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BI Daily

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RSA TRENDS

South African province considers Christmas drinks sales curfew

Limpopo deputy police commissioner Major General Jan Scheepers expressed concern about the spike in alcohol-related crime around Christmas and has suggested that the solution is to ban drinks sales after midnight. "We should examine the possibility of earlier closing times for liquor outlets to minimise the post-closing influx of patrons on our streets, enabling our police to focus on preventing crime in our communities," argued Scheepers, as reported by South African news outlet [The Citizen](#).

He also suggested there was a need for educational campaigns to promote mindful drinking and measures to curb excessive noise this December. The proposal is an echo of the prohibition measures South Africa adopted during the Covid-19 pandemic, with the country repeatedly introducing lockdowns – [the fourth alcohol ban also introduced a curfew from 9pm until 4am](#). An attempt was made last year to implement Liquor Act No 5 of 2009 in Limpopo, which was then lifted by the high court in Polokwane.

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GLOBAL TRENDS

Russians buying up alcohol at record pace

In 2024, almost 2 billion litres of alcohol were sold in the Russian retail, which is the highest figure since 2017, according to calculations made by the local alcohol regulator Rosalkogoltobakkontrol (RATK). Vodka, as well as still and sparkling wines, are the top sellers.

Record sales were also observed for still and sparkling wines. Still wine sales for the first 10 months of 2024 amounted to 469m litres, 0.9% more than last year. Sales of sparkling wines increase to 163m litres over the same period. This equates to a 10.9% year-on-year rise for the same period,

and a 61% increase on the first 10 months of 2017. In terms of output, according to data of RATK, 271m litres of still wine and 134.7m litres of sparkling wine were produced in Russia from January to October. According to the agency, these are the highest figures since 2017.

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What Do Consumers Really Think About Organic Wine?

At a time when vineyards are being mothballed or ripped out, there's one type that's expanding — the organic vineyard. According to the OIV's most recent statistics, the world's certified organic surface area increased by an average of 13% per year from 2005 to 2019. There are good reasons for wineries to focus on organic and other forms of certified sustainable viticulture, from the pressure from major buyers like Systembolaget, to a deep concern about the environment.

"They're more likely to be younger than older. They're more likely to live in certain areas than others. They tend to have higher educational backgrounds," he says. "But what's really interesting is that there are two main driving reasons for them to look for organic or other green products: one is the concern over the environment and the other is their own health."

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Outlook for fine wine 'bullish', report finds

Among the trends identified was a rising demand for fine wines around the world, according to 20% of respondents, partly on the back of the continued re-stockings of bars and by restaurants, alongside growth in consumption and spending by those who with higher disposable income who had amassed savings. There was also a general trend of greater spend per bottle of fine wine.

Fine wine continued to be seen as a safe haven investment, prompting the desire among high and ultra high net worth individuals to build private fine wine collections – "scarcity of fine wines in general, continued premiumisation and growth of interest in fine wine across sophisticated individuals in emerging economies," it noted.

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MAJOR WINE PRODUCING COUNTRIES

California 2024 Winegrape Harvest Begins Early and Delivers High Quality

The 2024 California winegrape harvest got off to an early start in many regions following a rainy winter, a cool spring and a warm summer. While some appellations experienced late-season weather events that led to reduced yields, vintners across the state are reporting a high-quality vintage for 2024. Many winegrowers utilized innovative approaches to leverage opportunities and address challenges during this fast-paced growing season and harvest.

California produces about 80% of the nation's wine, making it the world's fourth-largest wine producing region. More than 90% of the state's wine is made in a Certified California Sustainable winery and over 65% of the state's roughly 610,000 vineyard acres are certified to one of California's sustainability programs (Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing, Fish Friendly Farming, LODI

RULES, Napa Green and SIP Certified). California's nearly 6,000 winegrape growers produce more than 100 varieties grown in 154 distinctive American Viticultural Areas throughout the state.

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