

Lower alcohol wine mirrors international trends

Two Oceans has announced the addition to its range of three low-alcohol wines, a red, white and rosé, all at 5.5% alcohol by volume. This range echoes an international trend for a more natural and balanced approach to healthy living.



Designed to be deliberately low in alcohol and calories, the range has an uncompromising stance on quality and taste. As the choice of those wine drinkers looking for health benefits as well as enjoyment, Quay 5 is about more than just taste.

Economic growth

Tough economic conditions both internationally and domestically have affected industries across the board, but for the South African wine industry, there is plenty to smile about. According to SAWIS (the South African Wine Industry Information & Systems), more South Africans are drinking wine, with a 3% increase in month-to-month domestic sales for bottled wines over the last year (as at November 2012).

SAWIS says that the wine industry is showing an upward trend, especially so over the last year, when a stronger rand saw more bottled wine entering the domestic market. A growth in bottled wine consumption in South Africa was seen across all ranges, although there was definitely a stronger interest in more affordable wines. "Health is always important in the alcohol industry, so wines with lower calorie and alcohol content are definitely coming to the fore, which is in line with international trends."

Quay 5 is made from carefully selected grapes with well-balanced ripeness at lower than average alcohol levels and retails at under R30 a bottle. This may be one of its biggest selling points.

According to Ultra Liquors' GM of wine division, Mark Norrish, it is currently all about price for consumers. Norrish said there was a spike in sales of wines in the R20 to R40 bracket, with a strong move towards better value not necessarily lower priced wines per se, but quality wines at more affordable prices. He added that new entrants to the market generally did

well as they offered good quality and value for money.

Black market increases wine consumption

Su Birch, CEO of Wines of South Africa (WOSA) also commented on the increase in local wine consumption, contributing it largely to new drinkers, many of whom are coming from the black community.

She pointed to a significant increase for wine consumed by black wine drinkers. In 2007, black wine drinkers consumed 55% of bottled wine, by 2011, this number had increased by more than two thirds to 66%.

This could be attributed to a new growing middle class interest in wine, as has been seen elsewhere in the world as well, especially in countries with emerging markets like Nigeria and Brazil. South Africans also appear to follow the behaviour of wine consumers in other parts of the world, favouring sweeter and rosé wines. In the US, for instance, there was a significant interest in a Muscato wine in 2011 - a sweet red wine that is lower in alcohol and which gained a lot of popularity under especially younger, hip wine drinkers.

Commercial wines also emerged as a growing trend during 2012, with blends becoming a common choice.

All bodes well for the Quay 5 range, which is aimed at the young-at-heart in South Africa, who are conscious of their weight and health while still wanting to enjoy their wining and dining with friends. The range comprises of Fresh Fruity White, Floral Fresh Blush and Berry Fresh Red.

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