

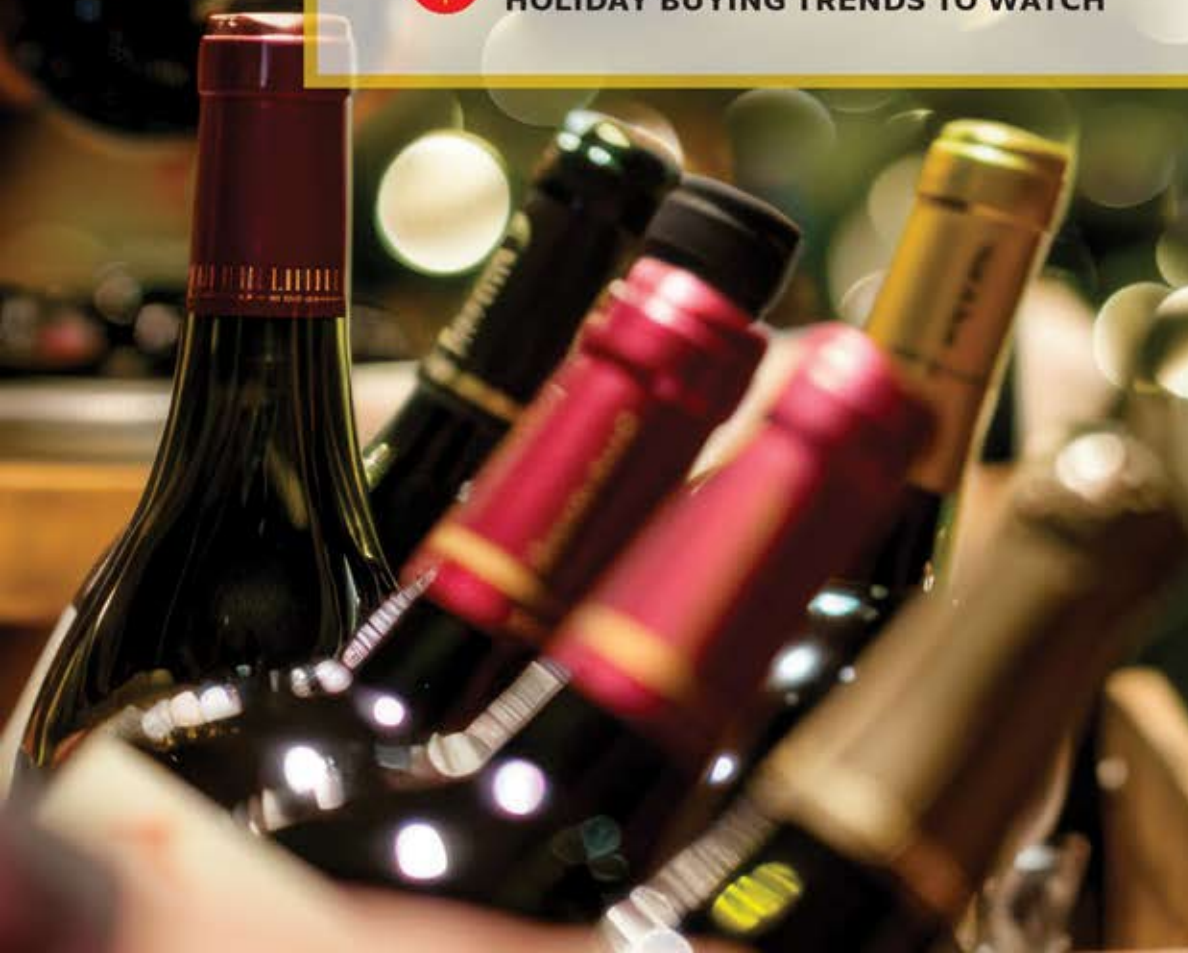
Beverage Journal

NOVEMBER 2024

2024 HOLIDAY BUYING ISSUE



OUR ANNUAL RETAIL GIFT GUIDE
HOLIDAY BUYING TRENDS TO WATCH





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Cover Credit: Adobe Stock

**INCOME TAX ON SERVERS'
TIPS/GRATUITY ... THE DEBATE**

Removing income tax on servers' tip/gratuity income has been a topic of debate recently. Both Presidential candidates have touted potential policy changes. I did a little digging and have provided a brief breakdown of some of the Pros and Cons I found.

PROS:

1. Increased Take-Home Pay for Servers:

One of the most obvious benefits of removing income tax on servers' tips/gratuities is that it would directly increase their take-home pay. Many servers, bartenders, and other tipped employees rely heavily on gratuities to supplement their low hourly wages. Removing the tax on this income would provide a financial boost.

2. Boost to the Service Industry:

With a tax exemption on tip/gratuity income, servers may feel more incentivized to stay in or join the industry, potentially reducing high turnover rates. The industry, which often struggles with job retention, might see improvements in employee satisfaction and longevity. As a result, businesses may benefit from more experienced and motivated staff.

3. Easing Administrative Burdens:

For employers, tracking and reporting employees' tip/gratuity income can be a time-consuming and complex task. Exempting tip income from taxation could simplify this process, reducing administrative costs and the chances of errors or compliance issues for both employers and employees.

4. Recognition of Unstable Income:

Server tips fluctuate based on several factors, including customer volume, seasonality, and economic conditions. By exempting tip income from taxation, the government would acknowledge the instability and unpredictability of this income source, providing relief to workers whose earnings are not guaranteed.



CONS:

1. Unequal Treatment of Income:

Critics argue that removing taxes on tip/gratuity income creates an unequal tax policy. Other workers who also earn variable or supplemental income, such as commission-based salespeople, still have to pay taxes on their earnings. This exemption could be unfair.

2. Potential for Underreporting & Fraud:

While tips are already difficult to monitor accurately, removing the tax could exacerbate the issue of underreporting. Servers may be incentivized to hide their earnings, particularly cash tips since they would no longer be obligated to pay taxes on them. This could create broader issues with tax compliance and transparency within the industry.

3. Inaccurate Data for Benefits and Obligations:

If tips are no longer taxed, servers might underreport their actual earnings to avoid income-based calculations for benefits like healthcare or child support obligations. This could distort economic data and cause other unintended financial discrepancies.

Conclusion

The removal of income tax on tips/gratuities presents a clear financial benefit to hospitality workers. However, this policy could lead to potential underreporting and concerns about fairness in tax burdens.

The key challenge in this debate, I think, is balancing the need for tax equity with the desire to support hospitality workers. ■

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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,
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AGE OLD TRADITION

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NEW OAK
BARRRELS



1. THE ZERO PROOF

Fond memories of a tuxedo-donning barman at the famed Harry's Bar in Florence, Italy, sparked Lapo's, The Zero Proof's private label. Currently, there is the bittersweet, subtly effervescent, non-alcoholic Negroni conveniently packaged in cans (SRP: \$19.99 per four-pack of eight-ounce cans) and the Aperitivo, a booze-free Campari substitute laden with notes of Italian orange, hibiscus, and rhubarb roots that enlivens dinner-party spritzes.

\$ SRP: \$31.99 per 750-ml bottle
🌐 thezeroproof.com

4. BAILEYS

Churros are often dipped into chocolate sauce or dulce de leche, but Baileys is encouraging consumers to try the satiating fried dough pastry in sippable form with its latest Irish cream liqueur offering. The limited-edition cinnamon churros flavor, shot through with vanilla notes, can be mixed with tequila, poured into coffee and hot chocolate, or served simply over ice.

\$ SRP: \$24.99 per 750-ml bottle
🌐 baileys.com

2. SANTA TERESA

As part of its Cask Finish Series, historic Venezuelan rum producer Santa Teresa has introduced an expression finished in arabica coffee casks. First, organically grown Arabica coffee beans are roasted to a medium color, then coarsely ground and cold brewed with four-year-old rum. That mixture is matured in American white oak barrels for six months, and when it's extracted, it's replaced with triple-aged Santa Teresa 1796 Solera rum that soaks up the chocolaty coffee flavors for three months.

\$ SRP: \$59.99 per 750-ml bottle
🌐 santateresarum.com

5. ILEGAL

Ilegal's well-known reposado mezcal is the base of its new limited-edition, small-batch Caribbean Cask Finish produced in Oaxaca. After resting in American oak barrels for four to six months, the liquid is finished in 215 one-time rum casks that impart the aged agave notes with complementary flavors of tropical fruit, warm spice, and butterscotch.

\$ SRP: \$45.99 per 750-ml bottle
🌐 ilegalmezcal.com

3. ACRÓNIMO SPIRITS

Siblings Alessandra and Jose Luis Camino Creel, the founders of Acronimo Spirits, are passionate about Chihuahua, so it's natural their debut offering is a sotol, the northern Mexican state's native spirit. The bright, complex blanco, which flaunts notes of gentle smoke and ripe yellow and green fruits, is made in collaboration with fifth-generation producer Casa Ruelas from two species of the spiky plants—*Dasyliiron wheeleri*, found largely on the desert floor, and *Dasyliiron cedrosanum* from the Sierra Madre Occidental highlands.

\$ SRP: \$59.99 per 700-ml bottle
🌐 acronimo.com

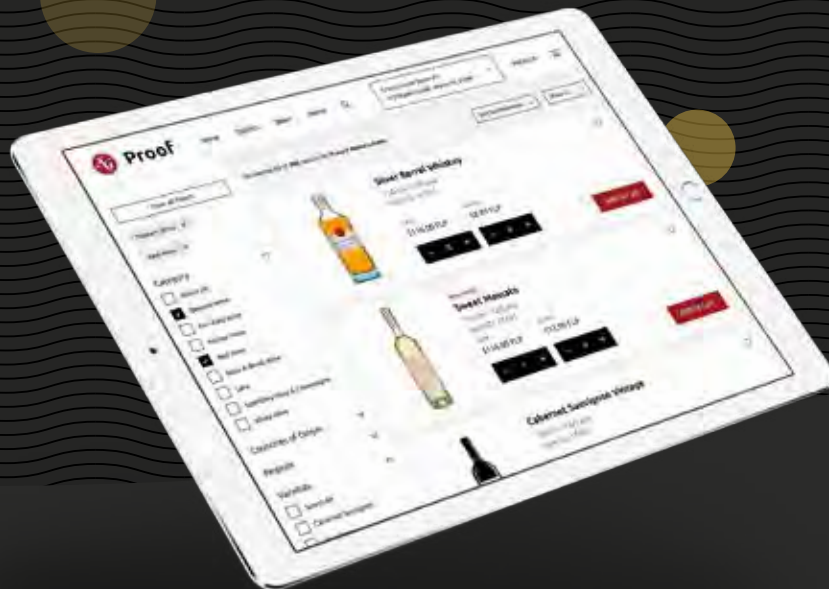
6. COMPASS BOX

Compass Box's revitalized Core Collection pairs two favorites—Orchard House and The Peat Monster—with the recently launched 92-proof Nectarosity and Crimson Casks blended Scotch whiskies. The pâtisserie-inspired Nectarosity, crafted with parcels of whisky from the Girvan and Clynelish distilleries, uses custom-toasted and charred virgin oak barrels from Missouri, while rich, spicy Crimson Casks captures the influence of Oloroso sherry casks from Jose y Miguel Martín.

\$ SRP: \$64.99 to \$74.99 per 750-ml bottle
🌐 compassboxwhisky.com

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7



8



9



10



11



12

7. CLONAKILTY

Clonakilty Distillery has unveiled its first single pot still Irish whiskey. Crafted from barley grown on the Scully family farm in County Cork, close to the ocean, the 92-proof spirit flaunts a distinct maritime character that is reinforced during the maturation process. Following its triple-distillation in copper pot stills, the liquid is aged in casks that previously held bourbon and amontillado and oloroso sherries in Clonakilty's Atlantic warehouse, culminating in a long sea salt and caramel finish.

\$ SRP: \$49.99 per 700-ml bottle
clonakiltydistillery.ie

8. MIJENTA

Additive-free, sustainable tequila brand Mijenta is kicking off its experimental Maestra Selection Series with the limited-edition, small-batch Maestra Selection No. 1. This annual release is the first tequila to be produced solely from *agaves de semilla* (agaves grown from seed), which maestra tequilera Ana María Romero hand-selected from a single estate in Presa de Otomites, Jesús Maria. The agaves, approximately eight years old, had a high natural sugar content and the liquid was bottled at a robust 100-proof, unleashing tropical fruit aromas and layers of chocolate and spice.

\$ SRP: \$99.99 per 750-ml bottle
mijenta-tequila.com

9. BOOKER'S

To honor his grandfather Booker Noe, sixth-generation master distiller at the James B. Beam Distilling Co., Freddie Noe, who took the reins from his father Fred, dreamed up The Reserves. First up in this annual limited-release series is a 125.9-proof blend of uncut, unfiltered, cask-strength eight- to 14-year-old bourbons pulled from eight different warehouses.

\$ SRP: \$129.99 per 750-ml bottle
beamdisting.com

10. WESTLAND

Seattle's Westland Distillery has rolled out its Cask Exploration Series with two 92-proof American single malt whiskeys finished in beer and wine barrels. The former nods to the Pacific Northwest's craft-brewing roots with a mix of Scotch ale, stout, brown ale, doppelbock, saison, and stock ale casks and the latter incorporates Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, and Washington red blend barrels that celebrate the state's renowned winemaking scene.

\$ SRP: \$74.99 per 700-ml bottle
westlanddistillery.com

11. MILAGRO

For the first time in 10 years, Milagro has expanded its core range of tequilas, including silver, reposado, and añejo, with a cristalino añejo. Distilled from 100 percent blue Weber agave grown in the Jalisco Highlands, it is matured in former American bourbon and French oak casks for 18 to 24 months before it is filtered through charcoal. With its layers of caramel and vanilla, the crystalline spirit is ripe for cocktails or sipping on the rocks.

\$ SRP: \$59.99 per 750-ml bottle
milagrotequila.com

12. ROW 94

Country music star Dierks Bentley moved to Nashville in 1994, so his 94-proof Row 94 whiskey is a fitting homage to the beginning of his professional journey. After visiting numerous distilleries, Bentley chose Green River Distilling Co. in Owensboro, Kentucky, as his partner. There, the spirit—showcasing a mash bill of 70 percent Kentucky-grown corn, 21 percent rye, and nine percent malted and row barley—is brought to life with purified Kentucky limestone water and cultivated yeast.

\$ SRP: \$39.99 per 750-ml bottle
row94whiskey.com

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McFAUL'S IRONHORSE TAVERN

A MODEL OF CONSISTENCY IN PARKVILLE

WRITTEN BY TEDDY DURGIN | IMAGES BY ASHLI MIX PHOTOGRAPHY

Glen McFaul likes to challenge himself. He could have named his bar/restaurant in Parkville just the IronHorse Tavern, and it probably would have been successful. But he decided to call it McFaul's IronHorse Tavern. Ego? Nope. "By design!" he exclaimed, during a recent interview with the Beverage Journal for the latest feature in our series of articles on bars, restaurants, and taverns named after the owner, the owner's

family, or some other person. "It was a way for me to put some added pressure on myself to make sure I was going to accomplish what I told everyone I was going to do. When you put your name on a business, it's even more important that you follow through and execute on your plans. Naming a business after yourself or your family gives you a heightened awareness of everything."

(continued on page 10)

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Maben K., Anne Arundel County

- Mountain Liquors
- Kenilworth Liquors
- Phelps’s Liquors
- Harbor Spirits
- Arundel Liquors
- Market Place W&S
- Chesapeake Liquors
- Leeds Liquors
- All Saints Liquors
- I.M. Wine
- Dual Hwy. Liquors
- Decker’s Wine & Spirits
- Hideaway Lounge
- Franks Den
- Shop Rite Liquors
- Harpers Choice Liquors
- John’s General Store
- Star Liquors
- Cranberry Liquors
- Woodensburg Market
- Ye Old Packaged Goods
- Old Orchard Liquors
- The Liquor Store
- Camelot Liquors
- Centreville Liquors
- Federal Hill Wine & Spirits
- Staples Corner Liquors
- Short Stop Beverage Barn
- Milford Liquors
- Clauss Liquors
- 7 Courts Liquors
- Walther Liquors
- Bernie’s Liquors
- Muddy Creek Liquors



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Glen & Kristin McFaul
(with son Glen)
owners & operators of
McFaul's IronHorse Tavern



(continued from page 8)

And in opening McFaul's IronHorse Tavern more than a decade ago, Glen McFaul was able to restore the luster and reputation of the Baltimore County cornerstone restaurant that was located on the east side of Loch Raven Reservoir. The site had been everything from a blacksmith shop to a post office to a general store since its initial construction in 1886. Owned by the Sanders family for years, their ice cream and sandwich shop became a restaurant in 1991 until its sale in the late 2000s.

And the "IronHorse" part of the name? It was a term Native Americans would use to describe locomotives (the nearby Ma and

Pa Railroad ran from Baltimore to York, Pennsylvania). As well as Baltimore sports teams having also adopted the moniker to describe such tough, dedicated players as Johnny Unitas, Art Donovan, Brooks Robinson, and Cal Ripken Jr.

McFaul thought of his dad as such a man. "He was an IronHorse who never

missed a day of work. His father-in-law never missed a day of work either."

McFaul has taken a lot of inspiration from his family over the years. Indeed, his grandfather, Ernie Tyler, was the Baltimore Orioles' long-time umpire attendant who worked 3,819 consecutive home games at Memorial Stadium and Oriole Park at



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Camden Yards between 1960 and 2007. The man was married for 64 years and had 11 children, the oldest being Glen's mother. He was so respected that "Cal Ripken knocked on his office door at the stadium when he was about to be inducted into the Hall of Fame and said, 'Hey, Ernie, you're going to miss your first game.' Cal made him his honored guest at his induction in Cooperstown."

These are the types of men Glen McFaul holds himself up to, and it's reflected in his business success. "Consistency is key," he stated. "If someone has come to your business and had a great experience, and they've gone and told two other people and they come to your business . . . that consistency has to be there. You can't have the three of them looking at each other and the one guy saying, 'Uh, this isn't how it was last time.' Make sure you have that consistency, particularly for the people who are referring others to come give you a chance."

And that consistency has been followed through to the Tavern's food and beverage offerings. "Consistency and quality ingredients will always make great food and great drinks," McFaul said.

At the same time, he and his staff aren't afraid of tinkering and experimenting to keep things fresh. McFaul's IronHorse Tav-



ern changes its drinks menu seasonally. "We do Crushes really well, and we have a few signature drinks that vary throughout the seasons," he noted. "Some of our favorites are our pumpkin martini. We also do a Gentlemen's Fig drink. We have some really talented guys and gals [working the bar], and I have a background in mixology."

McFaul and his staff also change the food menu twice a year. In fact, it's one of the favorite parts of his job: "Working in collaboration with our chefs and providing some of my ideas . . . I love that! I love sitting down and working out what hopefully doesn't upset the people. Generally, our customers are excited about the new stuff coming. It's exciting for me whenever we launch some new stuff or even when we bring back some old menu items. Now that we are 12 years old, we can have some 'retro bring-backs.' It's fun to tell customers, 'Hey, remember in 2013 when we served this?' We try to stay on trend, but we also have a lot of plays on your normal comfort foods and your normal comfort drinks."

But the work is not without its share of stresses and pitfalls. In some ways, McFaul feels he is still reeling from the COVID-19 crisis earlier in the decade. "I think the most challenging part started after the pandemic," he remarked, "trying to restart.



HOW TO TOUCH A MAN'S HEART





We went from 66 employees to six in one day. It was the day before St. Patrick's Day 2020. Ever since then, everything has just been a little more difficult. But that comes from trying to keep a really good customer service level and making sure you have the right people – people who understand what their job is, but also understand what we've created here as a tradition.”

He also got some key pieces of advice from the late Nacho Mama's owner Patrick “Scunny” McCusker: “He told me a little bit of an Irish undertone will never hurt, consistency is key, and don't be afraid to change things up and give people a little variety. With those three pieces of advice, I

molded my business!”

He added that maintaining a good business and appealing to the broadest range of customers is also about not getting into politics with the paying public, especially in these divisive times. Again, he went back to some wise counsel his father gave him: “He would ask me, ‘Hey, do you know who Cal Ripken votes for?’ And I'd say, ‘No.’ And he would say, ‘That's the point!’”

And now Glen McFaul is in a position where bartenders, barbacks, former waiters, and others come to him for business advice. What does he tell anyone who's thinking of opening their own place someday and maybe even naming it after them-

selves or their family's name? “Believe in yourself! And when you're putting together your plan, make sure it is achievable to execute, and then execute it with everything you have. Put the right people around you, and take pride in what you do each and every day. If you do all that, you'll be fine.”

As for the rest of 2024 and into the new year, does McFaul think everything will be fine? Does he have any predictions? Is he feeling optimistic? Pessimistic? A bit of both? He thought for a few seconds and then answered slowly with a slight chuckle and a measured tone, “Well, politics aside, let's just say I am trying to stay optimistically realistic.” ■

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FROM FRANCE WITH



HOLIDAY COCKTAILS

SOL SPRITZ

1 ½ oz. Las Californias Citrico gin
1 oz. cucumber syrup *
½ oz. Ancho Reyes Verde liqueur
½ oz. lime juice
Topo Chico to top

Method: Combine all the ingredients in a large glass over ice. Garnish with a cucumber ribbon.

* Cucumber syrup: Simmer one cup of both sugar and water until dissolved. Remove from the heat and add one cup of finely chopped cucumber. Let it rest for at least an hour or until cool. Fine strain.



THE CAMPFIRE

2 oz. Fox and Oden Straight Bourbon Whiskey
1 oz. apple cider
½ oz. cinnamon syrup
¼ oz. lemon juice

Method: Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Add the Fox and Oden Straight Bourbon, apple cider, cinnamon syrup, and lemon juice. Shake well and strain into a glass filled with ice. Garnish with an apple slice and cinnamon stick.



IRISH WHISKEY COFFEE COCKTAIL

2 oz. of Glendalough Double Barrel Irish Whiskey
2 tsp demerara sugar
4 oz. freshly brewed coffee
Heavy cream to top

Method: Pour freshly brewed coffee into an Irish coffee cup. Add the demerara sugar and whiskey. Stir all ingredients and top slowly with heavy cream. Garnish with coffee beans.



THE 456

1 ½ oz. Johnnie Walker Black Label Squid Game Edition
½ oz. barley tea syrup
½ oz. lemon juice
Club soda to top

Method: Build the ingredients except for the club soda into an ice-filled cocktail shaker. Shake and double strain into a Collins glass with ice. Top with club soda and garnish with a lemon twist.

NOCHE NEGRA

1 oz. Cantera Negra Reposado Tequila
1 oz. espresso (cold brew concentrate)
¾ oz. Cantera Negra Café
¾ oz. simple syrup

Method: Combine all the ingredients into a cocktail shaker with ice. Shake vigorously. Double strain into a chilled coupe or martini glass. Garnish with an espresso bean.



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5 HOLIDAY BUYING TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2024

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY AND LOW- AND NO-ABV OPTIONS WILL BE IMPORTANT FOR BEVERAGE CONSUMERS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

BY KELLY MAGYARICS

The holiday sales season known as OND hits retailers every year, but each holiday period is uniquely impacted by the events of that year. So what can beverage professionals expect from consumers as we enter the busiest—and most crucial—sales season of 2024?

Though inflation is cooling, consumers are still feeling the economic strain of recent years, and prices remain higher than they once were. At the same time, purchasers have shifting priorities, drinking less—and less often—and considering the sustainability of the beverages they purchase.

Beverage professionals from retail shops, distributors, restaurants, and more discuss five overarching trends that will impact holiday sales in 2024.

01 NO- AND LOW-ABV BEVERAGES WILL HAVE BROADER REACH

With a wider availability of zero-proof and low-ABV wines, spirits, and beer, the practice of abstaining from or limiting alcohol now transcends Dry January—and that includes during the holiday season.

As Alexandra Morey, the director of operations for MHW Ltd., a service importer, distributor, and back-office pro-

vider in Manhasset, New York, points out, millennials decreased their alcohol intake 40 percent from 2023 to 2024, downsizing from an average of five drinks per week to three drinks. A similar percentage of overall Americans planned to drink less in 2024. “Younger drinkers engage in more ‘tempo drinking’ [avoiding alcohol most days of the week], or abstaining altogether,” she says. “Low-alcohol beverages ... have done an incredible job building their brands in a short period of time.”

“This time of year, it’s essential to provide non-alcoholic beverages and moderating options to promote inclusivity,” says Andrea Starr, the senior director for merchandising at Total Wine & More. “The quality and variety of these beverages are at an all-time high.”

Starr also expects imported lagers—a low-ABV option—to retain strong interest. “Consumers increasingly view these beers as a way to explore unique flavors and global traditions during the holiday season, adding a touch of sophistication during their gatherings,” she says.

Last year Kraig Rovensky, the global brand ambassador for The Pathfinder, a fermented and distilled hemp-based, zero-proof spirit, saw sales double going

into Thanksgiving and then spike again before Christmas. He expects the same this year—and predicts an unintended consequence. “Now that NA has seen the rise it has, people are actually paying attention to ABV in a new way,” he says. “They might actually gravitate towards buying the lower-ABV sherry, vermouth, or amaro, for example, over the whiskey.”

02 CONSUMERS WILL SEEK OUT SUSTAINABLE, INTENTIONAL VALUE-ADDED PACKAGING

As trade members and consumers alike seek out ways to be more sustainable, generic holiday packs with mass-produced glassware or shakers have become less of a draw. “VAPs [value-added packaging] have also become more costly to the suppliers,” says Morey. “Though we are seeing variety packs rise to the occasion.” She cites examples like Flaviar’s whiskey advent calendar.



Kraig Rovensky, The Pathfinder



At Total Wine & More, non-alcoholic alternatives have become important to stock, even during the holidays.

“With a shift towards more mindful spending and a focus on the environmental impacts of waste, purchases will lean into high quality versus a lesser, expensive package with added glassware,” says Nadia Bickelhaupt, the sommelier and owner of Konro Restaurant in West Palm Beach, Florida. One exception, she says, is bottles packaged in wooden crates, which can become showpieces in collections.

Rovensky believes the Marie Kondo effect may be at play here, with consumers eschewing the added clutter that may be part of VAPs. “If brands got smarter and more creative, VAP would be quick to catch back on,” he says. “Who needs another two branded rocks glasses? A cool catch tray or limited-edition art would be far more attention-grabbing these days.”

03 | CONSUMERS ARE TRADING UP TO FEWER, BUT HIGHER-QUALITY, OFFERINGS

During the pandemic, Dave Parker, the founder and CEO of top back-vintage retailer Benchmark Wine Group, witnessed a philosophical shift from quantity to quality, with consumers investing in expensive bottles and rare vintages with long-term value. “These were the small luxuries they could afford when restaurants and large gatherings were not part of the equation,” he says.

Though these buyers switched to (relatively) more modest options like second-growth Bordeaux during the subsequent period of high inflation, this trend will continue to reverse this holiday season now that inflation is declining. “For decades, the average dollars spent on wine has outpaced the average number of bottles sold, indicating people tend to drink ever better.” Last year, Benchmark saw an average increase of six percent in sales during the fourth quarter, and Parker predicts the same this year, with higher-end Champagnes and heavier reds playing a part in even modest celebrations.

While Morey anticipates the typical annual spike in the sparkling wine cat-



Nadia Bickelhaupt, Konro Restaurant

egory from November to January, she believes it’ll be a more conservative uptick this year, based on data from the past 24 months. For the wine category as a whole, consumers are increasingly focused on what’s in the bottle, often turning to organic and biodynamic options. “We’ve also seen consumers looking into the wine fermentation, sulfites, and filtering processes,” she says. “They generally want less additives and are willing to pay more for it.”

Those engaging in the aforementioned “tempo drinking” practice, skipping the booze for five or six days a week, are often then more willing to splurge on the other days, Bickelhaupt says. This is especially true during the holidays, with an increase in the number of parties, gatherings, and special dinners. “High-end spirits will continue to dominate the holiday market, specifically allocated bourbons and tequilas, particularly for gifting as their cachet continues to increase,” she says.

04 | AN ETHOS OF EXPERIENTIAL DRINKING IS GAINING TRACTION

Opportunities during the holidays to include wine as part of an activity or event are becoming more appealing. “We are seeing that consumers are choosing to spend their money on experiences rather than goods, and putting more thought and effort into these experiences,” says Erin Dudley, the wine director for Neighborhood Restaurant Group, a hospitality company based in Alexandria, Virginia. She says she’s seen an uptick in event and wine tasting sales, but a drop in sales of bottles.

Bickelhaupt agrees. “COVID-19 reframed the consumer mindset around enjoyment, with more people dedicating

themselves to learning about wine and leaning into their food and beverage experiences,” she says. During the holidays, this could take the form of a tasting of wines for Thanksgiving or Hanukkah at a retail shop, pairing dinner at home, a wine-gifting exchange, or tree-trimming cocktail party.

05 | HIGHER PRICES STILL POSE CHALLENGES

In September, the Federal Reserve announced that the price of goods is 21 percent higher than in February 2020. If the previous years are any indication, prices will go up five to 10 percent across the board this holiday season, believes Matthew Fisk, the sommelier for WineLair, the Washington, D.C.-based offshoot of European private wine club WineBank.

“Alcohol sales will get a significant boost due to American holiday habits, but the bubble will burst pretty quickly once the holiday season ebbs,” he predicts.

Inflation and the general increase of cost of goods makes winemaking more expensive, Dudley says, and imported wines have the added cost of transportation and tariffs. Still, Bickelhaupt sees some positive signs, like the last several strong, high-quality vintages in California and the slight pricing decrease in French wines. “Spirits, however, seem impervious to price fluctuation,” she notes. “Economically conscious consumers are finding them a better investment as there’s no need to be concerned about oxidation and longevity of product.” ■



Erin Dudley, Neighborhood Restaurant Group

2024 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

BY BEVERAGE MEDIA EDITORS

The holiday season is upon us, which means beverage brands from around the world are showcasing new and classic products in gift-worthy sets and special seasonal packaging. And this year's selection does not disappoint; from artist-designed gift boxes to limited-edition wines and spirits, there is no shortage of eye-catching bottles to stock your shelves with during this whirlwind season.

With almost 50 items, this year's *Beverage Media* gift guide offers a highly curated collection of standout products across multiple categories. In the world of spirits, high-end tequila, well-aged Scotch, and eye-catching gin are all represented. On the wine side, classic Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignons are bundled in elegant gift packs, while several Champagne houses have debuted new releases. Each beautiful, high-quality item selected is worthy of the season.



ABSOLUT

The Absolut Espresso Martini Gift Set includes a 750-ml bottle of Absolut Vodka, a 50-ml bottle of Kahlúa Coffee Liqueur, and an 8-oz. can of Owen's Espresso Martini Mix. **SRP: \$20**



ARCHERY SUMMIT

This three-bottle collection includes the Renegade Ridge Pinot Noir 2022, Archer's Edge Pinot Noir 2022, and Dundee Hills Pinot Noir 2022. **SRP: \$250**



BLANDY'S

Blandy's 10-Year-Old Varietal Pack includes four 200-ml bottles—one each of the 10-year-old Sercial, Verdelho, Bual, and Malmsey. **SRP: \$68**

ALFRED GRATIEN

Alfred Gratien's 'The Angels' Share' Cuvée Paradis Rosé 2008, packaged in a metallic blush sleeve, celebrates 160 years of excellence. **SRP: \$150**



AVIVO

This gift pack comes in eco-friendly, recyclable packaging and includes one bottle each of red, white, and rosé, plus an exclusive Avivo wine key. **SRP: \$90**



CASA NOBLE

The limited-edition Marques de Casa Noble Tequila is skillfully blended with nine añejos and 12 extra añejos aged between one and five years. **SRP: \$170**

Please check with your local distributor for availability and exact pricing.

CHAMPAGNE POMMERY

For the 150th anniversary of Madame Pommery's introduction of Brut Champagne, Champagne Pommery has released Cuvée Apanage 1874, an expression of Pommery's identity and purity. **SRP: \$100**



CLIFF LEDE VINEYARDS

The Platinum Poetry Duet includes one bottle of Poetry Cabernet Sauvignon 2011 and one bottle of Poetry Cabernet Sauvignon 2021. **SRP: \$850**



DEWAR'S

The limited-edition, 375-ml Double Double 38 Year Old Blended Malt Scotch is crafted using a unique four-stage aging process, including finishing in Pedro Ximénez sherry casks. **SRP: \$2,200**



CHARLES HEIDSIECK

The house's Blanc de Blancs is vibrant and generous, with a new white and gold label that highlights its signature grape variety, Chardonnay. **SRP: \$120**



CLOUDY BAY X LAFCO

The Cloudy Bay x Laoco Holiday Gift Set includes one bottle of Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc and one 15.5-oz. Laoco candle with a scent inspired by New Zealand's vineyards. **SRP: \$99**



DOM PÉRIGNON

A tribute to legendary artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, the special-edition Dom Pérignon 2015 is packaged in three unique gift boxes, each depicting a different section of the artist's *In Italian* painting. **SRP: \$350**



CHARLES KRUG

The Cabernet Connoisseur Gift Box includes three bottles of Cabernet Sauvignon, one of each single-vineyard bottling. **SRP: \$515**



DAOU

The Estate Collection By-the-Glass set includes a 100-ml pour of three different wines: Estate Soul of a Lion 2019, Estate Cabernet Sauvignon 2019, and Estate Mayote 2019. **SRP: \$65**



DUTCHER CROSSING

The two-bottle Giving Pack includes the CFM Sauvignon Blanc 2021 and CFM Cabernet Sauvignon 2018. Its proceeds go to melanoma research in honor of the owner's father, Charles F. Mathy. **SRP: \$160**

CHIVAS REGAL

The Chivas Regal x Filthy Gold

Rush Cocktail Kit includes a 750-ml bottle of Chivas 12-Year-Old Scotch Whisky and a custom Gold Rush premium cocktail mixer from Filthy Food. **SRP: \$32**





EHLERS ESTATE

The 1886 Gift Pack includes two bottles of the 1886 Cabernet Sauvignon from the 2021 vintage. **SRP: \$350**



ELEVEN ELEVEN

The Essentials Gift Set features one bottle of XI Cabernet Sauvignon 2020, an etched stainless steel wine key, and an etched Riedel Degustazione wine glass. **SRP: \$115**



EMPRESS 1908 GIN

The Empress Gin Negroni Rosa Set showcases the Empress 1908 Elderflower Rose Gin alongside everything needed for a Negroni Rosa. **SRP: \$40**

FOUR ROSES

Four Roses Small Batch & Honey Kit includes one 750-ml bottle of Four Roses Small Batch bourbon and one 10-oz. bottle of Ooni x Four Roses Bourbon Barrel Aged Honey. **SRP: \$52**



GAMBLE FAMILY VINEYARDS

The Family Home Holiday Gift Box includes one bottle of Gamble Family Vineyards Family Home Cabernet Sauvignon 2018 sourced from the Family Home vineyard in Oakville, California. **SRP: \$150**

GRAHAM'S PORT

Graham's Trio Pack features three 200-ml bottles, one each of Graham's 10 Year Tawny Port, Graham's 20 Year Tawny Port, and Graham's Six Grapes Reserve Port. **SRP: \$54**



HATOZAKI WHISKY

The Highball Your Way gift set comes with one 700-ml bottle of Hatozaki Finest Blend Whisky, one highball glass, and one cocktail card. **SRP: \$46**



HERRADURA TEQUILA

The Selección Suprema extra añejo tequila rests in American white oak barrels for 49 months before release. **SRP: \$349**

HIGH WEST

The High West Core Whiskey and Cask Collection Gift Set includes one bottle each of High West Bourbon, Double Rye, and its first Cask Collection limited release—a blend of straight bourbon whiskeys finished in Petite Sirah barrels. **SRP: \$90**



JANSZ TASMANIA

This special packaging of Jansz Tasmania's Premium Cuvée NV is a collaboration with Daniel Gray-Barnett, a world-renowned, Tasmania-based illustrator. **SRP: \$27**



JUSTIN

The Holiday Duo set includes the Justin Chardonnay 2023 and the Isosceles 2021. **SRP: \$130**



LANDMARK VINEYARDS

The Perfect Pairing Picnic Kit includes one bottle of Overlook Chardonnay 2022, one bottle of Overlook Pinot Noir 2022, one stainless steel corkscrew, one cheese knife, and one cutting board, all with insulated storage. **SRP: \$125**

LOUIS ROEDERER

The newly released Cristal Rosé Vinothèque 2002 perfectly embodies the intensity and complexity sought from extended periods of aging. **SRP: \$2,500**



LOUIS ROEDERER

The house's newest non-vintage release, Collection 245 showcases the 2020 vintage and is both generous and intense. **SRP: \$70**



MARTELL COGNAC

Martell's holiday gift set includes two cocktail glasses, garnish picks, a bottle of Martell Blue Swift—the world's first VSOP Cognac aged in American whiskey barrels—and a recipe card. **SRP: \$48**



MINGLE MOCKTAILS

Each custom gift box includes a variety of non-alcoholic Mingle mocktail flavors, a Let's Mingle canvas tote bag, and a Celebrate Your Spirit recipe card. **SRP: \$65**

MIONETTO

Mionetto's classic wine, the Prosecco DOC Treviso Brut, offers its 2024 vintage in a holiday gift box. **SRP: \$15**



MONKEY 47

The 14th Distiller's Cut edition of Monkey 47 uses capers from the remote island of Pantelleria in Sicily as its 48th botanical for this annual limited release, packaged in a 375-ml bottle. **SRP: \$80**



PINE RIDGE VINEYARDS

A gift set for wine-drinking golfers, this includes a bottle of Pine Ridge Vineyards Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2022 and a branded golf bag tag and golf towel. **SRP: \$125**



PLANTERAY RUM

This 40-year-old limited-edition, 100 percent pot-still rum—Planteray's oldest release yet—is presented in a bespoke wooden box with an individually numbered bottle and handcrafted bottle stopper. **SRP: \$1,900**



PRIEST RANCH

The Holiday Essentials gift set includes one bottle of the Cabernet Sauvignon 2019, one bottle of the Sauvignon Blanc 2023, and a cheeseboard, all wrapped in a black gift box with a personalized message. **SRP: \$136**



QUI TEQUILA

This limited collaboration with Chef Nobu Matsuhisa and Kaws features a bottle of Nobu Rare by Qui Tequila, aged 25 years before release. Available in three colors, each bottle and box features Kaws artwork. **SRP: \$1,000**



REDBREAST IRISH WHISKEY

The Redbreast 18 Year Old, the first permanent new addition to the Redbreast family in four years, also uniquely uses cream sherry casks in the aging process. **SRP: \$249**



SANTA MARGHERITA

These limited-edition holiday tins, containing Prosecco Superiore, celebrate iconic cities, including Chicago, Boston, and New York City, and are available exclusively in their respective states. **SRP: \$25**



SEGHESSIO FAMILY VINEYARDS

The For the Chef gift set includes a bottle of Seghesio Family Vineyards 'Home Ranch' Zinfandel 2022 and a Journeyman Salt Set and Calabrian Chub. **SRP: \$115**



SILVER OAK WINERY

This two-bottle holiday gift box includes the Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2020 and the Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2019. **SRP: \$300**



SKREWBALL PEANUT BUTTER WHISKEY

A ready-to-drink twist on a holiday classic, Skrewball Eggnog blends Skrewball Peanut Butter Whiskey and spicy eggnog made from premium dairy cream. **SRP: \$20**



STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS

Packaged in a velvet-lined gift box, S.L.V. Gift of a Legend pairs a bottle of S.L.V. Cabernet Sauvignon 2021 with two etched Riedel glasses and a token for an exclusive winery experience. **SRP: \$350**



THE DONUM ESTATE

This gift box includes a vertical of Donum's Carneros Estate Pinot Noir, curated for Ai Weiwei's Zodiac Heads. It features the Year of the Rat (2020), the Ox (2021), and the Tiger (2022). **SRP: \$325**



TIPSY SCOOP

The Drink and Be Merry boozy ice cream pack includes four spirit-infused flavors: Santa's Cookies and Whiskey, Christmas Morning, Mistletoe Margarita, and New Year's Toast. **SRP: \$100**

VEUVE CLICQUOT

Packaged in a pink gift box designed by Italian artist Paola Paronetto, the La Grande Dame Rosé 2015 is Pinot Noir-dominant, with freshness and character. **SRP: \$320**



YALUMBA

Offered in a six-bottle wooden case, The Signature 2018 is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz with fresh berry, mint, and cedar aromas, named for former managing director Nick Waterman. **SRP: \$396**