

# Unravelling the latest trends driving change in the beer industry

Issued by [JNPR](#)

4 Aug 2023

As the world celebrates International Beer Day on 4 August, the beer industry is witnessing a transformative phase driven by shifting consumer preferences and an increasing demand for innovative alcoholic beverages among millennials and Generation-Z drinkers. With a focus on meeting these evolving demands, the industry has experienced exponential growth and a surge in craft beer popularity.



These key trends are shaping the future of the beer market, impacting its formulation, style, and overall consumption:

## **Adapting to consumer demands: The beer industry's ongoing revolution**

The modern beer industry is evolving rapidly to accommodate the changing tastes and preferences of consumers. Demand for diversified beer styles and easy-drinking options have grown significantly in the past five years, resulting in a 40% increase in the share of easy-drinking beers worldwide. South Africa, ranked by the Beer Association of SA as the 12th largest beer-consuming nation globally, has also witnessed remarkable changes in the past decade, with a strong entry of small independent beer brands and craft beers into the market.

## **The rise of craft beer: Quality and flavour take centre stage**

The craft beer category continues to expand, differentiating itself from traditional beer by its innovative, complex and flavourful elements. Craft brewers prioritise high-quality ingredients and unique brewing techniques to cater to the growing preference for quality among consumers, this is according to Market Research Future. This inclination towards quality is also evident in the 2023 Liquor Retailing in South Africa report, published by Trade Intelligence. According to the report, alcohol buying trends are changing among consumers as a result of tough economic conditions. Consumers' focus on value and quality are essential drivers in their purchasing decisions.

## **Embracing health-conscious drinking habits**

The Covid-19 pandemic inspired a change in beer consumption. Consumers have become increasingly health-conscious, leading to a transformation in beer consumption habits. The trend includes a growing demand for low-alcohol options that align with health and fitness goals, with consumers even monitoring calorie intake. Mindful of what goes into their bodies, moderation in beer consumption is now a top priority for many.

Heineken Beverages remain at the forefront of changing consumer preferences, and taking these insights into account the brand has developed a new product that not only meets the demand but contributes to the advancement of beer.

### **Heineken Silver: A game-changer for the next generation**

Catering to the evolving preferences of the younger generation (18–35 years old) with a different taste profile, Heineken has unveiled its latest offering - Heineken Silver. This new addition to the Heineken family caters for the rising demand for easy-drinking beer among next-generation drinkers. With an alcohol by volume (ABV) of only 4% and 10 bitterness units, the beer contains a mere 116 calories in every 330ml bottle, making it a perfect fit for daytime social occasions.

As the beer industry continues to navigate the ever-changing landscape of consumer preferences, craft beer's rise, and health-conscious drinking habits, breweries worldwide are actively innovating to stay relevant. On this World Beer Day, enthusiasts raise their glasses to a dynamic and exciting future for the beer industry, fuelled by the latest trends driving its evolution.

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