

6 liquor trends for 2020

By [Marson Strydom](#)

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With SA Cocktail Week kicking off on 29 February, mixologist at The Really Great Brand Company (RGBC), Marson Strydom, explores some of the shake-ups we can expect to see on shelves, in bars, at festivals and at home in 2020 and beyond.

“Finding a beverage you fancy can be complicated,” says Strydom. With all the varieties and flavour combinations available (there are well over 300 gin brands on the South African market alone), choosing exactly what one wants can be a conundrum. “Consumers are fatigued by an overload of different brand labels, shapes and colours. Customers tend to shop with their eyes – anything pretty gets picked up. Yesterday, pink was a colour, today, it’s a flavour.”



As long as there is an abundance of liquor products on our shelves, consumers will continue to ‘drink pink’. But will consumers follow the fads in ‘twenty plenty’ or will they fold and stay with what works for them?

Simplicity is key

Over-the-top cocktails and sugary concoctions are fizzling out as mixologists turn back the clock and serve the classics. Gone are the days of frivolous garnishes and flavour enhancers that dilute a drink for what it is. Savouring a simple, classic drink allows us to appreciate its true taste and quality.



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10 Jan 2020



A health-and-wellness approach

The growth of a health and wellness culture has spilt over into the liquor market. As consumers become more aware of what they put into their bodies, there is a greater need for high-quality, low alcohol by volume (ABV) and alcohol-free products. We have already seen a rise in non-alcoholic products on shelves – even the launch of an alcohol-free drinking festival to celebrate sobriety – as well as low-calorie spritzers and mixes. You can expect this health trend to grow.



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9 Oct 2019



Conveniently canned

Alcoholic beverages are increasingly being packaged in ready-to-drink (RTD) varieties to satisfy consumers' needs for convenience. One-litre bottles and two-litre mixes are making way for easy-to-handle innovations like gin-in-a-tin and pocket-sized spirits for consumption on the go. No longer do you have to carry around multiple mixes and ingredients to make a drink, because it's all conveniently canned.

Sustainability on the brain

Consumers are basing buying decisions not only to quench their thirst – albeit with a kick – but also on whether a brand aligns with their lifestyles. While 'low calorie' and 'alcohol-free' are important factors, sustainability is seemingly the number one draw card when choosing products.

"Local brands are embracing sustainable processes, ingredients, packaging and paying it forward with community and environmental projects. At The Really Great Brand Company, we're dedicated to the survival of all things classically South African. That's why for our Wixworth gin brand in particular, for every bottle of Wixworth sold, we contribute to stoprhinopoaching.com to help in the fight against rhino poaching," says Strydom.



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Embracing SA flavours

There's a growing culture among local brands that embrace South African culture and local ingredients.

Gin still #1

Gin is still on the rise and will be for a while. "We'll see new gins come and go over the next two years, along with up and coming craft spirits like spiced and botanical rums, but we'll also see gins form a solid foundation that will carry them for years to come," says Strydom. "Innovation will subside and we'll see a great number of gins being discontinued. Consumers will fall back into their comfort zone and purchase what they are most confident in.