Consumer Countries/Markets

Inside the Finnish market

Traditionally the Finns have been an enthusiastic bunch when it comes to beer and neutral, vodka-like spirits. And Finland has a bit of a reputation when it comes to alcoholic beverages. Whether it’s because of the cold climate or the long, dark winter, there has always been a thirst for a soul-warming tipple or two.

The average Finn – assuming there is such a thing – drinks a bit more red wine than white, and the wine is most likely from Chile. Over 28% of the red wine sold through Alko is from Chile.

The restaurant and bar scene in Finland is evolving fast and there are plenty of places popping up where the wine menu is well thought out. It is in the restaurants that people can explore more interesting wine styles, regions and grape varieties.

38% of all wine sold in Alko comes in a bag-in-box. “Bag-in-box is really important for us. If you consider the amount of wine sold in a BiB and the amount of brands available compared to wine bottles, it’s really an interesting market,” says Meriluoto. “The competition is intense, though. Importers fight over shelf space in Alko, so you really need to support the product with marketing,” he continues. Finnish consumers are used to the 3-L BiBs, but there are more and more 1.5-L and 2-L pouches and BiBs coming into the market. “The thing is, Finns do not love glass. Others might still want their glass bottle with a closure made from a piece of bark, but Finns don’t care if the wine comes in a box, pouch or a plastic can. There is already a generation of people in Finland who were introduced to wine in a bag-in-box and only after they discovered bottled wine.”

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Comment: In 2016 South Africa exported 5 551 452 litres to Finland; 38% in 3 litre Bi-in-B (28% red, 69% white), 30% in 750 ml glass bottles and 26% in bulk.
Respondents report renewed optimism on the economy. But political and trade-related risks continue to loom.

Executives are more upbeat about current economic conditions—both globally and in their home countries—than they were for all of 2016, in McKinsey’s latest survey on the topic. They are nearly twice as likely as in the past two surveys to say conditions in the world economy have improved in recent months, and they report notable improvements in their home economies, too. Their views on the future, though, are more tempered. Respondents are more optimistic than not about economic prospects but doubt conditions will improve much more than they already have.