vinetur

Fruit-flavored lager sales jumped 34% in Britain's pubs

Tesco has added dedicated shelves as brewers chase younger drinkers in a category that outpaced the wider beer market

Sunday, November 22, 2026



Fruit-flavored lager is gaining ground in Britain, with sales rising in pubs and stores as younger drinkers buy more peach, lemon and orange beers and large brewers move quickly into the category.

The shift is becoming one of the clearest changes in the British beer market at a time when overall beer sales are under pressure. It also has wider implications for the drinks industry, because a sustained move toward fruit lager could affect what pubs put on tap, what supermarkets give shelf space to, and how beer competes with cider, wine and spirits for younger consumers.

At the center of the trend is Jubel, a British fruit-flavored lager brand founded by Jesse Wilson. Wilson said the company grew 94% in the first half of its financial year and that the number of pubs stocking its beer rose by about two-thirds. Around 3,000 pubs now serve Jubel on draft, including sites run by Young’s, Fuller’s and Mitchells & Butlers. At the peak of the summer, Wilson said, the company was selling the equivalent of one and a half pints every second.

Jubel was launched in 2018 after Wilson tried lager mixed with peach syrup on a ski trip in the French Alps, where the combination is common. He said he wanted to create a drink that was less sweet than cider and more refreshing than standard lager. He described the brand’s recent momentum as sudden in appearance but built on years of work.

Industry data point to a broader market move beyond one company. Heineken said in its latest UK beer report that sales of flavored and fruit beer in hospitality venues rose 34%. Worldpanel by Numerator found that sales of flavored lager in supermarkets and other stores climbed nearly a third over the past year to £58.3 million, even as beer sales overall fell 1%.

The same Worldpanel figures showed that 558,000 more shoppers bought flavored lager than a year earlier, bringing the total to 2.3 million. Sales volumes rose 25%, compared with growth of 0.3% across the wider beer market.

Retailers are adjusting. Tesco has introduced dedicated fruit lager sections in 300 stores, a sign that the category is drawing enough brands and shoppers to justify separate space. For brewers and retailers, that matters because it suggests the segment is moving from novelty into a more established part of the beer aisle.

Younger drinkers are an important part of that expansion. Worldpanel found that people under 35 accounted for 17% of spending on flavored lager, compared with 10% of spending on beer overall. Separate YouGov research found that 6% of adults aged 18 to 34 regularly drink fruit beer, against 2% of British adults overall. Nearly three in 10 people aged 25 to 34 had heard of Jubel, while fewer than one in 10 people aged 55 or older knew the brand.

Wilson said Jubel's customer base is split roughly evenly between men and women, unlike the traditionally male-heavy beer market. He said many drinkers first encountered the brand at music festivals and that some customers might otherwise have chosen wine or spirits.

Market research suggests, however, that much of the category's growth is still coming from within beer and cider rather than from other parts of the drinks market. According to Worldpanel, about 42% of sales growth came from shoppers switching from other beers and ciders, while another third came from existing beer and cider buyers adding flavored lager to their purchases. That points to a reshuffling inside the alcohol market even if brands also hope to bring in new drinkers.

The rise of fruit-flavored lager has been strong enough to draw in major brewers. Heineken launched Cruzcampo Sevilla Orange this year. Molson Coors introduced Madrí Excepcional Limón. BrewDog has entered the segment with Cold Beer Peach, joining longer-established products such as Damm Lemon.

Those launches show how quickly big drinks groups are responding. Rather than building entirely new brands, they are using names that already have distribution and recognition. That could make competition harder for smaller companies even in a fast-growing category.

Jubel has raised about £6.5 million since launch, including early backing from C&C Group, the drinks company behind Tennent's. Wilson said C&C's distribution network helped the brand reach more pubs, but he added that Jubel has remained operationally independent. He also said the business is now profitable and has no immediate plan to raise more money.

Pub operators say the demand is visible at bar level. Simon Dodd, chief executive of Young’s, said sales of Jubel across the group’s pubs rose 53% over the past year. A lime-flavored version launched exclusively at Young’s performed well enough to become a permanent offering in some pubs. Dodd said the growth reflected a wider increase in what customers want to drink.

The trend is emerging as Britain’s recent enthusiasm for darker beer appears to be losing some pace. Guinness had become a major hit with younger drinkers, and less than two years ago some pubs struggled to secure enough stock. Earlier in November, Diageo, the owner of Guinness, reported a low-single-digit decline in sales of the stout in Great Britain and Ireland in the three months to September. Chief executive Sir Dave Lewis said unusually hot weather and stronger competition from rival stouts, including cheaper options such as Murphy’s, had contributed to the drop.

Dodd has been more direct in describing changes inside his own estate, saying Guinness has fallen back while beers such as Jubel, Asahi and Hawkstone are performing well. That gap between Diageo’s national figures and one pub operator’s experience suggests the shift may be uneven across the market, with some venues seeing sharper changes than others.

The growth of fruit lager also creates a challenge for premium continental-style lagers that have long dominated the higher end of the market. Brands such as Peroni, Moretti, Estrella, Madrí and Cruzcampo have often sold themselves on image and imported identity. The new demand suggests novelty and flavor may now matter as much as those established cues for some consumers.

Even so, fruit beer remains a small part of the market. YouGov’s data show that only 2% of British adults drink it regularly. The category is still much smaller than the mainstream beer segments it is trying to challenge, and fruit-based alcoholic drinks have often struggled to shake off their association with warm weather and short-lived fashion. Britain’s drinks industry has seen similar cycles before, from alcopops to fruit cider and the craft beer boom, and brewers now have to test whether peach and lemon lagers can hold space on bars and shelves beyond a single summer.