

Beer - UK - December 2012

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"Drinkers are increasingly looking for pubs to make imaginative choices with their range of drinks and those which stick to safe options of just mainstream brands are likely to struggle to win over beer enthusiasts."

– Chris Wisson, Senior Drinks Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

- How can the on-trade beer market better convey value for money to curb its decline?
- Can lager soften its unhealthy associations?
- Can craft brewers balance exclusivity with wider appeal?
- Can British brewers follow the lead of cider and leverage regionality?

This report looks at the UK market for beer sold in both the on-trade, ie out-of-home outlets such as pubs, restaurants and clubs where the drink is consumed on the premises, and the off-trade (or take-home) market, eg supermarkets, off-licences and convenience stores.

The beer market is divided into three main segments:

- Lager can broadly be described as a light/amber, clear, carbonated beer brewed with pale-kilned malts which, after fermentation, is filtered, pasteurised and conditioned before being packaged in cans, bottles or kegs for sale. This is, however, a very broad definition, and as consumers' tastes become more sophisticated, there is a growing interest in darker lagers using different malts, sometimes referred to as red and black lagers, organic beers and even fruit-flavoured lagers.
- Ale. Ale is sometimes referred to by consumers as mild or bitter, but the term 'ale' is used throughout this report. This refers to top-fermented beers that are traditionally described as British or Irish. These beers are so called because the yeast floats to the surface during fermentation, as opposed to lagers, which are bottom-fermented. Barley wine is simply a beer with a very high ABV.
- Stout is a derivative of porter, originally an 18th century brown mild ale. Stout is a black, dense beer, which is usually top-fermented, and made with dark roasted barley and an abundance of hops, which provide the characteristic flavour.

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