paragraphs is that the non-alcoholic beer available in New Zealand right now is sensational and will only continue to improve and grow.

What we also saw in response to hazies was an evolution in traditional IPA.

As a rule, these became slightly sweeter, the flavours moved away from woody and herbal notes and started mimicking the tropical fruit accents of the haze brigade, and the whole range of hoppy beers morphed away from being defined by bitterness.

The question being asked eight years ago, when I started writing here, was: "Have we reached peak craft?" The answer back then was: "Maybe, probably".

But the advent of hazies kicked the can down the road, driving growth through the pandemic years.

Now the question is not whether we've reached peak craft, or even peak beer, but rather whether we've reached peak alcohol?

All the data supports the idea that alcohol consumption, in all its forms, is on a sustained downward trend.

It's hard to separate this slide out from a general economic malaise – if we're all suddenly better off financially, will we start buying more booze? I don't know the answer to that.

But I do sincerely believe that beer, which has been around for hundreds (and more like thousands) of years, won't be disappearing any time soon.

It will continue to change. And the biggest change we've seen since the advent of hazies is the rise of non-alcoholic beer.

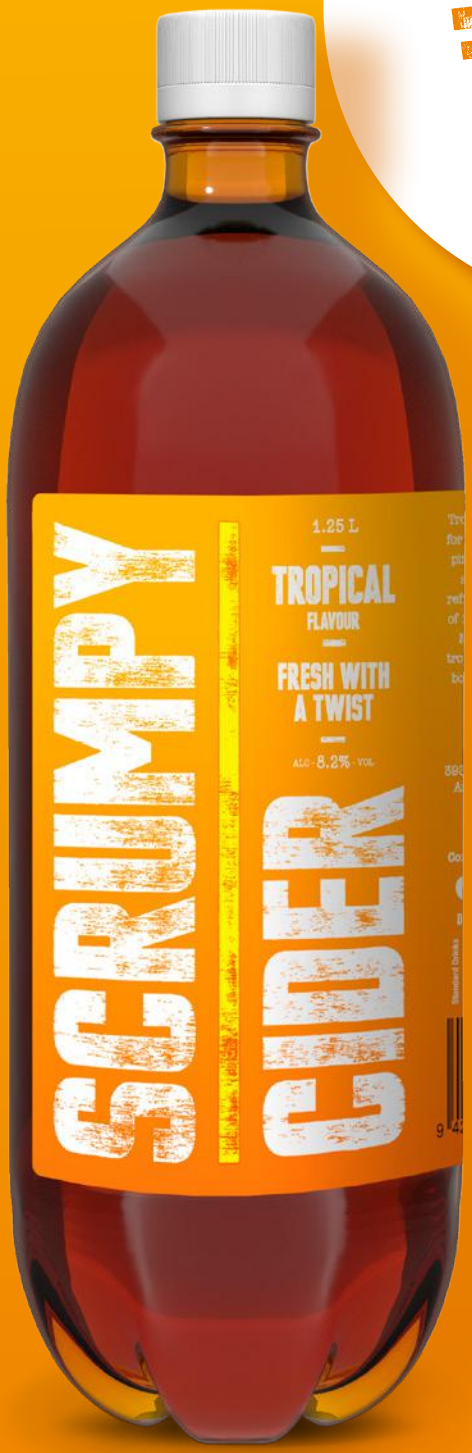
The hill I will die on in these final paragraphs is that the non-alcoholic beer available in New Zealand right now is sensational and will only continue to improve and grow.

If you'd told me eight years ago that I'd write that line, or that I'd be drinking non-alcoholic beer on a weekly basis, I'd have choked on my IPA.

There are plenty of mockers and doubters out there when it comes to non-alcoholic beer, but it was the same in the early days of hazies and we all know how that turned out.

Cheers and thanks for reading.

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Changing of the guard...



Martin Bridges

CHANGE IS afoot in the beer department at *Drinksbiz* and we're delighted to introduce our new writer Martin Bridges.

A BJCP-certified beer judge and writer, Martin will be taking over from Michael Donaldson, with whom he co-hosts *The Third Pint Theory* podcast. After eight years behind the keyboard for *Drinksbiz*, Michael is stepping back to focus on other projects, and we'd like to thank him for all his wonderful work and industry insights over that time.

Martin has traversed the beer world – from UK real ales to New Zealand's craft brewing boom – and he writes about trends, styles and industry observations with equal parts authority and wit. Whether reflecting on the prevalence of hazy beers, forecasting industry shifts, or championing the return of proper West Coast IPAs, he brings a deep, hop-fuelled knowledge of beer, without taking himself (or the beverage) too seriously. Martin's first column for *Drinksbiz* will appear in early 2027.



Renaissance 6-packs for summer

RENAISSANCE BREWING has released its popular Discovery APA and Paradox Pilsner in new 330ml can 6-packs for summer. The duo is joined by new release Horizon NZ Hazy in the same format.

Horizon is an easy-drinking hazy pale ale with juicy tropical fruit, white grape and stone fruit notes from Nelson Sauvin and Rakau hops. The Renaissance 330ml 6-packs are RRP $19.99.

Ⓓ Brandhouse

Peckham's the people's pick!



FOLLOWING MORE than 7,000 votes from across the country, Foodstuffs announced in October that craft cidery Peckham's had won this year's People's Choice category in the New World Beer & Cider Awards.

Peckham's Boysenberry Cider was named the 2026 People's Choice Winner, followed by Panhead Port Road Pilsner and Behemoth Haze Juice Hazy IPA.

The cider is described as "fruity and bright", the result of slow, wild fermentation of Jonagold apples, together with a year-long maturation and the addition of whole Riwaka Choice boysenberries.

Peckham's co-owner Lois Scott says they were overjoyed to see their cider strike such a strong chord with Kiwi consumers. "For a small, independent producer like us to win the People's Choice vote against some of the country's biggest beer brands is extraordinary. Put an authentic, farm-made cider from real orchard fruit in front of people and they love it. That's a real opportunity for retailers to grow the category."

Ⓓ Peckham's



Zeffer goes bigger

HAWKE'S BAY'S Zeffer has shifted its Hazy Alcoholic Ginger Beer from a 6-pack into a new 10-pack format. Marketing Manager Alice Yortt says the change is in response to growing consumer demand for larger pack formats, with 10-packs continuing to drive strong growth within the category.

Zeffer Hazy Alcoholic Ginger Beer (5% ABV) 330ml can 10-pack RRP $29.99

Ⓓ Cassels

DB rolls out zero-alc beer taps across NZ

DB BREWERIES is rolling out a portfolio of zero-alcohol beer on tap across New Zealand following the success of a pioneering trial that it says overcame one of the biggest barriers to serving zero-alcohol beer through traditional hospitality draught systems.

The nationwide rollout began in selected venues in September, with 300 venues expected to be ranging a zero tap by the end of the year. It includes Heineken 0.0, Export Zero and the new Monteith's Zero Pale Ale.



DB Managing Director Peter Hart

The activity follows a New Zealand-first pilot launched earlier this year, which tested new technology designed to pour ice-cold zero-alcohol beer on tap without freezing in the lines.

DB says the trial, conducted at Auckland venues Empire Tavern and Moretons, delivered strong consumer feedback, consistent product quality and sales that exceeded expectations.

DB Managing Director Peter Hart says it marks the beginning of a significant shift in how no-alcohol beer is experienced in New Zealand. "Until now, consumers choosing zero-alcohol beer have had a different experience from everyone else at the table. Our ambition is simple. If someone chooses zero alcohol, they should still be able to enjoy the same freshly poured pint, in the same venue, as part of the same social occasion. This is about socialising without compromise."

India's Medusa arrives in NZ

INDIAN BEER brand Medusa has arrived in New Zealand as part of a wider Australasian push. New Delhi-based parent company Medusa Beverages says it marks the next phase of its international expansion as it aims to emerge as a leading international beer brand originating from India.

Medusa, which was founded in 2017, has launched two products onto the New Zealand market: Medusa Air (4.5% ABV) and Medusa Premium (5.9% ABV).

Amardeep Singh, Executive Director, Medusa Beverages, says: "New Zealand is a natural next step in our international growth journey. It is a market where consumers have a deep appreciation for quality beer and are open to discovering new brands. We are entering with a focused strategy, building through liquor and retail channels first, while establishing a strong distribution network and earning consumer trust. India continues to be our largest market and the foundation of our global ambitions, and every international market we enter is an opportunity to take an Indian beer brand to a wider audience."



SHOWCASE



Ginger Bear goes tropical

JUST IN time for summer, Queenstown craft brewery Crimson Badger Brewing has launched a tropical take on their popular alcoholic ginger beer with new Pineapple Ginger Bear.

They've taken their refreshing Ginger Bear and given it a juicy tropical twist, balanced with a natural pineapple flavour and gentle ginger bite.

The Crimson Badger team describes Pineapple Ginger Bear (4% ABV) as "Crisp, tasty, and dangerously easy to get along with. Kind of like your mate with a boat."

It joins the Crimson Badger Brewing line-up of Original Ginger Bear, Ginger Bear 6%, Dark & Grizzly, and the non-alcoholic Ginger Bear 0%.

The craft brewery was founded in 2017 by Sam, an Australian, and Wes, a Canadian, who met while working in Queenstown.

The pair found a kindred spirit in their shared appreciation for alcohol, competition, and creativity. Against all odds, they hatched a plan to create an alcoholic ginger beer, cheekily named Ginger Bear. With no prior brewing experience, little starting capital, and juggling full-time jobs, the ambitious duo founded Crimson Badger Brewing Limited.

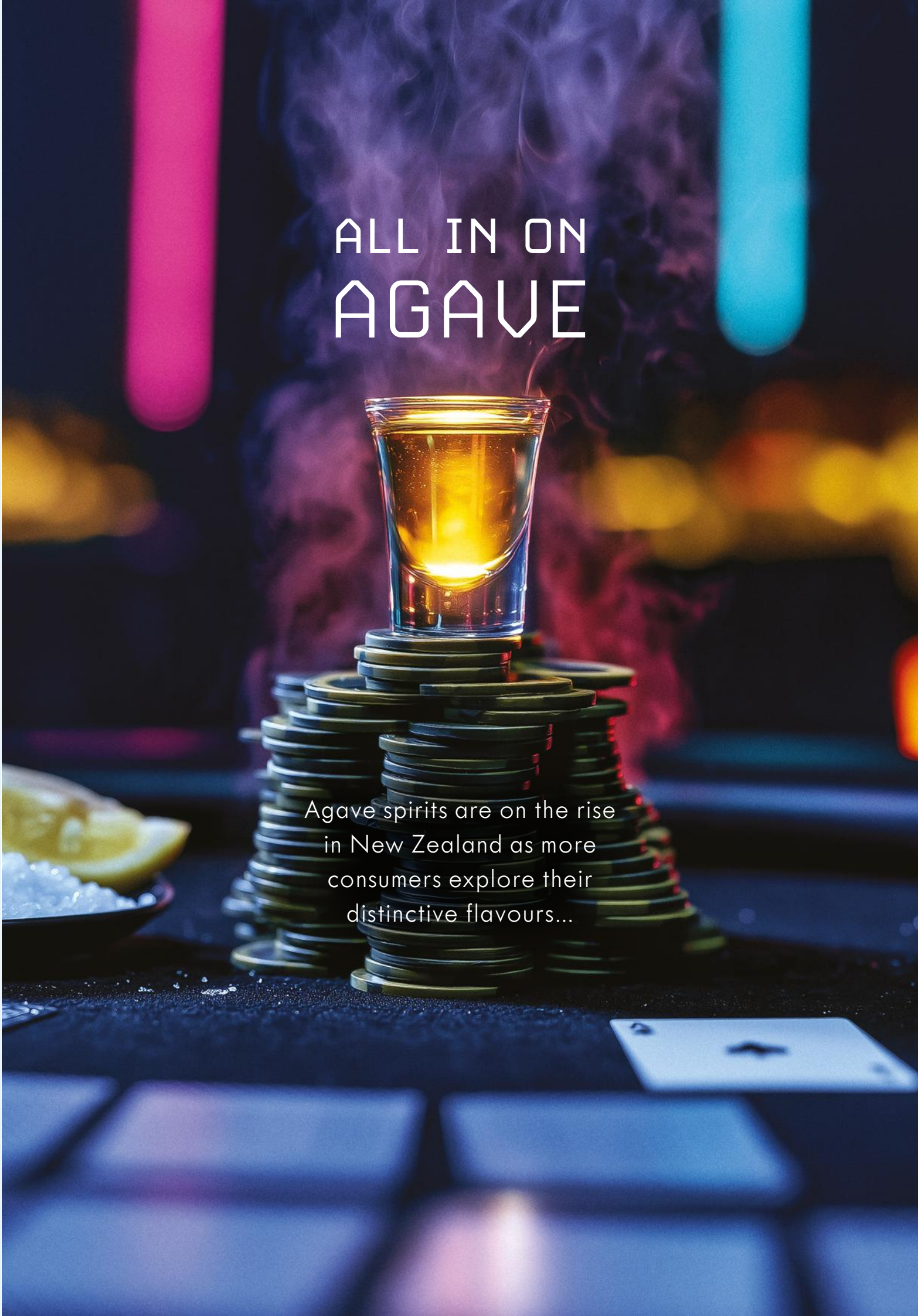
Over the years they have been joined by an equally enthusiastic team and now specialise in unique brews that are fast finding fans across the country.

Crimson Badger Pineapple Ginger Bear (4% ABV) is available in 330ml 10-packs.



Distributed by Federal.
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ALL IN ON AGAVE



Agave spirits are on the rise in New Zealand as more consumers explore their distinctive flavours...



Tequila – RRP $45 - $69.99

La Chica Blanco
35% ABV, 700ml RRP $46.99
Hancocks

A clean, crisp tequila with notes of blue Weber agave and a warm and earthy finish.

La Chica Gold
35% ABV, 700ml RRP $46.99
Hancocks

Light gold in colour, this tequila has notes of sweet caramelised blue Weber agave and a warm, mellow finish.

Kaloré Café Tequila
20% ABV, 1L RRP $49
Hi I.Q. Liquor

A blend of 100% agave tequila with coffee liqueur.

Jose Cuervo Especial Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $52.99
Lion

A golden-style tequila from one of the world's best-known tequila brands. Made from a blend of reposado and younger tequilas.

Jose Cuervo Especial Silver
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $52.99
Lion

A smooth tequila with tones of lush agave, caramel, and fresh herbs.

Mango Shotta
20% ABV, 700ml RRP $54.99
Federal

A mango and spicy jalapeño-flavoured tequila shot with hints of lime, chamoy (Mexican pickled sauce) and Tajín (Mexican seasoning mix of chilli, lime and salt).

Olmeca Reposado
38% ABV, 750ml RRP $54.99
Pernod Ricard

Rested in ex-bourbon casks, this tequila has a flavour that's sweet with a touch of smoke and notes of pepper.

Mango Shotta is a mango and spicy jalapeño-flavoured tequila shot with hints of lime, chamoy and Tajín seasoning.

Sauza Hacienda Gold
35% ABV, 700ml RRP $54.99
Suntory Global

Flavours of agave and caramel balanced with pepper notes lead to a sweet finish.

Sauza Hacienda Silver
35% ABV, 700ml RRP $54.99
Suntory Global

Fresh blue agave with green apple leads the palate in this tequila, which has a moderately bitter citrus finish.

Buen Amigo Gold
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $56.99
EuroVintage

A gold-hued tequila with aromas and flavours of nuts with vanilla and cinnamon.

Buen Amigo Silver
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $56.99
EuroVintage

A young tequila with intense flavour. Subtle notes of peach and lemon.

Bambarria
35-39% ABV, 700ml RRP $59.99-$64.99
World@BWS

A versatile tequila available in Blanco and Reposado expressions as well as in several flavoured versions, including Apple & Cinnamon, Café, Coconut, Jalapeño, and Mango.

El Jimador Blanco
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $59.99 and 1L RRP $84.99
Hancocks

A versatile tequila with aromas of agave, apple and spice and mild agave flavour. The finish is smooth, clean and warming.

El Jimador Reposado
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $59.99 and 1L RRP $84.99
Hancocks

Two months in oak gives this tequila its light gold hue, along with flavours of spicy cinnamon and apple.



Orendain Blanco
38% ABV, 750ml RRP $62 and 1L RRP $79
Hi I.Q. Liquor

Aromas of cooked agave and citrus mingle with fresh, light characters and a hint of sweetness. Intense agave flavour with fresh herb notes.

Orendain Reposado
38% ABV, 750ml RRP $63 and 1L RRP $80
Hi I.Q. Liquor

Rich caramel, nut, and jasmine blossom open the aromas of this tequila with cooked agave and citrus notes of tangerine and sweet orange. Smooth on the palate with dried fruits and wood.

ALBA x Jumping Goat Coffee-Infused Tequila Liqueur
30% ABV, 700ml RRP $64.99
socialsmiths

This recently released collaboration combines ALBA's Mexican tequila with Jumping Goat's original coffee-infused spirit. Rich and layered with a smooth, bittersweet finish.

El Jimador Añejo
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $64.99
Hancocks

Aged for 12 months, this tequila has aromas of vanilla, hazelnut and a hint of cinnamon. Its agave flavours have mellowed and sit alongside earthy notes with light cinnamon and other spices. A smooth finish with hints of oak and cherry.

Lunazul Tequila Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $64.99
Hancocks

A tequila with a smooth, balanced palate featuring peppery notes, ripe fruit, crisp citrus and a subtle hint of vanilla.

Lunazul Tequila Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $64.99
Hancocks

Rested in bourbon barrels, the Reposado expression from Lunazul is rich and smooth, with lush caramel, semi-sweet vanilla, ripe fruit and spice, evolving into subtle oak and vanilla notes.

Jose Cuervo Tradicional Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $67.99
Lion

'Tradicional' is the original Cuervo tequila. This 100% blue agave rested tequila has been aged in oak barrels for a minimum of two months, giving it a smooth and subtle complexity.

Jose Cuervo Tradicional Silver
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $67.99
Lion

A blue agave silver tequila. When bottled, a special process is used to conserve its flavour and finish it at freezing temperatures. It's therefore recommended to keep this tequila in the freezer and serve as a crisp, frozen shot.

Olmeca Altos Plata
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $67.99
Pernod Ricard

Aromas of sweet cooked agave with herbal notes and a subtle citrus quality. On the palate it is smooth and soft, with lime and lemon characters and a lingering sweetness on the finish.

Olmeca Altos Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $67.99
Pernod Ricard

Ageing for six to eight months in white oak gives the reposado expression of Olmeca Altos its woody aromas with a hint of sweet orange and vanilla. It is rounded and full on the palate with more sweet orange, cooked agave and subtle wood character.

Hijos De Villa Blanco Bullet
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $69.90
World@BWS

A sure-fire conversation starter, this tequila is presented in a distinctive bullet-shaped bottle.



ALBA Blanco
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $69.99
socialsmiths

New Zealand brand ALBA sources its tequila 1,500m above sea level in the small town of Magdalena in Mexico's state of Jalisco. Its hallmarks include a smooth and slightly sweet finish with fruit characters typical in tequilas of this region. The Blanco has upfront agave aromas with fresh and sharp floral notes.

ALBA Pura Dorado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $69.99
socialsmiths

Like its Blanco sibling (above), the ALBA Pura Dorado hails from Jalisco. It has soft, rounded caramel notes with a hint of dried herbs and honey.

Cazcabel Coconut
34% ABV, 700ml RRP $69.99
Federal

A tequila with aromas of coconut and underlying notes of earthy agave. The palate is rich with warm hints of coconut. The finish is smooth with sweet vegetal notes.

Cazcabel Coffee
34% ABV, 700ml RRP $69.99
Federal

Aromas of chocolate and coffee with a hint of earthy agave lead to a palate rich with freshly roasted coffee, notes of chocolate, vanilla and agave. A smooth, dry, rich coffee finish.

Cazcabel Honey
34% ABV, 700ml RRP $69.99
Federal

Earthy, honey aromas and rich, sweet flavours of warm natural honey with a finish of caramel and smoky notes.

Don Ramón Punta Diamante Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99
EuroVintage

This aged expression of Don Ramón is rested in white oak and has bright floral and herbal aromas with subtle vanilla and chocolate. On the palate there are flavours of citrus, cooked agave and herbs.

Don Ramón Punta Diamante Silver
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99
EuroVintage

Aromas of bright florals lead the way with notes of herbs and raw agave emerging on the palate. A pronounced herbaceous flavour with a hint of sweetness that evolves into a warming minerality.

El Padrino Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99-$74.99
World@BWS

Made at the Casa Maestri distillery in the Mexican town of Tequila, this tequila uses agave harvested from the distillery farm in San Julián.

El Padrino Clementine
35% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99-$74.99
World@BWS

Juicy citrus notes of clementine complement a cooked agave character in this tequila.

El Padrino Coconut
35% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99-$74.99
World@BWS

Rich coconut sits alongside classic tequila characters in this flavoured expression.

El Padrino Lime
35% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99-$74.99
World@BWS

The tang of lime adds freshness to this flavoured tequila.

El Padrino Mango
35% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99-$74.99
World@BWS

Lush mango pairs with cooked agave flavour in this fruity tequila.

El Padrino Passionfruit
35% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99-$74.99
World@BWS

The tropical flavour of passionfruit leads this tequila alongside lush fruit notes.

El Padrino Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99-$74.99
World@BWS

Aged from four to six months in American oak barrels, this tequila has intense flavours of sweet cooked blue agave.

El Padrino Spicy Cucumber
35% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99-$74.99
World@BWS

The addition of fruit extracts gives this tequila a fresh cucumber character and a hint of spice.

Don Ramón Punta Diamante Reposado is rested in white oak and has bright floral and herbal aromas with subtle vanilla and chocolate.



Espolón Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99
Campari NZ

A smooth and balanced tequila with delicate aromas of sweet agave, tropical fruit, lemon zest and a hint of pepper that continue on the palate along with vanilla bean, grilled pineapple and spice.

Espolón Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $69.99
Campari NZ

Six months in American oak barrels gives this tequila a rich golden hue and a spicy nose with a hint of caramel fudge. The taste is bold and full-bodied with rich roasted agave, sweet tropical fruit, vanilla and a long, spicy finish.

Hijos De Villa Reposado Bullet
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $69.99
World@BWS

A distinctive bullet-shaped bottle contains rested tequila from Hijos De Villa.

Barullo Spicy Sandía is a bold tequila liqueur that blends the natural sweetness of watermelon with a fiery touch of spice.

Tequila – RRP $70 - $99.99

1800 Coconut
35% ABV, 700ml RRP $72.99
Lion

Natural coconut flavour is infused into 1800 Silver to create this expression with its slightly sweet and medium-bodied tropical taste. Ideal for serving on the rocks or in tropical-inspired cocktails – it pairs particularly well with pineapple juice.

1800 Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $72.99
Lion

This tequila is matured in American and French oak barrels for a minimum of six months. It has notes of buttery caramel, mild spices and a touch of smoke from the barrel finishing.

1800 Silver
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $72.99
Lion

A blend of specially selected white tequilas. 1800 Silver is a versatile tequila with a clean, balanced taste and hints of sweet fruit and pepper.

Cazcabel Blanco
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $79.99
Federal

A fresh, crisp tequila with a spicy aroma, a hint of citrus and plenty of earthy agave. Smooth and well-balanced with more earthy agave and citrus. A crisp finish with touches of black pepper and a light smokiness on the exit.

Lunazul Tequila Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $79.99
Hancocks

Aged in bourbon barrels for 12 to 18 months, this tequila has flavours of earthy agave and toasted oak with sweet dark fruit notes and a hint of nutmeg. Hints of tobacco and baking spice on the finish.

Barullo Spicy Sandía
30% ABV, 750ml RRP $80
Ay Caramba

A bold tequila liqueur made in Mexico that blends the natural sweetness of watermelon with a fiery touch of spice. Serve chilled as a shot, over ice, or mix into cocktails.

1800 Añejo
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $82.99
Lion

A minimum of 14 months ageing in French oak barrels gives this tequila flavours of toasted oak, vanilla and butterscotch with a spicy, well-rounded finish.

Cazcabel Reposado
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $84.99
Federal

This rested expression of Cazcabel matures in American oak barrels for a minimum of nine months. It has aromas of agave with a touch of eucalyptus and hints of white pepper, caramel and toasted oak. The palate balances dry, earthy agave with vanilla and toasted oak. The finish is long and complex with a jalapeño tingle.

Teremana Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $84.99
Hancocks

This tequila brand from actor Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson has amassed some impressive awards since its launch several years ago. The Blanco expression has notes of bright citrus with a smooth, fresh finish. Awarded Gold at the NZ Spirits Awards 2026.

Arette Blanco
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $85
Tickety-Boo

Sweet aromas of cooked agave in this tequila are followed by fresh flavours of citrus, black pepper and an earthy spice.





Tequila Hacienda de Xalpa Silver
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $88
Ay Caramba

A fresh, light tequila with aromas of herbs and pepper. It has a rich cooked agave flavour, crisp and slightly sweet, with a long finish.

Avión Silver
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $89.99
Pernod Ricard

An intense agave aroma with subtle mint and rosemary, delicate floral and black pepper characters and hints of grapefruit and pineapple. Crisp and clean, well balanced and smooth.

Corazón Blanco
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $89.99
Federal

This unaged tequila has aromas of baked pineapple, roasted jalapeño and tangerine zest. There's a mineral tone on the palate and a creamy mouth-filling texture, leading to a spicy finish.

Mi Campo Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $89.99
EuroVintage

This tequila is rested in wine barrels to create a modern spirit with flavours of orange blossom, tea, honey and sweet orange, balanced by subtle white pepper notes.

Arette Reposado
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $90
Tickety-Boo

Aged for six months in American white oak, this tequila has aromas of citrus, caramel and cooked agave with citrus and vanilla flavours, an earthy note and cinnamon sweetness. The finish is rich and spicy.

Batanga Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $90
Hi I.Q. Liquor

A crisp tequila with flavours of pineapple and guava, with hints of cinnamon, clove and warming spices.

Batanga Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $91
Hi I.Q. Liquor

Ageing in American oak barrels creates complex flavours of coffee, vanilla, toffee and warming spices.

Tequila Hacienda de Xalpa Reposado
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $94
Ay Caramba

A full-bodied tequila aged in white oak casks. It opens with aromas of vanilla, honey, soft oak, and butterscotch that develop on the palate. Smooth with a lingering finish.

Storywood Speyside 7 Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $94.99
World@BWS

Storywood blends Mexico and Scotland, with the tequila aged in Scottish Speyside whisky barrels for seven months. The Speyside 7 Reposado has a caramel character with hints of oak, vanilla and honey over an earthy agave base.

Teremana Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $94.99
Hancocks

Aged in American whiskey barrels, this rested expression of Teremana Tequila has notes of oak and vanilla with a smooth, rich finish.

Calle 23 Blanco
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $95
Mineral

Aromas of cooked agave with hints of citrus and herbs lead to a soft palate full of agave flavour, with notes of Granny Smith apples and pears on the lingering finish.

Don Ramón Platinum Silver
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $96.99
EuroVintage

Fresh notes of citrus and agave on the nose lead to lengthy flavours of agave.

Corazón Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $99.99
Federal

Aged six to eight months in American oak, this tequila has aromas of thyme, green grass, and agave nectar. Earthy tones on the palate with soft vanilla, almond and fresh herb flavours. Rounded and refined.

Ollitas Cristalino
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $99.99
Hi I.Q. Liquor

This tequila is made with agave baked in brick ovens and a blend of reposado tequilas aged a further 12 months in American oak. A unique filtering process creates the completely transparent liquid. Soft on the palate with aromas of cooked agave and notes of vanilla.



Tequila – RRP $100 - $149.99

Calle 23 Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $100
Mineral

This tequila is double-distilled in traditional pot stills and spends eight months in ex-bourbon oak casks. With delicate aromas of wood and cooked agave, it is a well-balanced tequila that is light and smooth in the mouth. Notes of roasted peppers and fresh figs, light wood, a big agave presence and spiciness.

Vendedor de Sueños Tequila Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $100
Ay Caramba

"Vendedor de Sueños" translates as "Seller of Dreams" – this unaged tequila is naturally sweet with a smooth, creamy body and subtle dairy notes.

Teremana Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $104.99
Hancocks

The Añejo expression of actor Dwayne Johnson's Teremana Tequila range has rich, warm oak, vanilla and roasted agave characters with a lightly sweet and complex finish. Awarded Gold and the Trophy for Best Overall Agave Spirit at the NZ Spirits Awards 2026.

Calle 23 Añejo
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $109
Mineral

A full-bodied tequila that is double-distilled in traditional pot stills and matured for 16 months in ex-bourbon oak casks. Oak aromas marry with a rich touch of vanilla and coffee and notes of herbs and spices. On the palate there is cracked coffee and tobacco balanced with agave and vanilla.

Teremana Añejo was awarded Gold and the Trophy for Best Overall Agave Spirit at the NZ Spirits Awards 2026.

Patrón Silver
40% ABV, 200ml RRP $32.99 and 700ml RRP $109
CCEP

This silver tequila is handmade in small batches. It is soft, smooth and sweet on the palate with fresh agave, hints of citrus and a finish of light pepper.

Patrón XO Café
35% ABV, 750ml RRP $109
CCEP

A combination of Patrón Silver with fine Arabica coffee, this spirit balances sweet and bitter notes with flavours of chocolate, light agave, freshly roasted coffee, and vanilla.

Corazón Añejo
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $109.99
Federal

Aged 16-18 months in American oak, this tequila has a fresh, forest-like aroma, with well-integrated notes of spice. Light in the mouth, it is savoury with flavours of spiced tobacco, charred moss and coffee.

Gran Orendain Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $113
Hi I.Q. Liquor

A 100% agave tequila with triple distillation. It has a soft, cooked agave flavour with mint and herbal aromas. Fresh and lively.

Herradura Plata
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $114.99
Hancocks

This 'Plata' expression from Herradura is aged 45 days and has aromas of green and cooked agave, with herbal and slightly woody notes. Flavours of agave, wood and citrus give way to a smooth, clean and warming finish.

Tanteo Chipotle
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $115
Hi I.Q. Liquor

Tanteo Chipotle blends 100% blue Weber agave tequila with real roasted chipotle peppers. Layers of roasted pepper, tobacco, and subtle leather notes create a bold yet approachable profile, finishing long with a warm smoky heat.

Tanteo Habanero
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $115
Hi I.Q. Liquor

Real habanero peppers add an intense yet balanced burst of heat to this tequila, which also has tropical fruit notes of mango, passionfruit, and pineapple layered with vibrant agave character.

Tanteo Jalapeño
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $115
Hi I.Q. Liquor

This tequila is infused with real jalapeños for a spicy kick alongside fresh green pepper notes, subtle agave sweetness, and a smooth finish with a lingering warmth.

El Mayor Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $116
Hi I.Q. Liquor

A pure expression of agave in a crisp, light body with a hint of pepper. Fresh floral aromas with a spicy undertone lead to a palate full of agave flavour with subtle florals and pepper. A wave of heat on the finish, which is clean and dry.

Casa Noble Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $118.99
EuroVintage

A vibrant and balanced tequila, with a sweet agave presence and hint of citrus.

Gran Orendain Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $119
Hi I.Q. Liquor

Aged for 11 months in American oak barrels, this tequila has a smooth taste with delicate agave and wood aromas.

Patrón Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $119
CCEP

Aged at least four months in American oak barrels, Patrón Reposado has a light oaky flavour alongside big, cooked agave notes and hints of honey, vanilla and tropical fruit.

Casa Noble Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $119.99
EuroVintage

This rested tequila spends 11 months in new French oak and opens with warm vanilla, bright lemongrass and subtle floral aromas, followed by flavours of sweet, cooked agave and toasty oak.

Don Ramón Platinum Añejo Cristalino
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $119.99
EuroVintage

Aromas of nuts, vanilla and cinnamon persist on the palate, along with a delicate wood character.

Pantalones Organic Tequila Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $119.99
Blanc Beverages

Pantalones Tequila is the creation of actor Matthew McConaughey and wife Camila. The Blanco is smooth with sweet notes of cooked agave, honey and a hint of citrus.

Storywood 14 Añejo
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $119.99
World@BWS

This tequila spends 14 months in single malt Scotch whisky barrels from Speyside. It has flavours of toasted oak, roasted nuts and treacle toffee.

Storywood Cask Strength Speyside 7 Reposado
53% ABV, 700ml RRP $119.99
World@BWS

A cask-strength expression of the original Storywood Speyside 7 tequila. Bottled at 53% ABV, it brings added intensity to the notes of caramel, oak, vanilla, and honey over an earthy agave base.

Arette Artesanal Suave Blanco
38% ABV, 750ml RRP $120
Tickety-Boo

The Artesanal range from Arette is a more premium expression of its tequilas. The Blanco is crystal clear with a zesty, lemony aroma that persists on the palate along with dried herbs, juicy florals and cooked agave. Smooth mouthfeel and a fresh finish.

Cenote Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $120
Tickety-Boo

This golden-hued tequila is aged for three months in American oak, creating aromas of vanilla and wood and leading to a rounded palate of vanilla, wood spice and green vegetable characters.

El Mayor Blanco is a pure expression of agave in a crisp, light body with a hint of pepper.

El Mayor Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $120
Hi I.Q. Liquor

El Mayor Reposado is aged in white oak barrels for nine months (seven months longer than the minimum industry standard). Smooth on the palate with a dryish, medium body and notes of perfumed fruity agave, vanilla, spice and caramel.

Casa Noble Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $121.99
EuroVintage

This aged tequila has aromas of dried fruit and spice complementing flavours of toasted oak, butterscotch, and vanilla with an undertone of sweet, cooked agave.



Sangre de Vida Tequila Blanco
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $123
Hi I.Q. Liquor

"Sangre de Vida" translates as "Blood of Life", hence the distinctive heart-shaped bottle. This tequila has lush aromas of white flowers, lemons, spicy agave, ripe bananas, fresh mint and notes of anise and pepper. Balanced on the palate with fruity, mineral notes and lemon, agave and intense spice.

El Mayor Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $124
Hi I.Q. Liquor

Designed for sipping, this tequila is aged in white oak barrels for 18 to 36 months. Aromas of caramel, sweet fruit and light oak lead to a soft, medium-to-full-bodied palate with caramel, grilled tropical fruits and brown spices.

Patrón Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $124
CCEP

Patrón Añejo is aged for over 12 months in a combination of French oak, Hungarian oak and ex-American whiskey barrels. Oak, vanilla and raisins on the nose persist on the palate along with honey and a finish of caramel and smoke.

Herradura Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $124.99
Hancocks

Eleven months in American white oak intensifies the aromas of cooked agave in this tequila, along with hints of anise, fruit and spice. It is rich with flavours of sweet cooked agave, vanilla, butter and dried fruit. The finish is smooth and sweet with a hint of brown spice.

ArteNOM 1579 Blanco
40.7% ABV, 700ml RRP $126
Mineral

This copper pot-distilled tequila is made at 2,070 metres above sea level in the remote mountain town of Jesús María by Felipe Camarena, who uses stressed hillside agave plants grown in tequila's highest-altitude agave region. It has a rich agave viscosity, and is velvety on the palate with a fresh chilli tingle, white pepper, and spearmint.

Casa Maestri Reserva de MFM Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $129.99-$139.99
World@BWS

Casa Maestri is the flagship brand of Casa Maestri Distillery, founded and led by Celia Maestri. The Reserva de MFM ceramic bottles were designed by Maestri and a ceramic artist from Guadalajara, Jalisco. The Reposado expression is aged for eight months in ex-whiskey barrels and has a slight herbaceousness with anise, wood spice and some clove. Slight tropical notes and pronounced pepper.

Herradura Añejo
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $129.99
Hancocks

Ageing for just over two years gives this tequila a rich, dark copper hue. It has intense aromas of cooked agave and spices, which continue on the complex palate along with dried fruit notes and toasted oak. The finish is smooth, sweet and slightly spicy.

Pantalones Organic Tequila Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $129.99
Blanc Beverages

Aged in American oak barrels for nine months, the Reposado expression from Pantalones has notes of cooked agave, vanilla, and a hint of oak.

Storywood CS Sherry
53% ABV, 700ml RRP $129.99
World@BWS

This limited-edition release is aged in Oloroso sherry casks for seven months and bottled at cask strength for added intensity. Bold and full-flavoured with sweet cherry and jammy dark fruits on an earthy agave base.

Arette Artesanal Suave Reposado
38% ABV, 750ml RRP $130
Tickety-Boo

The agave in this Artesanal expression of Arette Reposado is cooked for 48 hours in stone ovens, intensifying the rich flavours of citrus, earthy agave, vanilla and spice.

Gran Orendain Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $135
Hi I.Q. Liquor

Ageing in premium bourbon single-use barrels creates a rich, full flavour and body in this tequila with cooked agave, caramel, chocolate, vanilla and coffee.

Pantalones Organic Tequila Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $139.99
Blanc Beverages

Fifteen months in American oak whisky barrels adds notes of vanilla, butterscotch and brown sugar to this tequila, which has a velvety finish.

Fifteen months in American oak whisky barrels adds notes of vanilla, butterscotch and brown sugar to Pantalones Organic Tequila Añejo.





ArteNOM 1414 Reposado

41.2% ABV, 700ml RRP $144

Mineral

Sergio and José Manuél Vivanco have become renowned for producing rich, well-balanced tequilas from 2,000 acres of estate-grown agave in Jalisco. For ArteNOM Selección de 1414, the family has revived their unique tradition of fermenting the agave mash with field-extracted wild yeast for a display of agave terroir and flavours of salted vanilla cookie, allspice and a mild chilli heat.

Cenote Añejo

40% ABV, 700ml RRP $145

Tickety-Boo

Ageing for a year in American oak gives this tequila its rich amber colour and lush, complex character. The nose is smoked and woody, with vanilla, spice and chocolate on the palate. The bottle is especially striking with its sculpted piña adornment on the cap.

Sangre de Vida Tequila Reposado

55% ABV, 750ml RRP $149

Hi I.Q. Liquor

This intense, higher-proof tequila has a fruity aroma with caramel and soft notes of agave. The palate starts with the fresh sweetness of agave and leads into citrus, spicy pepper and oak.

Casa Maestri Reserva De MFM Añejo

40% ABV, 750ml RRP $149.99-$159.99

World@BWS

Fourteen months in ex-whiskey barrels gives this tequila a fruity character with slight anise, cooked agave and a hint of wood. Smooth on the palate with pepper, apple and subtle vanilla.

Storywood Cask Strength Double Oak Añejo

53% ABV, 700ml RRP $149.99

World@BWS

This is the top of the Storywood range in the Cask Strength Limited Editions. It is aged 14 months in Speyside ex-whisky barrels and Oloroso sherry casks. Flavours of honey, caramel, dark fruits, cherry, and earthy agave.

Tequila – RRP $150 - $199.99

Arette Artesanal Fuerte

50.5% ABV, 750ml RRP $150

Tickety-Boo

A higher-strength white tequila with intense agave flavour. The 'Fuerte' expression from Arette comes directly from the 'alambique de olla' ('pot still') without dilution.

Herradura Ultra Añejo

40% ABV, 700ml RRP $154.99

Hancocks

A blend of Añejo and Extra Añejo stripped back to a Platino finish for a platinum appearance. Subtle notes of cooked agave with hints of caramel, vanilla, wood, honey, dried fruits and toasted almonds.

Fortaleza Blanco

40% ABV, 750ml RRP $160

Tickety-Boo

This tequila has rich aromas of citrus and cooked agave with hints of olive, earth and black pepper. On the palate there is more citrus and agave with vanilla, basil, olive and lime.

ArteNOM 1146 Añejo

41.3% ABV, 700ml RRP $179

Mineral

Master Distiller Enrique Fonseca distils agave grown predominantly in and around his highland hometown of Atotonilco el Alto in Jalisco. For this añejo expression, he ages select tequilas initially in ex-Cabernet Franc wine barrels from the Loire Valley for a minimum of 14 months, then in toasted American white oak previously used to age either Canadian whisky or Tennessee rye whiskey, again for a minimum of 14 months. A rich amber colour, this tequila has flavours of toffee, walnut candy, custard, orange zest, and dark chocolate.

Fortaleza Reposado

40% ABV, 750ml RRP $180

Tickety-Boo

Aromas of citrus, caramel, butter, cooked agave, and sage lead to a palate of cooked agave, citrus, vanilla, apple, earth, and cinnamon. The finish is long, rich and delicately spicy, with an oily texture.

Gran Orendain Extra Añejo 3YO

40% ABV, 750ml RRP $180

Hi I.Q. Liquor

This tequila has an intense amber colour and is aged more than three years in white oak barrels from France.

Arette Artesanal Suave Añejo

38% ABV, 750ml RRP $185

Tickety-Boo

An elegant and complex aged tequila that spends at least 18 months in American white oak barrels. Aromas of citrus, dried fruit and a vanilla sweetness continue on the palate. The lingering finish has a hint of black pepper.



TEQUILA AND MEZCAL

Tequila
Takes its name from the town of Tequila in the Mexican state of Jalisco. Legally, tequila can only be produced in this state and in four other regions of Mexico and is recognised as a protected designation of origin product. To be a true tequila, it must be made from the blue agave plant (also known as blue Weber agave, after the French botanist who first classified it) and produced in one of those recognised areas.
Production: Agave plants are succulents that grow well in Mexico's hot, arid conditions and produce thick, spiky leaves. Careful tending by the jimadores (agave harvesters) allows the plants to ripen fully – often taking six to eight years. When ready to harvest, the jimadores cut away the spiky leaves to reach the core, known as the piña, which resembles a giant pineapple without its top. The piñas are baked over hours or days (depending on the producer) and then mashed under a large stone wheel (for traditional production). The extracted agave juice (wort) is then fermented and distilled at least twice to produce clear tequila.
Ageing: This initial clear tequila can be bottled as 'silver' tequila (also known as 'plata' or 'blanco'), or further aged in barrel to create reposado (aged from two months to just under 12 months), añejo (minimum 12 months) or extra añejo (minimum three years).

Mezcal
Mezcal is an agave-based spirit that can be made from any of 40 or more different varieties of the agave plant. It is made in 12 different regions in Mexico. While the harvest of piñas is the same as for tequila, the more artisanal mezcal producers use underground earthen pits in which to slow bake their piñas, which imparts the distinctive smoky flavour of mezcal. These cooked agave may then be milled in several ways: using an electric mill, smashing with a wooden mallet, or using a traditional horse- or mule-drawn 'tahona' (heavy stone wheel) that separates the agave fibres.



Fortaleza Blanco Still Strength
46% ABV, 750ml RRP $190
Tickety-Boo

Direct from the still, this tequila has aromas of fruit, baked ripe agave, green olive, and an earthiness. Slightly brighter and more intense at still strength, the flavours of butter, olive, earth, black pepper, and vegetal qualities are enhanced.

Tequila – RRP $200 and above

Jose Cuervo Reserva de la Familia Extra Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $213.99
Lion

One of Jose Cuervo's most premium offerings, this Extra Añejo tequila is aged in oak barrels for an average of three years with the final blend including tequila from reserves aged over 30 years. Rich and vibrant, with full flavours of agave, vanilla, and a hint of florals.

Sangre de Vida Tequila Añejo
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $215
Hi I.Q. Liquor

Each bottle of the Añejo expression from Sangre de Vida is hand-painted with motifs drawn from Mexico's history and culture. This aged tequila has aromas and flavours of agave, oak, caramelised honey, sweet potato, vanilla and pear.

Fortaleza Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $240
Tickety-Boo

This golden-hued tequila is aged for 18 months in American oak. It is rich and complex with flavours of butterscotch, caramel, toffee, citrus and hazelnut.

Clase Azul Plata
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $299
Tickety-Boo

This unaged tequila opens with fresh aromas of orange peel, lemon and green apple and leads to flavours of cooked agave, lemon peel, green apple and lingering herbal notes in a citrus finish. The transparent decanter shows off the clarity of the spirit.

Herradura Legend
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $319.99
Hancocks

This unique tequila from Herradura is matured for 12-14 months in heavily charred, new American white oak barrels that have been deeply grooved to expose the liquid to more layers of toasted oak as it ages. An Añejo tequila with a rich, deep colour, aromas of toasted agave and charred oak, and flavours of oak, caramel, stone fruit, and black pepper.

Clase Azul Reposado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $410
Tickety-Boo

This tequila is aged for eight months in American whiskey casks and presented in the iconic ceramic decanter synonymous with Clase Azul. It has a complex palate of agave nectar, ripe orange peel, toasted hazelnut, bittersweet chocolate, cinnamon and clove in a spiced finish.

Clase Azul Ahumado
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $589
Tickety-Boo

Dubbed "A ballad of fire", this tequila uses ancient techniques to create its distinctive smoky profile. The palate opens with flavours of smoked agave and fresh lemon with a mineral front that gives way to a silky finish with smoky undertones.





Casa Noble Marqués Añejo
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $599.99
EuroVintage

This is a special expression that blends nine añejos with 12 extra añejos for a silky tequila that balances cooked agave sweetness, vanilla and ripe fruit, with hints of peach and roasted nuts with spiced accents. A smooth finish with subtle white chocolate, pecan and almond.

Clase Azul Gold
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $710
Tickety-Boo

This tequila was inspired by Mexican sunsets and combines Clase Azul Tequila Plata with a special reposado tequila matured in French oak casks and an extra añejo finished in Pedro Ximénez sherry casks. Its decanter features two hand-painted ribbons in 24-karat gold.

Herradura Selección Suprema
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $713.99
Hancocks

This very special release from Tequila Herradura is the distillery's ultra-rested Extra Añejo tequila, spending 45 months in American white oak barrels for an elegant tequila. Described as "the taste of unhurried excellence", the extra ageing creates a rich, dark amber colour in the tequila with cooked agave, spice and floral notes on the nose and palate. Exceptionally smooth and complex, with a lasting, subtly sweet finish.

Clase Azul Añejo
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $1,000
Tickety-Boo

Aged more than two years in American whiskey casks, this tequila has intense aromas of oak, orange marmalade and spice, with flavours of candied orange peel, nutmeg, cinnamon and black pepper. A long finish of toasted and spiced notes.

Casa Maestri Reserva De MFM Extra Añejo with Sensory Kit
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $1,299.99-$1,349.99
World@BWS

This very special release from Casa Maestri contains the Extra Añejo expression (aged for three years in ex-whiskey barrels) and a "Sensory Kit" for a fuller experience of the tequila and its origins. There are 11 vials with nine sensory ingredients (including cooked agave, crystallised orange, caramelised walnut and American oak) as well as soil from the highlands and lowlands of Jalisco, where Casa Maestri's agaves are planted, harvested and cooked.

Clase Azul Ultra
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $3,600
Tickety-Boo

An extra añejo tequila made over an extended ageing period of five years: first in American whiskey casks, then separated into Amontillado, Oloroso, and Pedro Ximénez sherry casks before being recombined. It has a rich palate of dried plum, cinnamon, cacao and clove with hints of tobacco and a long finish of dried plum and caramelised walnut. The striking decanter is decorated with platinum, silver and 24-karat gold.

Mezcal RRP $70 - $99.99

Mezcal Monte Alban
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $79.99
Federal

Monte Alban Mezcal is produced with no added neutral spirits and no artificial additives. It's a solid 100% agave mezcal, with a mezcal worm in each bottle. A brilliant golden amber colour with hints of smoky agave and pineapple, it's ideal for agave-based cocktails.

Del Maguey San Luis Del Rio Crema de Mezcal
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $89.99
Pernod Ricard

A unique combination of roasted agave syrup and mezcal. It has a nose of roast agave, vanilla and pear, and notes of creamy almond, apple, coffee and pineapple on the palate with a long, sweet, smoky orange finish.

Del Maguey San Luis Del Rio VIDA Mezcal
42% ABV, 750ml RRP $89.99
Pernod Ricard

An artisanal organic mezcal, handcrafted and twice distilled slowly in small wood-fired, riverside copper stills. It has aromas of fruit, honey, vanilla and roasted agave, with a palate of ginger, cinnamon, burnt sandalwood, banana and tangerine.

Amigos Aotearoa
37% ABV, 750ml RRP $99
B&R Beverages

This mezcal was created especially for the New Zealand market – its creators worked with a Maestro Mezcalero in Mexico to come up with the flavour profile of Amigos Aotearoa. It has the smoky aroma and flavour that is the hallmark of mezcal, which deepens on the palate. It's super smooth with a hint of sweetness.

Don Ramón Mezcal
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $99.99
EuroVintage

This mezcal is made from 100% Salmiana agave from Zacatecas, grown for eight to ten years. It has an earthy smokiness and notes of herbs, florals, and fresh citrus layered with a subtle fruity finish.

Mezcal RRP $100 - $149.99

Derrumbes Durango
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $105
Mineral

Floral and earthy on the nose, this mezcal turns to sweet and fruity on the palate with mango, strawberry, wildflower honey, cooked agave, and a hint of minerality.

Mal Bien Zacate Limón
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $105
Mineral

Freshly cut lemongrass adds a special twist to this mezcal, which was created originally by Maestro Mezcalero Lucio Morales as a gift to his wife. The lemongrass is added to the stills before the second distillation, and a bit more is macerated in the finished product for extra aromatics and colour. Zacate Limón is a bright and lively expression of Espadín agave that adds an extra dimension to classic mezcal cocktails or works as a fun gin substitute.

Mezcal Embees Jaguar Joven
38% ABV, 750ml RRP $105
Ay Caramba

A fresh, intense mezcal made from 100% Espadín agave. Mineral and herbal notes on the nose, with cooked agave, wet soil, eucalyptus, and citrus. Pronounced flavours of cooked agave, earth, minerals, and citrus. Well-balanced with a lingering finish.

Motel Mezcal
43% ABV, 750ml RRP $105.99
EuroVintage

Produced by a third-generation maestro mezcalero, Motel Mezcal is made from agave grown for a minimum of eight years, cooked on volcanic stones and double-distilled with no additives or sugars. A smooth and refined mezcal – velvety on the palate, balanced with notes of ripe banana, pineapple, mild oak, and a subtle smoky finish.

Mezcal Vago El Manantial
43% ABV, 750ml RRP $109.99
Hancocks

An approachable, artisanal Espadín mezcal crafted in Tapanala, Oaxaca. Fully mature agave is roasted in underground pits, naturally fermented and distilled in copper stills before being proofed with local spring water. This mezcal has a soft, creamy and tropical profile, with bright agave, fruit and mineral notes.

Mezcal Umbe Coyote Reposado
38% ABV, 750ml RRP $110
Ay Caramba

This mezcal is aged for six months and has aromas of whipped cream, vanilla, dried fruit, cinnamon and cloves. On the palate there are hints of vanilla, cinnamon, grapefruit, coffee and spicy wood. The lingering finish has accents of cooked agave.

Derrumbes Zacatecas
46% ABV, 700ml RRP $112
Mineral

This mezcal has complex aromas of mixed berry jam, pine wood, celery, brine, prosciutto and light smoke. It's sweet and lightly floral in the mouth with raspberry, papaya, rosewater, sugarcane syrup, and a touch of chalk.

Xha Papá Espadín Joven
38% ABV, 750ml RRP $113
Mineral

Xha Papá is made in the small town of El Coyul, Yautepec in the state of Oaxaca. Maestros Mezcaleros the Bautista brothers harvest agave from various altitudes (200-800m above sea level) to create a joven mezcal as a very pure expression of the Espadín cultivar.

Mezcal Corazón
38% ABV, 750ml RRP $115
Ay Caramba

This 100% Espadín agave mezcal is based on a family recipe passed down through three generations. It is slightly sweet with the body, aroma and flavour of an aged mezcal but remains a young spirit, never rested in barrel.

Derrumbes San Luis Potosí
48% ABV, 700ml RRP $117
Mineral

Aromas of fresh pico de gallo, lime, sauerkraut, green chilli and sharp gorgonzola create a savoury and funky opening to this mezcal. The palate leads with apple and lychee, quickly joined by salsa verde and blue cheese.

Paquera Mezcal Espadín
42.5% ABV, 750ml RRP $119
socialsmiths

A traditional mezcal made by fifth-generation mezcalero Juan Hernandez. It uses seven-year-old Espadín agave roasted for six days in an earthen oven and crushed using a horse-drawn tahona (stone mill).

Gracias a Dios Espadín Joven
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $120
Tickety-Boo

This mezcal is made from 100% Espadín agave, grown for eight years. Flavours of spice and smoke give way to sweet fruits and a hint of citrus. Dry and spicy on the finish.

Gracias a Dios Espadín Mango
43% ABV, 700ml RRP $120
Tickety-Boo

A clean, bright, dry mezcal made with mangoes grown on the Oaxacan coast. It is full of mango character – from the initial aroma through to a palate of tropical sweetness with notes of creamy custard.

Gracias a Dios Espadín Piña
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $120
Tickety-Boo

This special edition mezcal is made with a different fruit each year by Gracias a Dios' mezcal maestro, Oscar Hernandez, who always gives a bottle to his local priest. This release uses pineapple, which adds a tropical sweetness to the traditional smoky character of mezcal.





Bañuelos Tequilana Joven
46% ABV, 700ml RRP $124
Mineral

The Bañuelos family began producing mezcal in 1915 in the municipality of Tequila, Jalisco. Today, they are based in the southern region of Zacatecas, where Maestro Mezcalero Jaime Bañuelos makes this expression using the iconic Tequilana agave from western Mexico.

Gracias a Dios Espadín Reposado
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $125
Tickety-Boo

This 100% Espadín agave mezcal is aged for four months in American oak. It has aromas of spicy oak, wild herbs and citrus pith, while the palate adds spice, smoke and minty, fruity elements. Balanced and fragrant, with earthy notes.

Derrumbes Destilado de Agave Tamaulipas
47% ABV, 750ml RRP $130
Mineral

A blend of three different agaves: Funkiana and Univittata (endemic to the Tamaulipas area), and Americana. The result is a high-energy spirit that feels sweet, dry and rich with layers of flavour and aroma.

Los Siete Misterios Doba-Yej
44% ABV, 700ml RRP $130
Tickety-Boo

Described as the 'entry point' to the Los Siete Misterios range, the Doba-Yej is a well-balanced mezcal: it has all the characteristics of a great mezcal to serve neat, as well as the character and strength to be mixed.

Verde Amaras Espadín Joven
42% ABV, 1L RRP $130
Mineral

Made using eight-year-old Espadín agave, this mezcal is herbaceous and subtly smoky. Smooth and bright on the palate with approachable smoky notes of cooked agave and hints of spice, caramel, ripe peach and grassy notes.

Derrumbes Michoacán
45% ABV, 750ml RRP $133
Mineral

A combination of Michoacán's iconic Chino and Alto agaves creates this mezcal. Chino brings mature fruit notes while Alto adds a delicate herbaceous character. It is kept under the red clay floor of the taberna in pinewood-lined pits to protect it from low temperatures before distillation.

Del Maguey Chichicapa Single Village Mezcal
46% ABV, 700ml RRP $134.99
Pernod Ricard

Complex flavours with abundant citrus and a long smooth finish with overtones of mint.

Mezcal RRP $150 - $199.99

Gracias a Dios Coyote
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $160
Tickety-Boo

This mezcal has aromas of herbs and grapefruit peel while cooked agave adds a caramel quality to the palate, and the finish is smooth, long and smoky.

Gracias a Dios Madre Cuishe
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $160
Tickety-Boo

An earthy and herbal mezcal with lemon, cucumber and peppermint. A smoky character too, with notes of caramelised sugar.

Gracias a Dios Mexicano
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $160
Tickety-Boo

This mezcal opens with an intense tobacco aroma with dried herbs and spices, meatiness, and a hint of citrus. Minerality on the finish.

Gracias a Dios Tepextate
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $160
Tickety-Boo

Smoke, minerality, grapefruit and lime peels, dried fruit and an earthiness combine in this mezcal.

Bañuelos Masparillo Joven
48% ABV, 700ml RRP $165
Mineral

The lesser-known Masparillo agave is at the heart of this mezcal from the fourth-generation Bañuelos family of mezcaleros. Earthy flavours alongside sweet roasted fruit and a savoury finish.

Bañuelos Tepemete Joven
48% ABV, 700ml RRP $180
Mineral

Tepemete is a wild subvariety of agave that is often overlooked for commercial production as it is much smaller than other varieties and relatively scarce and difficult to harvest as it prefers arid mountain terrain. A refined and complex mezcal with earthy, savoury, and vegetal character.

Mezcal RRP $200 and above

Los Siete Misterios Ensamble Espadín/Cuishe
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $210
Tickety-Boo

This blend of Espadín and Cuishe agave has opening notes of herbs and citrus that lead to tobacco, pepper, and olive.

Los Siete Misterios Ensamble Espadín/Mexicanito
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $210
Tickety-Boo

A blend of Espadín and Mexicanito, with notes of freshly cut herbs and bright citrus balanced with smoky chillies and roasted vegetables.

Los Siete Misterios Clay Pot Espadín
50% ABV, 700ml RRP $240
Tickety-Boo

This mezcal displays rich minerality with notes of avocado leaf, fresh herbs, flowers, and citrus.

Los Siete Misterios Ensamble Espadín/Tobalá
45% ABV, 700ml RRP $255
Tickety-Boo

A blend of Espadín and Tobalá, an agave renowned for its complexity and balance, showing notes of citrus, herbs, and chamomile.

Los Siete Misterios Clay Pot Coyote
47% ABV, 700ml RRP $340
Tickety-Boo

Coyote is a rare agave that is easily mistaken for the Arroqueño. This expression combines notes of dry, scented herbs such as holy leaf, epazote, and pine needles with the bright citrus aromas of lime and grapefruit peel.

Los Siete Misterios Clay Pot Tobalá
46.5% ABV, 700ml RRP $510
Tickety-Boo

Considered the crown jewel of agave varietals, Tobalá is renowned for its complexity and balance. This expression features notes of tropical fruits, herbs, and piloncillo (Mexican cane sugar).

Clase Azul Mezcal Guerrero
42% ABV, 750ml RRP $612
Tickety-Boo

The Papalote agave – native to the humid highlands in the state of Guerrero – is at the heart of this mezcal, which has distinctive flavours of freshly cut wood, seaweed, lemon juice, pepper, and light notes of tobacco.

Clase Azul Mezcal San Luis Potosí
43% ABV, 750ml RRP $612
Tickety-Boo

Aromas of cooked agave, caramel, green chilli, sweet fruit and freshly cut grass lead to flavours of herbs, hints of caramel, lime zest and clove, with a mineral and spiced aftertaste.

Clase Azul Mezcal Durango
40% ABV, 750ml RRP $900
Tickety-Boo

This mezcal is made with Cenizo agave endemic to the semi-arid highlands in the state of Durango in northern Mexico. The layered palate has herbal notes with lemon peel and charred agave and a long and subtle spiced and smoky finish.

For distributor details see the Distributor Index on page 66.





Agave spirits

Not tequila and not mezcal – try these distinctive agave spirits.

Ay Caramba Rustic 100% Destilado de Agave
38% ABV, 700ml RRP $69
Ay Caramba

This is a limited-release agave spirit from Auckland-based Mexican specialty store Ay Caramba. It's handcrafted in Mexico from 100% agave in the same way as tequila using traditional methods, but can't be labelled as such due to Denomination of Origin regulations. It's an unfiltered, rustic-style batch designed to showcase the true character of agave with herbal and pepper aromas and a palate of gentle spice, mint, citrus and earthy undertones with a long agave-forward finish.

NODO Tequilana Blanco
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $85
Mineral

This agave spirit is produced by the Bañuelos family in Zacatecas, just outside Mexico's official Denomination of Origin region for tequila – hence NODO (No Denomination). It's a classic style in every sense except the regulatory name. NODO Blanco has a crisp and vibrant agave character with fresh, earthy flavours. Smooth and approachable.

NODO Tequilana Reposado
40% ABV, 700ml RRP $88
Mineral

This rested expression from NODO spends four months in ex-bourbon American oak casks, creating oak character and a golden colour.



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Stay and play

Sarah Miller visits a remote Swedish distillery that has built a global tourism brand...





WHEN JON Hillgren founded Sweden's first gin distillery in 2011, his vision was not only to create the world's best gin, but to prove it was possible to build a global destination brand that would attract visitors to the remote region he calls home.

While the countless awards that adorn every surface at the Hernö Gin Distillery are testament to the quality of his gin, getting people to the tiny hamlet of Dala (10km from the small city of Härnösand and nearly 450km north of Stockholm) has always been challenging. Thankfully, the opening of the Hernö Gin Hotell in 2025 made it a little easier (and a lot more enjoyable) – as I discovered when I made the pilgrimage in September.

The Hernö Gin Distillery stands beside Jon's family home in Dala, on Sweden's High Coast. The challenges created by this remote and often snowbound location are compounded by Sweden's strict alcohol policy, which allows the distillery to host tours and tastings but prevents it from offering free samples or selling bottles on site. With sales restricted to the shelves of the state-owned Systembolaget liquor stores, and the advertising of all drinks above 15% ABV also effectively prohibited, Jon had to find other ways to reach his audience.

He decided to take his gin to the people and opened Stockholm's Hernö Gin Bar in 2021. Located on the ground floor of a former bank in trendy Södermalm, the beautiful bar is bedecked with row upon row of Hernö Gin, and acts as a form of marketing and an opportunity for visitors to try neat samples, tasting flights and superb cocktails.

It was an immediate success and a second site opened in Gothenburg. However, Jon's real ambition was to get people to the distillery, and as the nearby town of Härnösand had no hotel that could equal that experience, he decided to build one.

Far from straightforward, the project took two years to plan, two years to build and required raising €20 million. Alongside that, the municipality's terms of sale required Hernö to take over the running of the neighbouring leisure centre. But it was worth it, and not just because it enabled Jon to plaster the company name across the top of the 122-room, nine-storey structure!

If you were picturing a small boutique or themed hotel, think again. While there are plenty of wonderful details for gin lovers – from the touches of copper in the interior design (echoing the distillery's copper stills) to the bespoke juniper and lemon zest toiletries – this hotel isn't only for tourists: it's also for the city. In addition to adding a swish spa to the leisure centre, and providing the city with an excellent restaurant and much-needed meeting spaces (all named after gin cocktails), the hotel has also created valuable jobs for residents of the small town, whether they want to stay in Härnösand or gain experience in hospitality before leaving home.

Building the hotel didn't guarantee anyone would come, of course. In addition to working closely with the regional tourism authority, Hernö offers a selection of curated packages to elevate the guest experience. Its Gin Weekend – which includes a round-trip to the distillery, two-hour gin tasting and three-course dinner – is so popular that demand always exceeds the distillery's 72-person capacity.

There are few experiences as powerful as being fully immersed in a brand for 48 hours.

There are few experiences as powerful as being fully immersed in a brand for 48 hours: sipping on a spirit where it is made, seeing the landscape it originates from, and meeting the people who make it. The Hernö Gin Hotell also proves that location needn't be an obstacle. If getting there is challenging, that can make it feel exclusive. And if the experience outweighs the effort guests have made to get there, they're sure to leave as passionate ambassadors.

But it's also crucial to remember that the weather will turn and the tourists will go home. And when that happens it's more important than ever to ensure you've also created a hub where you can serve the community and they can support you.

Sarah Miller stayed at the Hernö Gin Hotell as a guest of Jon Hillgren.

LITTLE
BIDDY

MADE WITH REAL NEW ZEALAND SPIRIT



BY REEFTON DISTILLING CO.

Archie Rose debuts new-look whiskies

ARCHIE ROSE Distilling is launching a refreshed look and identity for its core whiskies alongside a new release and a global campaign created by and starring Chris Hemsworth.

The launch follows the August announcement that Hemsworth, a longtime Archie Rose fan, had joined founder Will Edwards as co-owner.

The refreshed range presents Archie Rose's award-winning Single Malt Whisky and Straight Rye Malt Whisky (formerly Rye Malt Whisky) in new packaging with the liquids and production methods unchanged. New to the core range is Australian Original Whisky, which was created in collaboration with Hemsworth and marries the distillery's Straight Rye Malt and Single Malt Whiskies.

The three whiskies are now available in New Zealand through distributor Hancocks.

Archie Rose Distilling says that Hemsworth has drawn



on his deep connection to Australia's landscape to play a leading role in reimagining the brand's identity, including a custom bottle design and new packaging across the portfolio.

Inspired by the idea of being "forged from the earth", the flask-shaped bottle balances refinement with a distinctly Australian sense of grit. Texture within the glass evokes the earth in which the range's barley and rye are grown, while the labels and box packaging draw cues from the Australian landscape.

Archie Rose Distilling says the lighter glass bottle and redesigned box structure also reduce overall packaging weight and improve freight efficiency and sustainability.

The global creative campaign debuted in late October and features Chris Hemsworth (who also produced) alongside his brother Luke.

Hancocks

Special release marks Cardrona Day 2026

CARDRONA DISTILLERY turns 11 this year and the annual celebration (marking the day the first cask was laid) saw a very special whisky released on 5 November. Master Distiller Sarah Elsom selected an ex-Pedro Ximénez 500L butt and bottled it at 53% ABV for this year's Cardrona Day whisky, with just over 700 bottles available. The distinctive PX characters of sweet raisin and spice sit beautifully alongside ginger, fresh figs and nutmeg.

Cardrona Distillery



New Fireball Blazin' Apple

THERE'S A new addition to the Fireball Cinnamon Whisky range with the arrival of Fireball Blazin' Apple, available now through distributor Federal.

The new Blazin' Apple flavour is described as spicy, crisp and bold – offering a fresh twist on a familiar favourite where green apples meet red-hot cinnamon. Available in 700ml, 200ml and 50ml.



Federal

Next-level mixers from Veranda





DISTILLER MIKEY Ball of Wellington's Woodward Street Distilling has created two new intricately crafted additions for their Veranda mixer range. Manzanilla Olive Tonic is a savoury, dry style lifted by citrus notes of lime and yuzu. It's ideal with more savoury gins or a blanc vermouth. Volcanic Soda Water elevates soda to a new level – Ball describes it as having "an Okinawan water profile", meaning it's harder than average water with coral calcium, magnesium and a touch of bicarbonate and is designed to showcase the partner spirit in a highball. The two new releases join Veranda's bright pomelo-driven Citrus Maxima tonic.

The Veranda range is RRP $14.99 for a 150ml 8-pack.

Woodward Street Distilling Co.

Michter's the Most Admired Whiskey

LOUISVILLE-BASED DISTILLER Michter's has ranked #1 on the 2026 list of The World's Most Admired Whiskies published by *Drinks International* – marking the fourth consecutive year that it has topped the list of 50 celebrated distilleries from around the world. Michter's portfolio includes bourbon, rye, sour mash whiskey and American whiskey.

The annual rankings are determined by an academy of independent global drinks buyers,



journalists, bartenders and whisky experts from more than 25 countries and are widely considered the definitive list of the world's best whiskies.

Tickety-Boo

First NZ gin producer shortlisted for IWSC global title



ISLAND GIN has become the first New Zealand gin distillery to be shortlisted for the IWSC International Gin Producer of the Year Trophy.

Created by distiller Andi Ross in 2019, the off-grid, solar-powered distillery on Aotea Great Barrier Island was one of only seven gin producers globally named on the 2026 shortlist.

The trophy winner will be announced at an awards ceremony in London in late November.

The International Gin Producer of the Year Trophy celebrates sustained quality and consistency across a producer's entire range. To qualify for the shortlist, a producer must enter at least three products in the relevant category, every entry must receive an IWSC medal, and the results must include at least two Gold medals or one Gold Outstanding medal.

Andi Ross developed Island Gin after she began experimenting with a small alembic copper still and ingredients gathered on Aotea. Local mānuka bush honey became the signature botanical in Island Original Gin and the brand became known for its distinctive kina-inspired bottle made in New Zealand from 70% recycled glass.

New arrivals at Ay Caramba

SPECIALTY MEXICAN distributor Ay Caramba has added three new spirits to its range that showcase distinctly different flavours of Mexico.

Nixta Licor de Elote is a premium Mexican corn liqueur made from heirloom variety Cacahuazintle maize using the traditional 'nixtamalization' process, a technique that has been part of Mexican culture for thousands of years. It's a unique liqueur, smooth and rich with aromas of toasted corn, vanilla and caramel, followed by a silky palate with notes of sweet roasted corn, buttered popcorn and subtle spice.

Ancho Reyes Original is a liqueur made from sun-dried, hand-selected ancho chillies (dried ripe poblano chillies), that adds bold, smoky, and spicy-sweet character to drinks. Ancho Reyes Verde is made from poblano chillies that are picked while still green and then fire-roasted before maceration for a hint of spiciness and a smooth finish.



Ay Caramba

Bluff distiller joins senior ranks of UK's Gin Guild

BLUFF DISTILLERY co-founder and Head Distiller Chris Fraser has been admitted to a top level of The Gin Guild at a ceremony in the UK.

Fraser attended The Gin Guild's Autumn Installation and Banquet at Mansion House in the City of London in October, where he was made a Warden Rectifier, which recognises outstanding achievements by gin founders and brand owners. Warden Rectifiers take a traditional oath to 'protect, promote, and invigorate the distillation of gin'.

Bluff Distillery is the first New Zealand distillery to be recognised at this level.

The Gin Guild is an international gin-industry body, led by global gin distillers, dedicated to promoting and recognising excellence in gin distillation, sales, marketing, and service worldwide. Its members range from the world's most recognised gin producers through to emerging independent distilleries.

"When we started, the ambition was pretty simple. Make a world-class London Dry gin in Bluff and see how far we could take it," says Fraser. "To now see Bluff, New Zealand represented at Warden Rectifier level within The Gin Guild is a pretty special moment for us and, we hope, for New Zealand gin."

Since launching Bluff London Dry Gin in 2024, the distillery has become an internationally recognised producer. In 2026, its Bluff London Dry Gin was named Best Gin in Show and awarded Platinum at the Los Angeles Spirits Awards, following Best Overall Classic Gin at the 2026 New Zealand Spirits Awards, Best in Show at the Australian Gin Awards, Product of the Year at The Gin Guide Awards, Ultra-Premium Gin Master at The Global Spirits Masters, and Gold at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition.



The Guild's Charles Maxwell with Chris Fraser.

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