

# Beverage Journal

MARCH 2025

## THE NO-LOW REVOLUTION



A LOW-  
ALCOHOL WINE  
BREAKTHROUGH

THE TOP NON-  
ALCOHOLIC BEERS



04



08



12



13



17

## FEATURES

08  
**EASY LIKE SUNDAY**  
"Sunday . . . Sunday morning . . . Sunday is easy . . . Eggs can be over easy . . . Easy Like Sunday!"

13  
**LOW-ALCOHOL WINE'S BREAKOUT YEAR**  
Key regulatory changes are propelling the low-alcohol wine category forward.

17  
**NON-ALCOHOL BEERS TO STOCK NOW**  
Retailers and bar pros share their favorite non-alcohol brews.

## DEPARTMENTS

02  
**PUB PAGE**  
The enduring relevance of the three-tier system.

04  
**NEW PRODUCTS**

11  
**WINE BUZZ**

12  
**MARCH COCKTAILS**



Cover Credit:  
Adobe Stock



## THE ENDURING RELEVANCE OF THE THREE-TIER SYSTEM

In the wake of Prohibition's repeal, policymakers faced a critical question: How could the country reintroduce beverage alcohol in a way that prevented the societal harms of the pre-Prohibition era while still allowing a responsible marketplace? One of the most influential answers came from **Toward Liquor Control**, the 1933 study commissioned by John D. Rockefeller Jr. and authored by Raymond B. Fosdick and Albert L. Scott.

The book laid the foundation for how alcohol is regulated today, arguing that states should control distribution either through direct government control or strict licensing. This philosophy directly influenced the creation of the three-tier system—where producers, wholesalers, and retailers remain separate—to prevent vertical integration and ensure accountability. Nearly a century later, the principles of **Toward Liquor Control** remain as relevant as ever.

One of the key insights from the book was that beverage alcohol should **not** be treated like an ordinary commodity. The pre-Prohibition era had seen rampant oversupply, aggressive marketing, and lax enforcement, leading to widespread social problems. Fos-



dick and Scott argued that strong state oversight would be essential to keeping beverage alcohol access balanced between economic interests and public welfare.

Today's three-tier system reflects these concerns. By keeping production, distribution, and retail separate, it prevents monopolistic practices, discourages reckless marketing, and ensures tax revenue collection. Without this system, producers could potentially dominate retail sales, leading to excessive promotion and undercutting responsible policies.

Critics argue that the three-tier system is outdated in an era of e-commerce, direct-to-consumer sales, and evolving consumer preferences. However, the system remains a safeguard against industry consolidation and the potential social costs of a deregulated market. The alcohol industry operates differently from other consumer goods, requiring oversight to prevent abuses while still supporting a thriving business environment.

As policymakers and industry leaders debate the future of beverage alcohol regulation, *Toward Liquor Control* serves as a reminder of why the three-tier system was created in the first place. It was never about hindering commerce—it was about ensuring a responsible and sustainable industry. By maintaining state oversight and upholding the principles laid out nearly a century ago, we can balance economic interests with public responsibility in a way that benefits everyone. ■

**STEPHEN PATTEN** PUBLISHER

Maryland • Washington, DC

# Beverage Journal

Published Monthly by  
**The Beverage Journal, Inc.**  
(USPS# PE 783300)

Over 80 Years of Continuous Publication

#### BEVERAGE JOURNAL, INC.

President / Publisher Stephen Patten  
steve@beveragejournalinc.com  
410.796.5455

Board of Directors Lee W. Murray  
Thomas W. Murray

Information Technology Director Peter Williams

#### EDITORIAL

Editor-in-Chief Kristen Bieler

Senior Editor Courtney Schiessl

Contributing Editors Alia Akkam, Arielle Albert,  
Keven Danow, Jim Clarke,  
Edward Durgin, Jeff Siegel

#### ART & DESIGN

Creative Director Larry Lee

Senior Designer Jeff Tsui

#### TECHNOLOGY & WEB

eCommerce Director Ian Griffith

Online Web Programming Vali Balescu

#### PRINT & PRODUCTION

Print Services Manager Lee Stringham

#### ADVERTISING & MARKETING

MD & DC Advertising Sales Stephen Patten

National Advertising Sales Jody Slone-Spitalnik

### POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to  
**THE BEVERAGE JOURNAL, INC.**  
PO Box 2062, Williamsport, PA 17703

The Maryland Beverage Journal and the Washington, DC Beverage Journal are registered trademarks of Beverage Journal, Inc. All rights reserved.

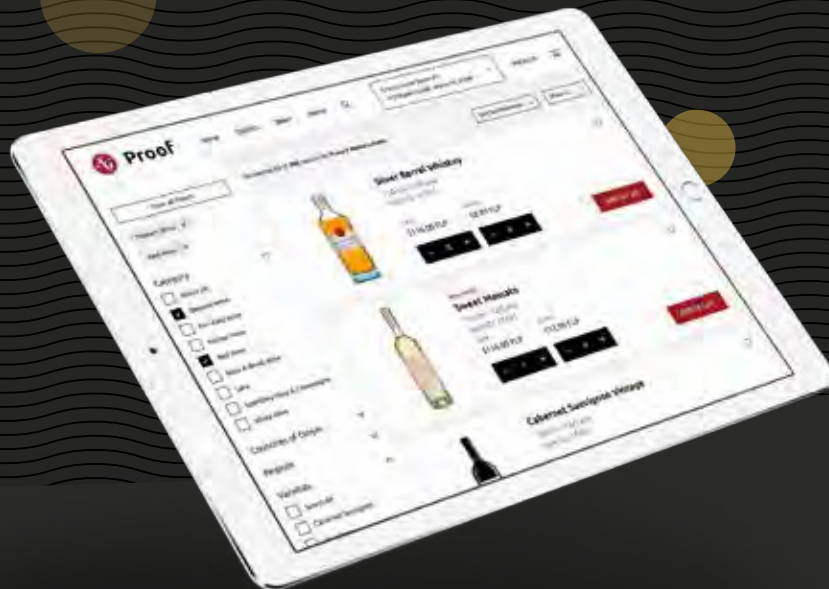
**Periodicals postage paid at Baltimore, MD** and additional mailing offices. Subscription rates: MD edition; 1 year \$49.00 plus tax, 2 years \$79.00 plus tax, 3 years \$109.00 plus tax, FedEx Ground delivery \$85.00 plus tax per year per edition, single copies \$10.00 plus tax. DC edition; 1 year \$36.00 plus tax, 2 years \$60.00 plus tax, 3 years \$83.00 plus tax, FedEx Ground delivery \$85.00 plus tax per year per edition, single copies \$5.00 plus tax.

The opinions expressed by guest columnists are their own and not necessarily those of Beverage Journal, Inc. Beverage Journal, Inc. is an equal opportunity corporation.

Copyright 2025 Beverage Journal, Inc. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written consent of the publisher. Not responsible for unsolicited material or advertising claims.

Turning inventory.  
And heads.

*That's Proof.*



**Proof**<sup>™</sup>  
BY SOUTHERN GLAZER'S

Visit [about.sgproof.com](http://about.sgproof.com) to find out more



1



2



3



4



5



6

## 1. WORLD WHISKEY SOCIETY

Eco-friendly Green Code is the latest innovation from World Whiskey Society. The 96-proof Kentucky straight bourbon whiskey embraces a fully recyclable bottle that flaunts an 84 percent lower carbon footprint and is five times lighter than typical glass options. Its flavors of honey, butterscotch, and dark fruit culminate in a molasses and toasted oak finish.

**\$** SRP: \$49.99 per 750-ml bottle

worldwhiskey.com

## 2. VEUVE CLICQUOT

Conjuring lighthearted balmy evenings, Veuve Clicquot's food-friendly Rich Rosé is a blend of 50 percent Pinot Noir, 30 percent Meunier, and 20 percent Chardonnay that tastes of strawberry, raspberry, redcurrant, and peppermint. Ideally, the sweet Champagne (there are 55 grams per liter of sugar) should be savored poolside over plump ice spheres.

**\$** SRP: \$72 per 750-ml bottle

veuvecliquot.com

## 3. LUXARDO

Italians have long loved Luxardo Del Santo Herbal Liqueur, and it's finally arrived stateside. Distinguished by a blend of infusions, including *Achillea moschata*, mace, *galanga*, cinnamon, carnation, and aromatic *calamus*, its minty and honeyed layers play well in cocktail favorites like the Last Word and Bijou.

**\$** SRP: \$34.99 per 750-ml bottle

luxardousa.com

## 4. MALTYVERSE

Storytelling is at the heart of Maltiverse, a collection of limited-edition whiskies bolstered by comic artworks from British illustrator Carl Harrison. This fictional universe, inaugurated with Cambus Distillery's Agent W and The Secret Auction, expands with a duo of two rare, 96-proof releases dubbed Maltiverse Scenes. A Wreck in Kentucky is Green River Distilling Co.'s six-year-old single barrel bourbon, while No Pressure Whiskey, a five-year-old high-rye single barrel bourbon, comes courtesy of MB Roland Distillery, also in Kentucky.

**\$** SRP: \$89.99 to \$109.99 per 700-ml bottle

maltiverse.com

## 5. TEQUILA HERRADURA

Back in 1870, before the tequila category was recognized, Casa Herradura began producing a blanco, the distillery's sole offering for nearly a century. Now it's back with a 46% ABV bottling, a higher proof than the rest of Herradura's 100 percent agave tequilas. In true commemorative fashion, the historic small-batch release honors the original packaging with a vintage design.

**\$** SRP: \$44.99 per 700-ml bottle

herradura.com

## 6. SURFSIDE

Surfside is ramping up its ready-to-drink portfolio with a handy variety pack of 100-calorie, 4.5% ABV green tea-based libations. In addition to the classic green tea and vodka showcasing real honey- and ginseng-inflected green tea, there are new ripe-for-summer flavors of peach green tea and vodka, mango green tea and vodka, and the half and half, green tea and lemonade with vodka.

**\$** SRP: \$19.99 per eight-pack of 12-oz. cans

drinksurfside.com

# F & N

Manchester, MD 21102

## MAILING SERVICES

Nick Cappadora

Fax: 410-239-8976 **410-239-8087** [fnms1@comcast.net](mailto:fnms1@comcast.net)

*Hand Assembly • Machine Inserting • Data Entry  
Laser Printing • Business Cards, Flyers & Forms  
Screen Printed & Embroidered Apparel  
Advertising Specialties*

*We can provide all of your printing and mailing needs.*

## UPDATES = MORE SALES

Call today for your Assessment!



- ✓ New Doors
- ✓ New Lighting
- ✓ New Shelving = More Facings
- ✓ Serving the entire Mid-Atlantic region



Like us at  
[facebook.com/CAREYSALESANDSERVICES](https://www.facebook.com/CAREYSALESANDSERVICES)



### CAREY SALES & SERVICES

Serving the Local Beverage Industry since 1933

3141 Frederick Ave., Baltimore, MD

410-945-7878 or 800-848-7748 • [careysales.com](http://careysales.com)



7



8



9



10



11



12

### 7. HEAVEN'S DOOR

Housed in a ceramic bottle emblazoned with one of Bob Dylan's lively paintings from The Brazil Series, the limited-release Bootleg Series Volume VI joins the Heaven's Door lineup of whiskeys from the legendary musician. The 121.16-proof blend of 12-, 13-, and 14-year-old wheated bourbons is finished in Limousin cigar barrels and expresses dried fruit and baking spices on the palate.

**\$** SRP: \$499 per 700-ml bottle  
[heavensdoor.com](http://heavensdoor.com)

### 8. WESTLAND DISTILLERY

Seattle's Westland Distillery has unveiled the third edition of Solum. Part of Westland's Outpost Range highlighting the Pacific Northwest terroir, the 100-proof American single malt whiskey, a year older than its predecessor, puts 100 percent Washington peated malt in the spotlight. Sustainably harvested from below the bog's waterline, the peat is unusually earthy and balanced with fruit and jolts of oak imparted by Westland's own refill casks.

**\$** SRP: \$149.99 per 700-ml bottle  
[westlanddistillery.com](http://westlanddistillery.com)

### 9. TÖST BEVERAGES

Along with its minimalist 750-milliliter and 250-milliliter glass bottles, Töst is now available in a versatile canned format. The dry, non-alcoholic bubbly, both the original made with white tea, white cranberry, and ginger, and the rosé melding white tea, ginger, and elderberry, can be conveniently sipped on beaches and at outdoor concerts alike.

**\$** SRP: \$13.99 per four-pack of 250-ml cans  
[tostbeverages.com](http://tostbeverages.com)

### 10. ON THE ROCKS

Effen Vodka is the star of the floral, herbal, elderflower liqueur-tinged Lemon Drop Martini (20% ABV), the most recent ready-to-drink concoction from On the Rocks Premium Cocktails. Subtly sweet and exhibiting hints of basil and vanilla, it can be shaken with ice and strained into a Martini glass, or simply poured over ice, and garnished with a complementary sugar rim and lemon twist.

**\$** SRP: \$12.99 per 375-ml bottle  
[ontherockscocktails.com](http://ontherockscocktails.com)

### 11. GARRARD COUNTY DISTILLING CO.

Garrard County Distilling Co. is relaunching its roster of whiskeys, beginning with the flagship All Nations Kentucky Straight Bourbon. Distillers from the likes of Jim Beam, Barton, MGP, and Bluegrass collectively weighed in on the 96-proof spirit's three different mash bills. Comprising existing stocks from distilleries located along the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, the five-to-seven-year-old blend was matured in #4 alligator char barrels in Clermont, Danville, Owensboro, and Boston before a final resting session at Garrard's Lancaster distillery.

**\$** SRP: \$39.99 per 750-ml bottle  
[garrardcountystillings.com](http://garrardcountystillings.com)

### 12. 1800 TEQUILA

The 12th edition of 1800 Tequila's collectible Essential Artist Series has debuted, and this time around Mexican-born, New York City-based multimedia artist Raúl de Nieves has whipped up six distinctly colorful artworks that explore the connection between earthly and ancestral realms. Building upon the stained-glass reminiscent pieces de Nieves created for his solo exhibition at the University of Washington's Henry Art Gallery, the bottles are an ode to Mexican heritage.

**\$** SRP: \$36.99 per 750-ml bottle  
[1800tequila.com](http://1800tequila.com)



# NOW AVAILABLE

Republic National Distributing Company's  
**New Online Product Search And Ordering Experience**



**DISCOVER** NEW ITEMS

**DIVE** INTO BRANDS

**SAVE** YOUR FAVORITE PRODUCTS

**SEARCH & ORDER** WITH EASE

GET STARTED TODAY BY VISITING

**[www.eRNDC.com](http://www.eRNDC.com)**





# EASY LIKE SUNDAY

A CRAFT BREAKFAST RESTAURANT

WRITTEN BY TEDDY DURGIN | IMAGES BY ASHLI MIX PHOTOGRAPHY

In this the second in our new series of articles on funny or quirky-named bars, restaurants, pubs and taverns in and around Maryland and Washington, D.C., we picked Baltimore's Easy Like Sunday for two reasons. One, this article's author loves his drinks in the morning with breakfast or brunch. Two, this article's author loves the Commodores and Lionel Richie.

"Easy Like Sunday Morning" was one of the smoothest R&B ballads of the 1970s. Written by Richie, the song expresses a man's relief as a relationship comes to an end. Instead of being sad and depressed about the break-up, he asserts throughout that he is instead "easy . . . easy like Sunday morning."

It's a strange inspiration for naming a restaurant. But as co-owner Antonios Kokolis relates the story, the tune wasn't necessarily the reason for the name. He notes that his partners, Sean and Anna MacCuish, started the first Easy Like Sunday in Charlotte, N.C. They sold that business about two and a half years ago because they sensed greater

**Antonios Kokolis,  
Anna & Sean MacCuish  
owners and operators**  
Easy Like Sunday

opportunity in Maryland.

That's when Kokolis got involved. "We all brought the Easy Like Sunday concept to Baltimore," he recalled during a recent interview with the Beverage Journal. "We can always say the name comes from the song. That's the easy answer. But it's not. The idea was to name it something simple. Sean and Anna asked themselves, 'When do people go out to brunch the most?' They noodled it through and brainstormed "Sunday . . . Sunday morning . . . Sunday is easy . . . Eggs can be over easy . . . Easy Like Sunday!"

He continued, "Of course, the staff – if they don't want to explain that long answer – will just say, 'Oh, it's from the song!' The funny thing is people will call to see if we're open or they'll write reviews, and the reviews will inevitably say, 'Easy Like Sunday Morning is



a great place to eat and drink!' It's not a bad thing to be associated with. We actually have the song playing twice each day on our play list. You'll hear it at both locations. I mean, we can't NOT play it!"

Easy Like Sunday does indeed have two Baltimore-area locations. The first is at Lo-

cust Point and the second is at The Village of Cross Keys development in north Baltimore. According to Kokolis, "We are growing the business at Locust Point. It's getting better and better every day. Cross Keys continues to be our star, though. And we do want to add a third Easy Like Sunday to the Baltimore



**SHOW MORE  
TO  
SELL MORE**

- ➔ Solid Shelves
- ➔ Maximum display
- ➔ Edgeless Doors
- ➔ Maximum efficiency

3141 Frederick Ave. Baltimore MD | 410-945-7878 or 800-848-7748 | [careysales.com](http://careysales.com)



area or one of the surrounding areas. We're looking at Columbia and Bethesda. We often walk into places and say to each other, 'Oh an Easy Like Sunday would do SO well here!'"

Easy Like Sunday is, for sure, a craft breakfast restaurant. It features a fairly straight-forward menu that is simplified enough so that everyone can find something and not get overwhelmed. "You go to some restaurants," Kokolis noted, "and you just feel overwhelmed by the menu. Here, we just want to be your cool place to come eat brunch and also have some great craft cocktails."

Easy Like Sunday serves up more than 15 craft cocktails. There is also a drink specials board. Kokolis stated, "Our most popular is probably The Wallflower, which is a tequila-based drink. People love that we put a live orchid on top. Everything here is about what tastes good, but also what looks good. If a drink is 'cute,' women customers are going to order it. Another big favorite is our Sunday Love, which is a lemon vodka drink. Our male customers love our Maple Fashioned. It's like an Old Fashioned, but we've added some maple syrup and orange bitters to it. It pops! We also have lavender rose ice molds, and we put edible glitter inside and it makes for a beautiful drink."

Kokolis and the MacCuishes (neither were available for this interview as Anna had recently given birth to the couple's third child) do a very deep dive whenever they hire bartenders. According to Kokolis, "We always tell them to think of Easy Like Sunday 'as your canvass. You're an artist!' We do try to get every drink out within three minutes during non-peak hours and five minutes during peak times. But we make sure they don't skimp on anything. The important thing is to have every cocktail taste the same every time a customer orders it, whether they are at Locust Point or Cross Keys."

So, what has been the key to success for Kokolis after migrating to Maryland from two states south? "I love people, from our staff to the people who we meet and serve. We meet all different types, and there's no better feeling than walking into either place and seeing what Sean,

Anna, and I have created. It just makes us feel good. All three of us are very artsy and creative. We wanted to create a business where we could put our own touch on things, and that's exactly what we have done. You can walk into either location and see something from each one of us."

He adds, "It's so important for us to keep everything consistent, too, because we do have two locations. And we have great assistance from our employees. Most of our staff has been with us for two years, really since we opened. So, having consistent staff is important. We take so much pride in Saturdays and Sundays, because those are our busiest days. Unfortunately, during the week, a brunch restaurant is slower because so many customers are working or are at school. Sunday is especially busy. Everyone likes to say that 'Sunday is the easiest day of the week.' Not for us! But it is certainly the most rewarding."

As for advice Kokolis would give to anyone reading this who dreams of opening his/her own place someday, he was quick to answer: "Keep going! Work hard towards your goal. Sean, Anna, and I have worked in all aspects of the industry. We've worked in the kitchen, we've worked in the front of the house. We've tended

bar, we've been servers. I think the biggest thing we've learned over the years is the importance of building relationships and connections. You never know who you are going to meet along the way who will eventually help you and help make the dream come true." ■



**Dierra Railey**  
**Bartender**  
**Easy Like Sunday**

COASTAL VIBES

Just outside San Luis Obispo, in the Edna Valley AVA, **Chamisal Vineyards** produces sustainable wines, like this cool-climate Chardonnay. The bright, citrus-forward 2023 bottling is the first to showcase the elegantly updated packaging that captures the soul of Chamisal's light, breezy wines.

SRP: \$18 per 750-ml bottle



IN DEMAND

Its Italian Bianco variety was such a hit that **Avaline** has reintroduced the fruity white wine as a limited edition. Made with Falanghina grapes produced by family-owned Cantine Losito, an organically farmed estate in Puglia's Terre del Gargano, it opens with aromas of peach and delicate yellow and white flowers that pave the way to notes of apricot and tangerine zest.

SRP: \$28 per 750-ml bottle



SUCH GREAT HEIGHTS

**Las Jaras Wines**, founded by Joel Burt and Eric Wareheim, is 10 years old, and the label is celebrating in multiple ways, including the debut of its High Elevation Pinot Noir born from northern Mendocino County old vines. The 2023 vintage, a blend of fruit sourced from the Mariah and Alder Springs vineyards located atop soaring ridges, exhibits a mélange of berry flavors and a long finish. Ten percent of the wine's sales will be directed toward Los Angeles wildfire relief efforts.

SRP: \$48 per 750-ml bottle



THE PIONEERS

In 1975, **Kiona Vineyards** planted its first grapes in eastern Washington's Red Mountain region, then a daring move. Fifty years later, the family-owned, Sustainable WA-certified winery is honoring its milestone anniversary with the release of a Cabernet Sauvignon blended from Kiona's estate vineyards. Made with 88 percent Cabernet Sauvignon and rounded out with eight percent Cabernet Franc, two percent Malbec, and two percent Petit Verdot, the wine is adorned with a nostalgic label that takes cues from the original logo.

SRP: \$45 per 750-ml bottle



SPRING PREVIEW

Napa Valley's **Bouchaine Vineyards** has turned out its first-ever non-alcoholic (less than 0.5% ABV) wine, a 2023 rosé crafted from sustainable, estate-grown Pinot Noir. Juice, extracted from grapes placed into a gentle press straight from the vines, was fermented and matured in stainless-steel tanks until blending. Then, it was vacuum distilled to separate the alcohol from the wine, carefully preserving the liquid's vibrant acidity and strawberry and melon notes in the process.

SRP: \$25 per 750-ml bottle



## THE OLD CUBAN

- 1 ½ oz. Diplomatico Reserva Exclusiva Rum
- 1 oz. simple syrup
- ¾ oz. fresh lime juice
- Small bunch mint leaves
- 2 dashes aromatic bitters
- 1 oz. Champagne

**Method:** Muddle the mint leaves and lime juice in a shaker. Add the simple syrup, bitters, and rum, and fill the shaker with ice. Shake and strain into a coupe glass. Top with Champagne and garnish with a mint sprig.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LESLIE KIRCHHOFF

## HOUSTON

- 2 oz. SirDavis American Whisky
- 1 oz. sweet vermouth
- ¼ oz. honey syrup\*
- 2 dashes Angostura bitters

**Method:** Add SirDavis American Whisky, sweet vermouth, honey syrup, and bitters into a mixing glass with ice and stir until well chilled. Strain into a chilled coupe glass. Garnish with a brandied cherry.

*\*Honey syrup: Add two parts honey and one part water into a small saucepan over medium heat. Stir until the honey is dissolved. Allow to cool and transfer to an airtight container.*

## LIKE A BIRD

- 1 ½ oz. Tres Agaves Blanco Tequila
- ½ oz. mezcal
- ½ oz. Tres Agaves Organic Agave Nectar
- ½ oz. lime juice
- ½ oz. pink or red grapefruit juice
- 1 oz. club soda

**Method:** Wet half rim of a 12-ounce glass with a lime and dip it in kosher salt. Combine the tequila, mezcal, agave syrup, lime juice, and grapefruit juice in a shaker. Fill it with ice and then shake vigorously. Strain into the glass and garnish with a grapefruit slice.



## THE IRISH HOLIDAY

- 1 ¼ oz. Drumshanbo Gunpowder Irish Gin
- ½ oz. Bauchant Orange Liqueur
- ½ oz. Reäl Pineapple Infused Syrup
- ½ oz. Reäl Cream of Coconut
- ¾ oz. lime juice
- 1 oz. cranberry juice

**Method:** Combine all ingredients in a shaker tin with ice. Shake and then double strain into a coupe or Martini glass. Garnish with a palm frond or slice of pineapple.





Clockwise from top left: Moderato's alcohol-free wines // Bordeaux Families' alcohol-free Sauv' Terre // Myalcolzero's alcohol-free Aurea Fenice sparkling wine.

# A BREAKTHROUGH YEAR FOR LOW-ALCOHOL WINES

IT'S A PIVOTAL MOMENT FOR THE NO- AND LOW-ALCOHOL WINE MARKET, WITH PRODUCTION INCREASING AND THE FIRST GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS IN THE EU

BY JACOPO MAZZEO

**D**ealcoholized wine has been around for some time—the first patents date back to the early 20th century—but the recent moderation trend has driven rapid growth for the no- and low-alcohol wine market. According to consumer research firm IWSR, the percentage of American drinkers who consume non-alcoholic beverages more than doubled last year, rising from six to 13 percent. This growth was largely driven by millennials and Gen Z, who now make up 45 and 17 percent of the category's consumers, respectively.



## NO-LOW ALCOHOL 0%

“The no- and low-alcohol wine market is poised for significant growth as consumer preferences shift toward more mindful drinking and wellness-focused lifestyles,” says Elena Lottici, the export manager at Italian wine producer Riunite. “Over the next few years, we expect this category to expand its appeal across a diverse audience, driven by innovation and increasing demand for options that combine great taste with moderation.”

While past developments in the category were largely driven by new product releases, the past year has seen the wider wine sector more decisively embrace the segment. This shift is reflected in significant investments in new production facilities—particularly in France—as well as groundbreaking regulatory changes. These include the upcoming launch of the first low-alcohol wines with geographical indication (GI) and permission for dealcoholization to take place within Italian wineries.

Building on this momentum, the coming months are set to mark a breakthrough for the market, with France and Italy poised to take on increasingly pivotal roles on the international stage. “In Eu-



French Bloom is demonstrating the premiumization potential of no- and low-alcohol wine.

rope,” says Lottici, “countries with strong wine traditions, such as Italy, Spain, and France, are well positioned to lead the way in this space.”

### NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE

While Germany has long been a world leader in no- and low-alcohol wine production, France has recently moved to the forefront of the category. Last spring, a sizable dealcoholization facility, Le Chai Sobre, opened in the Gers department of southwestern France. The plant boasts an annual capacity of 50,000 hectoliters (around 6.6 million bottles—approximately a third of the production of Germany’s Carl Jung, the world’s oldest and one of the

leading non-alcoholic wine producers). It will produce its co-owner’s brand, Moderato, and provide dealcoholization services for other producers seeking to enter this expanding market.

Bordeaux has also seen a surge of activity in the segment. Following products launched by the likes of Laurent David of the collective Bordeaux Pirate, and Coralie de Bouard—the daughter of Hubert de Bouard of Château Angéus fame—local co-op Bordeaux Families installed its own \$2.36 million dealcoholization facility, too. The firm is now working to bring the fruits of this investment to market, aim-



French Bloom’s Maggie Frerejean-Taittinger and Constance Jablonski.

**“I wanted to create a sparkling wine to meet exacting standards—it had to be 0.0% ABV, organic, and free from sulfites ... Beyond these requirements, the goal was for the wine to deliver a sophisticated experience on par with the finest sparkling wines.”**

- Maggie Frerejean-Taittinger,  
French Bloom



Luca Sonn, Myalcolzero

ing to have the segment account for 10 to 12 percent of its total annual production of 300,000 hectoliters by the year's end.

In Italy, trade associations and the government recently approved a decree allowing Italian wineries to produce dealcoholized wine within the country (although it's yet to be signed by the ministry of agriculture). By moving production onto Italian soil, the country is also poised to play a much larger role in the global market for dealcoholized wines.

### GREATER PREMIUMIZATION POTENTIAL

Dealcoholization offers a major opportunity for regions struggling with declining

consumer demand—not only as a way to repurpose otherwise unsold stock, but also to achieve higher potential margins in the process.

“Dealcoholization definitely represents an opportunity for growers in Bordeaux,” argues Anne-Sophie Sobecki, the head of marketing and communication at Bordeaux Families. “We can't just keep making Bordeaux red if there's no demand. [Dealcoholization] is a great way to diversify by tapping into a growing market with good premiumization opportunities. Some of our clients are already requesting vintage-dated, no- and low-alcohol labels.”

With its top cuvée priced at \$119, super-premium non-alcoholic wine brand French Bloom demonstrates this segment's premiumization potential. Its rapid success—sales have doubled each year since it launched in 2021—even led Moët Hennessy to acquire a minority stake in the brand last fall.

According to cofounder Maggie Frerejean-Taittinger, the brand targets the large crowd of food and drink enthusiasts who, for various reasons, may not want or be able to consume alcohol. “I wanted to create a sparkling wine to

meet exacting standards—it had to be 0.0% ABV, organic, and free from sulfites ... without added sugar or preservatives, ensuring purity and a focus on wellness,” she explains. “Beyond these requirements, the goal was for the wine to deliver a sophisticated experience on par with the finest sparkling wines.”

### OFFICIAL STATUS IN FRANCE

Recent developments in EU regulations are set to further support no- and low-alcohol wine's premiumization process. In 2021, the EU responded to growing consumer demand for these products by allowing the dealcoholization of GI wines down to a minimum of 0.5% ABV across all member states. France was the first to adopt this change in spring 2024. Under the new regulations, any IGP wine can now undergo dealcoholization down to a minimum ABV of 6%, provided the respective IGPs choose to incorporate this process into their production specifications.

It didn't take long for GIs to seize the opportunity. Gard, in the northern Languedoc-Roussillon area of southern France, is on track to officially permit the production of dealcoholized wines down to the 6% ABV threshold this year,



Enore Ceola, Freixenet Mionetto USA





## NO-LOW ALCOHOL 0%

and some producers are ready to capture the opportunity. Local winemaker Jean-Marc Floutier of Domaine du Grand Chemin, for instance, is looking forward to applying the IGP Cévennes label (a GI in the Gard) to his JMF range of 6.5% ABV wines.

“We make the wines with Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsault, Grenache, and Colombard—grapes typical of this region,” says Charlotte Duverdier, the domaine’s commercial director. “They are representative of our region, with profiles typical of the south of France. We just need to add a bit of sugar to keep the wines well-balanced.”

More GIs are likely to follow suit in the near future. The IGP Atlantique, which encompasses the entire Bordeaux area and extends further south, has already lowered the minimum alcohol content to 9% ABV. It is believed that the step to reduce this further to 6% is close to being officially confirmed before the end of the year. “There are discussions,” says Sobecki, “but it has not been confirmed yet ... This is definitely something that will help a lot of producers in Bordeaux.”

### THE CATEGORY GETS COMPETITIVE

In Italy, progress in the no- and low-alcohol wine market has not been as swift as

in France, but the country does boast a number of high-profile options: Riunite’s Zero Red Semi-Sparkling, for instance, is designed specifically for the U.S. market, mimicking the profile of a semi-sweet Lambrusco, while Maschio Zero White Sparkling is a non-alcoholic alternative to the classic Maschio Prosecco. Leading Prosecco brand Mionetto also introduced its own non-alcoholic version just over a year ago.

These wines, however, are all currently produced outside of Italy—mainly Germany and Spain—due to strict regulations that do not allow dealcoholization to occur on Italian soil. “The only way we could manage to produce our own labels of dealcoholized wine in Italy,” explains Luca Sonn, the proprietor of no- and low-ABV wine ecommerce platform Myalcolzero, “was by circumventing the ban and using a food processing facility, where dealcoholization is permitted.”

The ban has had a significant impact on both the cost of these products and their environmental footprint, due to the extensive transportation required. But with Italy now poised to allow Italian wineries to dealcoholize wine on-site, things are set to change.

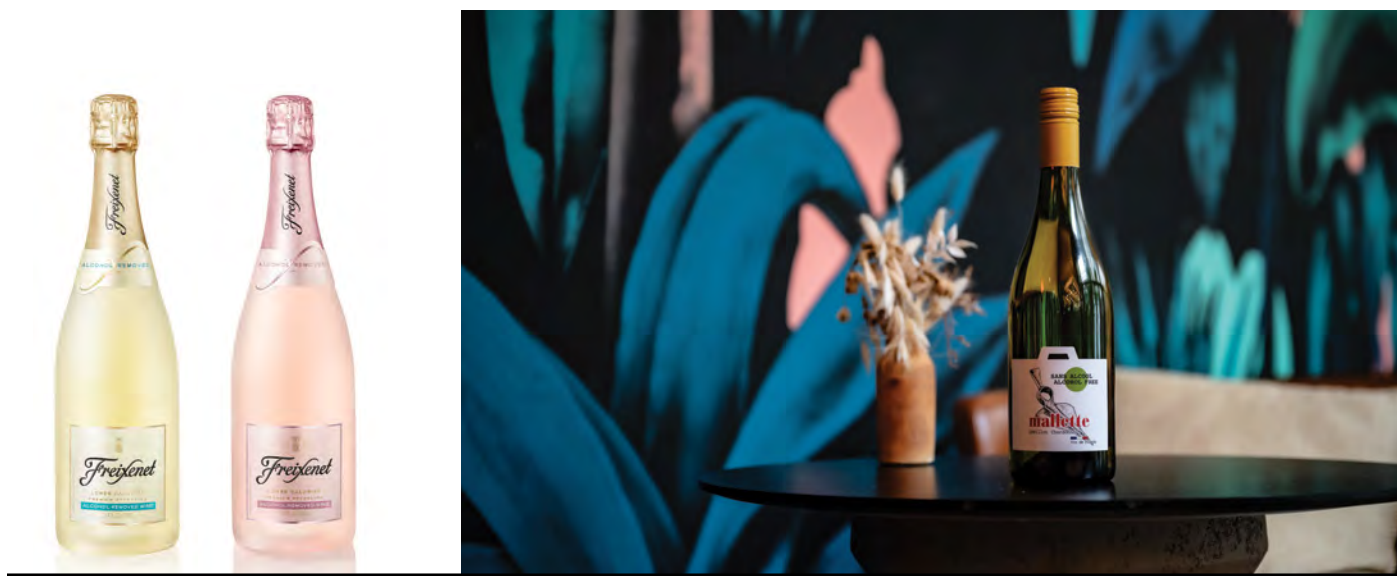
“Our long-term plan is to move production to the winery,” confirms Enore



Ceola, the CEO and EVP of North America for Freixenet Mionetto USA. “This will require machinery investment to dealcoholize the wine on site, which is important for our long-term goals and plans.”

As both Riunite and Mionetto plan to capitalize on this new regulation by moving all production to Italy, other leading Italian brands are likely to follow suit, with new entrants expected to join the no- and low-alcohol wine market.

Together, these developments are set to enhance competitiveness within the no- and low-alcohol category, propelling it into a more mature and mainstream phase. This evolution will likely bring clearer segmentation of price points and, most importantly, improvements in the quality, character, and identity of the wines. ■





# THE 9 BEST NON-ALCOHOLIC BEERS TO STOCK RIGHT NOW

EVEN BEYOND DRY JANUARY, NON-ALCOHOLIC BEER SALES ARE BOOMING, AND WITH THE CATEGORY REACHING MATURITY, THERE ARE MORE OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM THAN EVER

BY TYLER WETHERALL

**B**ack in 1970, Clausthaler took a punt on launching the first non-alcoholic beer brand in the U.S. After that, O'Doul's came along in 1990 from Anheuser-Busch, with little of interest happening in between. To say it was a slow start for non-alcoholic beer is an understatement. Compare that with today, when the non-alcoholic beer segment achieved an on-premise growth of 33.7 percent in the U.S. between May 2023 and 2024, according to data from CGA, eviscerating full-strength beer sales, which dropped 2.9 percent in the same period.

With more Americans now believing that even moderate alcohol consumption is bad for their health, and many consumers mixing and matching between full strength and zero proof—so-called “substituters”—the alcohol-free category is thriving. Non-alcoholic beers are set to grow at seven percent volume CAGR through 2028, according to IWSR. It leads the charge in the no- and low-alcohol segment, which is partly because the science behind its dealcoholization is more straightforward—but also because category maturity has delivered some genuinely excellent products.

*Beverage Media* reached out to retailers and bar professionals to find out which alcohol-free beers they are most excited about right now. Interestingly, the majority of the brands suggested by buyers were from non-alcoholic breweries—rather than a brand’s singular zero-proof option—and were launched in the last five years in response to growing demand. Established brands are also capitalizing on the zeitgeist; Athletic Brewing Company, America’s largest non-alcoholic brewery, recently announced it closed a \$50 million equity financing round to fund further expansion, showing that innovation in the category won’t be slowing down anytime soon. (All beers are listed below with suggested retail price per pack.)

**GOOD TIME BREWING  
NON-ALCOHOLIC IPA;  
\$14.99 PER SIX-PACK OF  
12-OZ. CANS**



*Selected by Andrew Bronstein, owner and buyer, Nemo's Beer Shop, Forest Hills, New York*

Opened in March 2022, Nemo’s is a neighborhood bottle shop and bar in Forest Hills, with eight exclusively local beers on draft—which can be enjoyed on premise or to go as growlers—and over 100 SKUs. When it comes to non-alcoholic options, owner Andrew Bronstein, who was previously a partner at Sixpoint



Andrew Bronstein

**“Finding a high-quality non-alcoholic beer in a less hop-forward style has long been a challenge, particularly for those who prefer crisp, refreshing brews.”**

– Sam Bogue,  
Flour + Water Hospitality Group

Brewery in Brooklyn, is a fan of Good Time Brewing’s IPA. The company launched in 2023 as the brainchild of Michael “Mikey” McFerran, who previously founded New York City bar The Spaniard, and the IPA was their first, signature release, brewed using arrested fermentation. “It’s one of the rare NAs that has proper hop flavor and balance,” says Bronstein. “It looks and tastes like a classic West Coast IPA, and that has been hard to find in the non-alcoholic category.”

**HALFWAY CROOKS  
‘BREVET PILS’;  
\$14.99 PER SIX-PACK OF  
12-OZ. CANS**



*Selected by Dairelyn Glunt, owner, Salud Cerveceria, Charlotte, North Carolina*

A beloved neighborhood bar, bottle shop, coffee shop, and brewery, Salud Cerveceria in Charlotte, North Carolina, offers a notably diverse selection of craft beers with a growing number of non-alcoholic options. Owner Dairelyn Glunt’s current favorite is the Brevet Pils from Halfway Crooks in Atlanta. The small, independent brewery opened in 2019, focused on lagers and barrel-aged beers.



Dairelyn Glunt

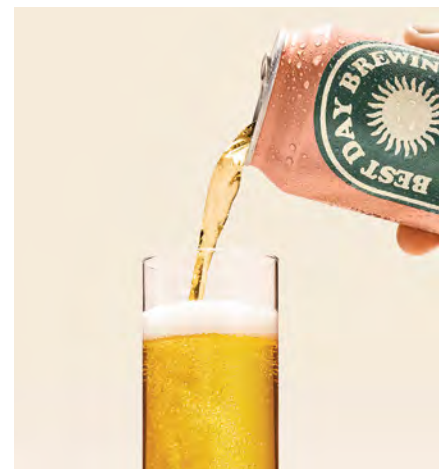
Originally selling on-site only, they started distributing in 2023 and its beers are still hard to come by. “We stock any beer they send to North Carolina,” says Glunt. “We just received Brevet Pils about a week ago, and it’s already become a top seller in our non-alcoholic category. It has that classic crisp and bitter taste you’d expect from a German pilsner, making it an easy pick for anyone looking for a high-quality non-alcoholic option.”

**BEST DAY NON-ALCOHOLIC KÖLSCH;  
\$13.99 PER A SIX-PACK OF  
12 OZ. CANS**



*Selected by Sam Bogue, beverage director, Flour + Water Hospitality Group, San Francisco, California*

When buying for the handful of restaurants in San Francisco’s Flour + Water



Hospitality Group, beverage director Sam Bogue operates under a simple ethos: “Keep them local and keep them fresh.” To do this he purchases in small weekly orders from a handful of Bay Area breweries. “Finding a high-quality non-alcoholic beer in a less hop-forward style has long been a challenge, particularly for those who prefer crisp, refreshing brews,” Bogue says, but Best Day Brewing’s non-alcoholic kölsch changed that. “Its aroma mirrors its traditional counterparts perfectly, while the palate delivers the subtle body of an ale paired with a bright, thirst-quenching freshness that invites sip after sip.”

**RICK'S ORIGINAL NEAR BEER; \$10 PER SIX-PACK OF 12-OZ. CANS**



*Selected by Justin Bullan, general manager, WhichCraft Tap Room & Bottle Shop, Austin, Texas*

Launched in 2022, Rick’s Original Near Beer is created by certified cicerone Josh Hare, who created a name for himself in Austin’s brewing community with longstanding Hops & Grain Brewing and the community hub and brewpub Pint & Plow. “He truly knows beer and how it ought to taste,” says Justin Bullan, the general manager of WhichCraft Tap Room & Bottle Shop, Austin’s first dedicated craft beer bottle shop. For Bullan, Hare’s status as an “Austin beer legend” is part of its appeal. Rick’s Near Beer, which is soon to open a new production facility, has a lineup of three products: Rick’s Hazy, an IPA; Rick’s Crispy Hop Water; and Rick’s Original, a pilsner, which is Bullan’s pick. “I’m excited to keep [it] in stock because it’s local, tastes great, and sells well,” he says. “I don’t typically drink non-alcoholic beer, but when I do, a Rick’s Original is my first choice.”



Andrew "Coco" Cordero

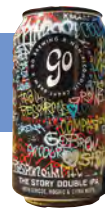
**NONNY WEST COAST IPA; \$18 PER SIX-PACK OF 12-OZ. CANS**



*Selected by Andrew "Coco" Cordero, beverage director, Wildland, Carlsbad, California*

Founded in 2022 by two brothers looking to reduce their beer consumption, Nonny has built a reputation for their craft, preservative-free, non-alcoholic beers. Based in Vancouver, British Columbia, there’s a Czech pilsner and a pale ale—but it’s the West Coast IPA that is the favorite of Andrew “Coco” Cordero, the beverage director of the newly-opened Wildland in Carlsbad, California, as well as for restaurateur John Resnick’s and Chef Eric Bost’s restaurant group, including Campfire and the Michelin-starred Jeune et Jolie. “It’s the closest thing to a [full-strength] West Coast IPA,” he says, “with bright citrus and pine flavors thanks to the Chinook, Columbus, and Simcoe hops.”

**GO BREWING 'THE STORY' DOUBLE IPA; \$14.99 PER SIX-PACK OF 12-OZ. CANS**



*Selected by Patrick Bisch, co-owner, The Open Bottle, Tinley Park, Illinois*

Another relatively new entrant into the non-alcoholic beer category, Go Brewing launched in 2023 after incubating for 18 months in the husband-and-wife

**"While calling a non-alcoholic IPA a 'double' IPA is a bit paradoxical, it still translates when you want a bolder IPA, but without the doubled booze!"**

– Patrick Bisch, co-owner, The Open Bottle

founders’ garage. But unusually for a non-alcoholic brewery, it also operates its own taproom in Naperville, Illinois, just outside Chicago, offering their lineup of around a dozen beers on draft, as well as alternative beverages and a roster of live events. “This brewery isn’t too far from us here in Illinois, and has blown up since they launched last year,” says Patrick Bisch, a certified cicerone and co-owner of The Open Bottle along with his wife Julie. “[The Story Double IPA] has a wonderful piney, citrus hop kick thanks to the Simcoe, Citra, Mosaic hops and also a nice caramel malt backbone. And while calling a non-alcoholic IPA a ‘double’ IPA



Patrick Bisch

is a bit paradoxical, it still translates when you want a bolder IPA, but without the doubled booze.”

**GUINNESS '0'; \$8.99 PER FOUR-PACK OF 14.9-OZ. CANS**



*Selected by Scott Baird, beverage director, Starlite, San Francisco, California*

In June 2023, Guinness announced that production of its non-alcoholic stout will increase by almost 300 percent to meet surging demand, following an investment of €25 million (\$25 million) in a new facility at its St. James’s Gate brewery in Dublin. And for Scott Baird, the beverage director of Starlite and founder of Trick Dog in San Francisco, it’s his favorite non-alcoholic beer. “Guinness being such a singular flavor memory for me, the non-alcoholic [SKU] absolutely scratches the itch when you have the craving for a Guinness, but aren’t inviting alcohol.” Guinness 0 is produced by removing the alcohol from



the full-strength stout through a cold filtration method to reduce heat stress to the beer.

**VISITOR EXTRA IPA; \$13.99 PER SIX PACK OF 12-OZ. CAN**



*Selected by Dylan Melvin, director of adult beverage, Foxtrot Market, Chicago, Illinois*



Dylan Melvin

When purchasing for the Foxtrot Market in Chicago—a newly reopened coffee and convenience mini chain selling craft beers—Dylan Melvin, who is a certified cicerone and also the cofounder of micro brewery Is/Was, finds non-alcoholic, gluten-reduced Visitor beer the “perfect pick” for the clientele. “It transcends traditional categories, resonating not just with the ‘better for you’ demographic, but with anyone seeking a thoughtful, flavor-driven beverage,” he says. “Crafted with the same care as full-strength beers, it offers a true craft experience that appeals to beer lovers and non-alcoholic drinkers alike.” While he’s also a fan of Visitor’s lager, his preference leans towards the Extra IPA.

**GOLDEN ROAD BREWING 'NON-ALC MANGO CART'; \$12.99 PER SIX-PACK OF 12-OZ. CANS**



*Selected by Mark Tuchman, owner, 99 Bottles, Sarasota, Florida*

Located in Sarasota, Florida, 99 Bottles is a craft taproom and bottle shop with 34 draft taps and a rotating selection of global beers—as well as a particularly impressive selection of non-alcoholic options. “We have been serving non-alcoholic beers at the bar for over five years,” says owner Mark Tuchman. While he rates the “great tasting” Bravus Peanut Butter Dark and Samuel Adams’s non-alcoholic Just the Haze IPA—which “fills our need for the juicy citrus and hop bite we crave!”—the standout for him is Golden Road Brewing’s Non-Alc Mango Cart. A de-alcoholized version of their full strength Mango Cart wheat beer, it’s made with real mango and Bravo hops. Los Angeles-based and woman-owned, Golden Road has just one zero-proof option, but, Tuchman enthuses, “what an amazing job the brewers at Golden Road did making a near perfect clone of their flagship fruit beer without any alcohol!” ■



Mark Tuchman