

Wine trends that will rule in 2021



This New Year is a year of hope and positivity. From stock market to the food industry, everyone is hoping for good times to come. And good times are rarely complete without a wine and hence the wine industry is hoping for a good year too. Sonal Holland, India's only Master of Wine believes that in the last quarter of 2020, some buoyancy and a pick-up in sales was seen in the F&B industry. Seeing the trends, Sonal has shared a forecast regarding the wine industry, and she believes that people will be looking for wine in 2021. Here are a few trends that you must look out for.

A thirst for knowledge



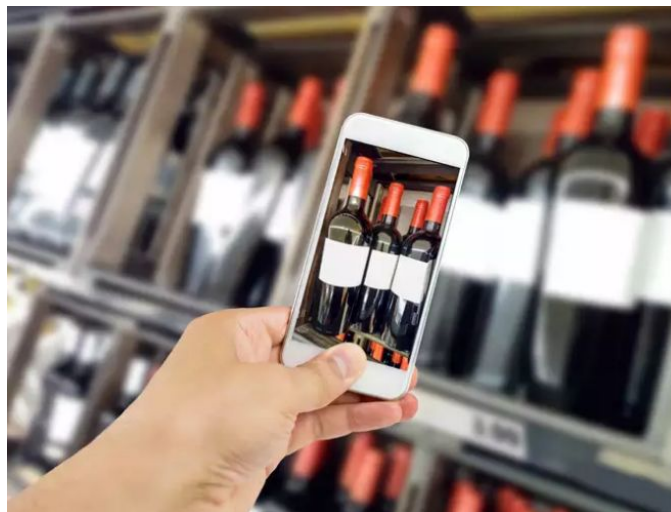
The pandemic was marked by a steep increase in online learning with more and more people attending webinars, Zoom meets, and Instagram lives. The wine and beverage industry also saw a lot of global experts sharing the knowledge. Sonal predicts that both consumers and professionals in the trade will continue to consume education about beverages and wine this year too.

A surge in specialist stores



In 2021, I see more consumers seeking out modern wine specialist stores to make their purchases. These are typically posh shops located within large food retail formats, shopping malls or multi-theatre complexes. They offer a widened selection of both domestic and international wines; better-informed staff; and overall, a better experience for the consumer, shared Sonal Holland.

More online sales



Another big trend that will continue this year is the purchase of alcohol - online. Ever since the Government has allowed online sales of alcohol, consumers have gravitated towards this highly convenient - and pandemic-proof - way of purchasing their favourite liquor. Given that the excise department has seen such a significant dip in revenue this year, I see no reason why the Government won't continue to encourage online liquor sales into the New Year, and even longer.

Wine - an affordable luxury



In a year, where the affluent haven't had a chance to spend on themselves as much through international holidays or luxury purchases, a quick and convenient way to consume luxury is by spending on premium wines. Now more than ever, wine has become a luxury that the affluent can splurge on - I see premium wine purchases continuing through the New Year, with the wealthy even looking to trade up, and splurge more than usual on their wines and other luxury beverages.

Wine in cans



With the recent introduction of wine in cans by brands like Sula and Fratelli; the Indian consumer, who is younger and not as experienced in the wine world, will have more opportunities to try and enjoy wines in 2021. Wine in cans is a more accessible and price-sensitive way for consumers to sample the beverage, and with their introduction, the hope is that a younger, newer audience will convert to drinking wine.

Blush & rose wines



Sonal says, rose wine from regions like French Provence, Italy, Spain will continue to rise in popularity in 2021. They are incredibly versatile and light, provides the freshness of a white wine, but the body and fruit of red wine. They also pair very well with vegetarian food. One variant in the rose category that will continue to enjoy popularity in the New Year is the blush-coloured styles of Moscato wines. It's a medium-sweet wine and low in alcohol, thus allowing for easy drinking. It's got great aromatics and is especially a hit among lady drinkers. As women continue to embrace wines in 2021, options like Moscato, which are perfumed, sherbet-like and not very expensive, will remain popular.

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