

On Trade Alcoholic Beverage Trends - China - April 2013

Report Price: £2463.80 | \$3990.00 | €3129.79

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In this report we answer the key questions:

Definition

This report covers the sale of alcoholic drinks through on-trade outlets within the People's Republic of China.

Alcoholic drinks:

- beer (eg lager, ale, cider)
- wine (eg red wine, white wine, rosé wine)
- Chinese spirits
- Champagne/other sparkling wine (eg Prosecco, Cava)
- Western spirits (eg whiskey, vodka).

On-trade outlets:

China's on-trade alcoholic drinks market remains highly fragmented, making marketing through on-trade outlets a difficult task. This is especially true considering the increasingly diverse range of consumer lifestyles that have emerged in recent years, coupled with increasing diversity of the types of outlets that Chinese people can now choose between. Not only have their lifestyles diversified, but the occasions and social situations that Chinese people are creating reasons for going out to eat and drink have also diversified, each according to different consumer groups and their particular needs and aspirations.

Out-of-home alcoholic drinks consumption in China is most often linked to the occasion of eating out, and this has a direct bearing on which types of drinks are likely to be consumed in different locations. Restaurants dominate the market, but diversifying lifestyles are also creating opportunities for a more diverse range of outlets, and new means of adapting drinks brands promotions to take advantage of that diversity. However, little coordinated marketing between drinks brands and on-trade outlets is yet to be seen, and there is a great opportunity for brands to advance their market position by improving on-trade marketing.

This is especially so given that consumers have shown a stronger tendency to being more open to trying new products and brands when they are drinking out of home compared to when buying via retail channels. It is much easier for drinks brands to stand out at on-trade outlets than from out of crowded supermarket drinks shelves. As competition in the market intensifies, engaging more directly with consumers to develop brand recognition and uptake will become even more important for the alcoholic drinks industry, and on-trade outlets provide the best environment in which to achieve that.

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