

# Christmas Drinking - UK - November 2010

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## What is this report about?

While Christmas remains the key time of year for alcohol sales, changing attitudes towards alcohol and adverse economic conditions have had a negative impact on its sales over the past decade and in particular over the past two Christmas periods.

## What have we found out?

- Christmas is the perfect time for brands to attract 18-34 year-old drinkers. For example, over half (53%) of this age group who are Christmas drink buyers try something outside of their usual repertoire of drinks during the festive period.
- Alcohol manufacturers have an opportunity to help make people good hosts. For example, six in ten stock up for when guests come around, and they can benefit from party packs, containing small bottles of a variety of spirits and wines, to satisfy all guest's tastes.
- Improved packaging that highlights limited editions or premium USPs such as vintage for wine or age for spirits is crucial in appealing to the 21 million adults who buy alcohol as a gift over Christmas. This is essential because these buyers include non-drinkers who lack detailed knowledge of key gifting products such as Scotch.
- Premium brands need to find ways to appeal to bargain hunters at Christmas rather than just rely on their name and prestige, as while three-quarters of UK alcohol buyers look for bargains at Christmas, a quarter also wants more expensive drinks than usual, with there being considerable overlap between the two needs.
- While older (55+) consumers are more likely to be better off at the moment, younger (18-34) adults still represent the most valuable target for alcohol producers at Christmas time. They are more optimistic that their finances will get better over the coming year and much more likely to see Christmas as a time for drinking in greater quantity.
- Online is an increasingly important retail channel for alcohol at Christmas. The three in ten UK adults Mintel identifies as most likely to spend comfortably over Christmas 2010 are 8% points more likely than average to use this method, which allows them to buy in bulk more conveniently

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