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Wine Gains Ground in Nigeria as Young, Urban Consumers Shift Tastes

Imported and local wines see rising demand despite economic challenges, with spending outpacing beer and spirits among affluent Nigerians

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Wine is becoming a more common choice among Nigerian consumers, even though beer and spirits have traditionally dominated the country's drinking culture. Recent research shows that 7 percent of surveyed Nigerians reported drinking wine more frequently than any other alcoholic beverage in the week before the study. This shift is visible in the market's annual size, which now stands at about 28,000 metric tons. Most of this wine is imported from countries such as France, the United States, Spain, South Africa, and Italy.

Local production of grape-based wine remains limited. However, there is growing interest in regions like Jos and Benue, where the climate is more suitable for grape cultivation. In addition to imported wines, locally made fruit wines—produced from mango, pineapple, palm sap, and plantain—are popular among lower-income groups and are often served at ceremonies and celebrations.

Urban centers such as Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt have historically been the main hubs for wine consumption in Nigeria. Consumers in these cities tend to be wealthier and more exposed to international trends. However, this profile is changing as importers introduce a wider range of wines at different price points and alcohol levels. According to survey data, 71 percent of wine drinkers have at least a university degree, 84 percent are in the middle- or high-income bracket, and 75 percent are between 20 and 40 years old. This points to a younger and increasingly aspirational consumer base.

Wine prices in Nigeria vary significantly. A standard bottle can cost as little as N4,000 (about $3), while premium brands can reach prices comparable to a year's rent in some parts of Lagos. This wide range reflects wine's dual role as both a luxury item and an accessible beverage for a broader audience. To attract more consumers, importers have introduced affordable options with low or no alcohol content. Brands like Eva and Veleta, priced around N4,000 per bottle, have found success among cost-conscious buyers looking for alternatives to beer or spirits.

Spending on wine outpaces other alcoholic beverages in Nigeria. In the first quarter of 2024, Nigerians spent an average of N11,207 per week on wine—more than they spent on spirits (N7,614) or beer (N4,123). Spending patterns also differ by demographic group: those with university degrees spend three times more than average on wine,

and women spend about 25 percent more than men.

When it comes to brand preferences, Nigerians show a strong liking for low-alcohol wines. Brands such as Eva, Pure Heaven, and Veleta hold significant market share. Four Cousins has emerged as a market leader due to its combination of affordability and taste appeal. Taste is the most important factor for Nigerian wine consumers; it drives 60 percent of brand choices. Other factors include perceived health benefits from fruit ingredients (14 percent), flavor variety (8 percent), and brand reputation (6 percent).

Brand loyalty is high among Nigerian wine drinkers: 60 percent regularly buy the same brand because they value consistent taste and familiarity. Still, about 22 percent enjoy trying new labels. This openness creates opportunities for new brands to gain market share by offering innovative flavors or packaging.

Most wine purchases in Nigeria take place through off-trade channels such as supermarkets, shopping malls, and specialized wine shops. This trend reflects changing consumer habits as urbanization increases and modern retail outlets become more common. For companies entering the market or seeking growth, building strong relationships with these retailers is essential for visibility and sales.

Despite its growing popularity, wine consumption in Nigeria faces challenges from economic pressures such as inflation and currency depreciation. These factors have reduced disposable incomes for many Nigerians and could slow short- to medium-term growth in the sector. For most people in Nigeria, wine remains a discretionary purchase rather than an everyday staple.

However, these challenges also create opportunities for local producers who can use domestic raw materials to make affordable alternatives to imported wines. At the same time, demand for premium imported brands is likely to remain strong among high-income consumers. This dynamic may lead to a dual market structure with space for both low-cost local wines and established global brands.

For investors interested in Nigeria’s wine industry, success will depend on timing market entry carefully and targeting the right consumer segments with products that match evolving tastes. A well-organized distribution network and clear brand positioning—whether as an affordable lifestyle beverage or a luxury product—will be

key factors in capturing value in this expanding but competitive market.