

Embargoed until 10:45am – 20 February 2009

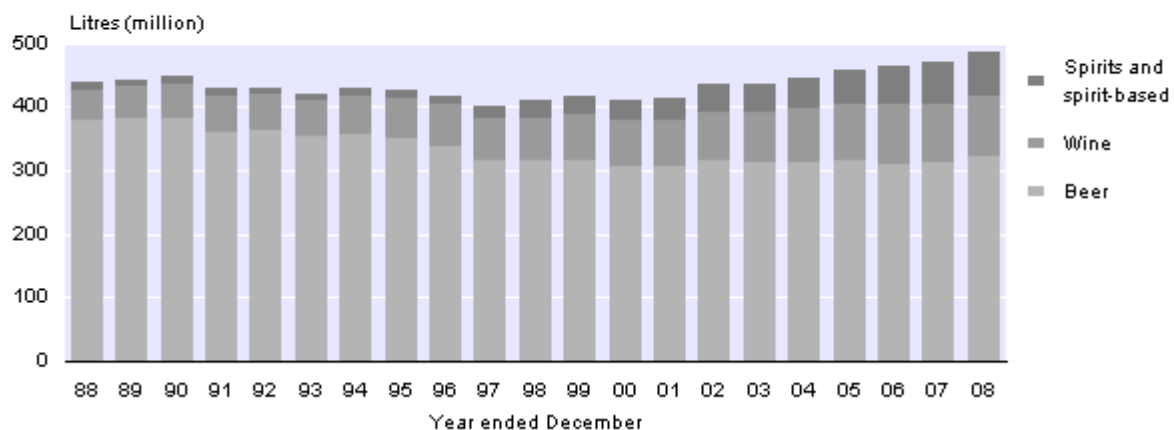
## Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2008

### Highlights

In the December 2008 year:

- The total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption rose 3.4 percent, to 486.4 million litres.
- The volume of pure alcohol available per person aged 15 years and over is the highest since 1994 (9.5 litres).
- Beer available for consumption reached 322.5 million litres, up 3.3 percent from 2007.
- The volume of wine available for consumption increased 2.3 percent, to 94.2 million litres.
- The availability of spirit-based drinks (less than 23 percent alcohol content) increased 4.3 percent, to 59.2 million litres.
- The number of cigarettes available for consumption increased 4.3 percent, to 2.5 billion.

**Total Volume of Alcoholic Beverage Available for Consumption**  
*By beverage type*  
1988–2008



Dallas Welch (Mrs)  
Acting Government Statistician

20 February 2009  
ISSN 1178-0401

See also [Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2008 – Media release.](#)

## Commentary

### Total alcoholic beverage available for consumption

Compared with the December 2007 year, the total volume of alcoholic beverage available for consumption during the December 2008 year increased 16.1 million litres (up 3.4 percent), to reach a new high of 486.4 million litres. Contributing to the increase were rises in the volumes of beer, up 10.3 million litres (3.3 percent); spirits, up 3.7 million litres (5.5 percent); and wine, up 2.1 million litres (2.3 percent).



### Total pure alcohol available for consumption

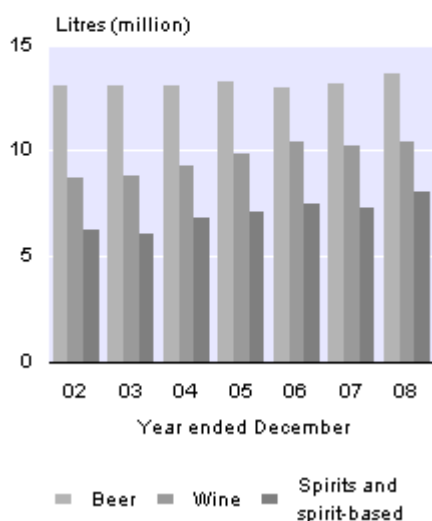
The pure alcohol available for consumption time series are a measure of the alcohol content contained within the various alcoholic beverages.

The total volume of pure alcohol available for consumption was 32.1 million litres during 2008, an increase of 4.5 percent compared with the 2007 year. The volume of pure alcohol available from wine increased 2.1 percent (to 10.4 million litres), and for spirits the increase was 9.4 percent (to 8.0 million litres). The total volume of pure alcohol available from beer was 13.6 million litres, a 3.6 percent increase.

The volume of pure alcohol available per person aged 15 years and over increased 3.3 percent from 2007, to reach 9.5 litres. This is the highest volume since 1994.

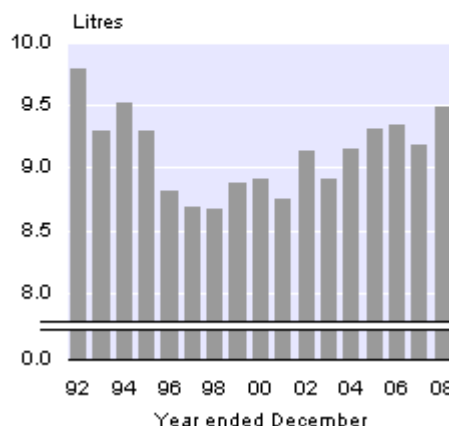
### Total Volume of Pure Alcohol Available for Consumption

By beverage type  
2002–2008



### Volume of Pure Alcohol Available for Consumption

Per head of population aged 15 years and over  
1992–2008

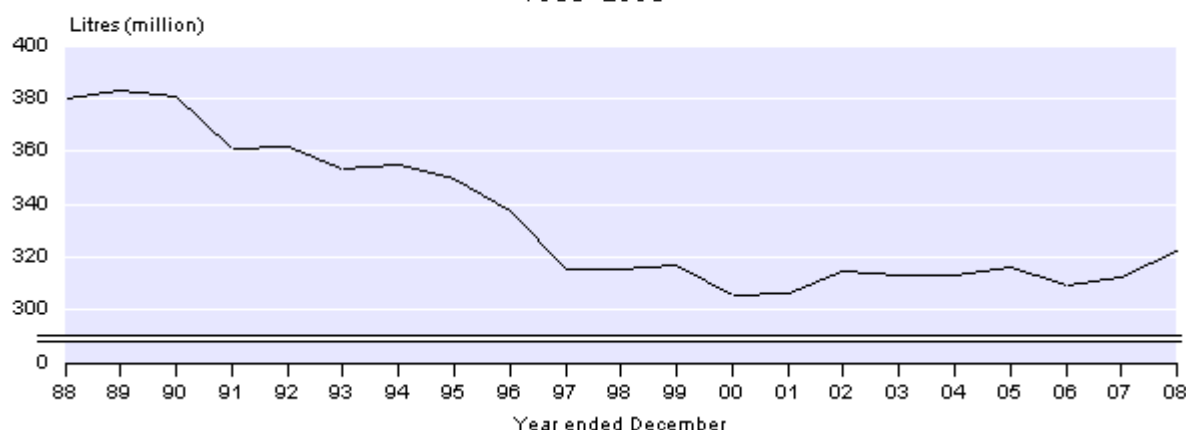


## Beer

Compared with 2007, the volume of beer available for consumption in 2008 rose 3.3 percent, to reach 322.5 million litres. Beer is still the most popular type of alcoholic beverage in New Zealand and it contributed 66.3 percent of the total beverage available for consumption in 2008. Beer's proportion has been in decline since 1992, when its proportion of the total beverage available for consumption was 84.2 percent.

### Volume of Beer Available for Consumption

1988–2008

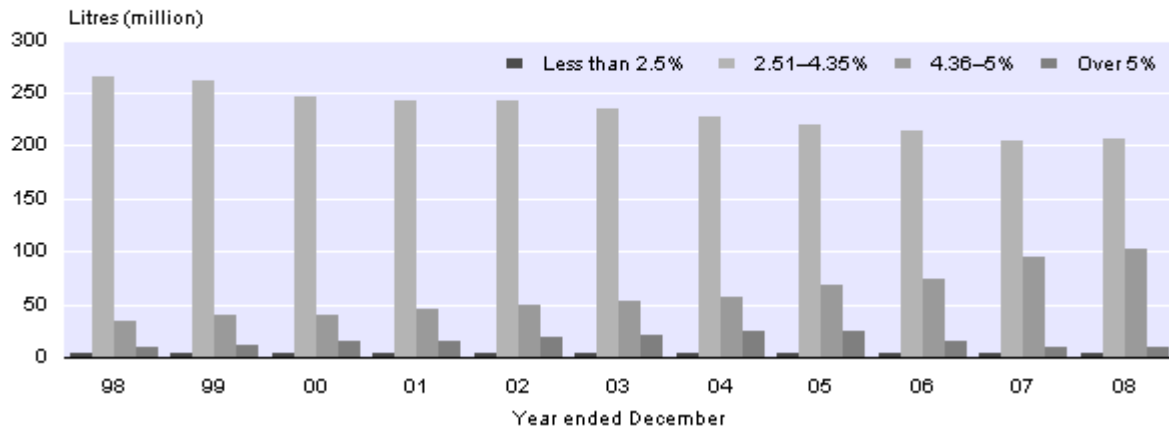


Of the total increase in the volume of beer available for consumption in 2008 (10.3 million litres), the majority was from beer with an alcohol content of between 4.36 and 5 percent, which was up 9.2 million litres from 2007. Beer with an alcohol content of between 2.5 and 4.35 percent increased 1.1 percent for the year. The volumes of beer with an alcohol content of less than 2.5 percent, and beer with an alcohol content of greater than 5 percent, decreased in 2008.

## Volume of Beer Available for Consumption

*By alcohol content*

1998–2008



## Wine

The total volume of wine available for consumption in 2008 was 94.2 million litres, up 2.3 percent compared with the previous year. Wine contributed 19.4 percent of total alcoholic beverage available in 2008, compared with 19.6 percent in 2007.

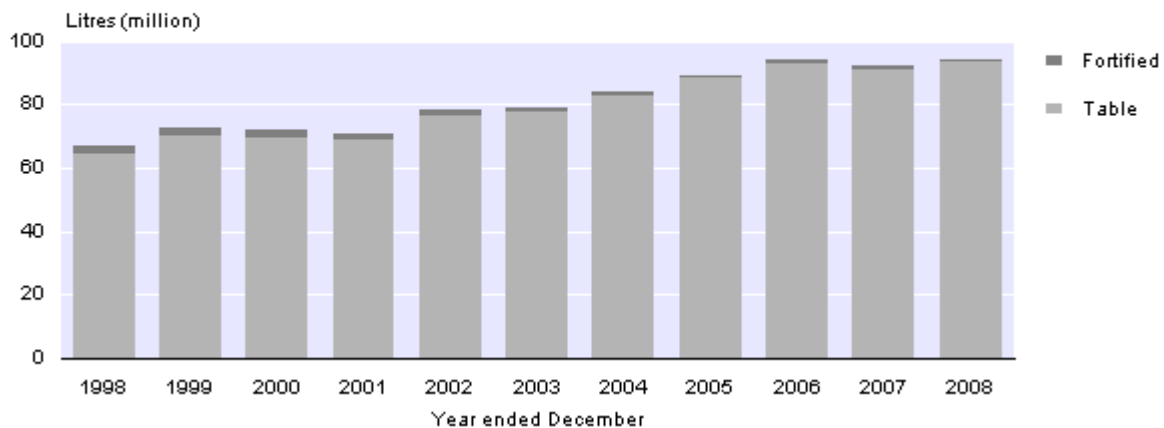
Table wine (up to 14 percent alcohol by volume), increased by 2.3 million litres (2.5 percent) in 2008 compared with the previous year, and contributed 99.2 percent of total wine available for consumption.

The volume of fortified wine (greater than 14 percent alcohol by volume), decreased by 193,000 litres (20.2 percent) in 2008.

## Volume of Wine Available for Consumption

*By wine type*

1998–2008



## Spirits and spirit-based drinks

The total volume of spirits and spirit-based drinks available for consumption rose 5.5 percent, to 69.7 million litres during 2008. The rate of increase slowed in 2008 when compared with increases in recent years, with 2008 having the lowest percentage increase since 1999.

Spirits and spirit-based drinks now represent 14.3 percent of the total alcoholic beverage available for consumption. The total share of spirits and spirit-based drinks has increased steadily since 1996.

The volume of spirits (containing more than 23 percent alcohol) available for consumption increased 12.9 percent, to reach 10.5 million litres in 2008.

The availability of spirit-based drinks (containing not more than 23 percent alcohol) continued to rise in 2008, although the rate of increase has slowed compared with the previous three years. The volume available in 2008 (59.2 million litres) was an increase of 2.5 million litres (4.3 percent) when compared with 2007.

In the year ended December 2008, the total volume of pure alcohol available from spirits and spirit-based drinks increased 9.4 percent. The volume of pure alcohol available for consumption from spirits increased 12.9 percent, and that available from spirit-based drinks increased 5.5 percent.



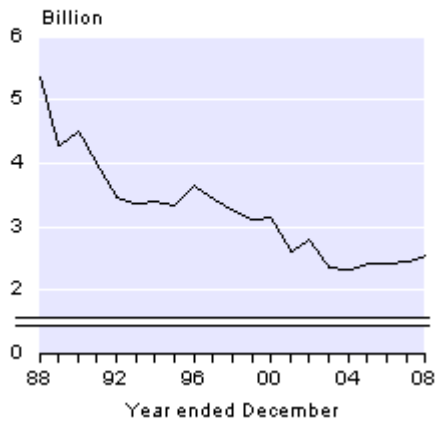
## Cigarettes and tobacco

During the December 2008 year, the number of cigarettes available for consumption increased 4.3 percent, to reach 2.5 billion.

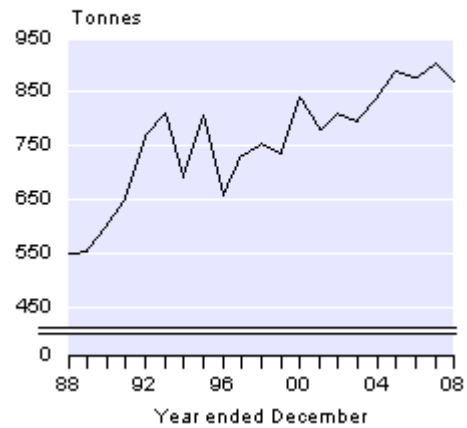
The number of cigarettes available for consumption has been gradually increasing since 2004, although this number is still significantly less than the peak in 1977 when there were 6.3 billion cigarettes available.

In 2008, the volume of tobacco available for consumption decreased 3.7 percent, to 870 tonnes, compared with 2007. The tobacco volume has been generally increasing since 1985.

### Cigarettes Available for Consumption 1988–2008



### Tobacco Available for Consumption 1988–2008



For technical information contact:

Scott Davis or Stuart Jones

Christchurch 03 964 8700

**Email:** [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz)

### Next release ...

*Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption: Year ended December 2009* will be released in February 2010.

# Technical notes

## General

The statistics contained in this release are a measure of the amounts of alcoholic beverage and tobacco released to the market, and therefore available for consumption. They do not necessarily apply to actual consumption. Information is not available to measure the change in the level of stocks that may be held pending sale and therefore not yet consumed. The figures also exclude the production of alcoholic beverages by households.

## Beer

The volume of beer available for consumption is obtained from New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS) figures on beer produced for local consumption on which duty has been paid, and Statistics New Zealand external trade statistics. Domestically produced beer with less than 1.15 percent alcohol content is excluded from these statistics. The estimates of beer available for consumption also excludes beer produced by private individuals with home-brewing equipment.

The volume of alcohol available from beer is calculated using the five categories used to calculate excise duty. These categories are:

1. not more than 1.15 percent alcohol volume (external trade statistics only)
2. more than 1.15 percent but not more than 2.5 percent alcohol volume
3. more than 2.5 percent but not more than 4.35 percent alcohol volume
4. more than 4.35 percent but not more than 5 percent alcohol volume
5. more than 5 percent alcohol volume.

The volume of beverage in each category is multiplied by 0.0115, 0.01825, 0.04, 0.04675, and 0.051, respectively. This converts the volume of beer available for consumption to the volume of alcohol available for consumption.

The factor of 0.04 was chosen to calculate the volume of alcohol of beer containing more than 2.51 percent, but not more than 4.35 percent, alcohol because the majority of beers produced in this range have 4.0 percent alcohol content.

## Wine

The volume of wine available for consumption is obtained from NZCS figures on wine produced for local consumption on which duty has been paid, and from Statistics NZ external trade statistics. Domestically produced wine with less than 1.15 percent alcohol content is excluded from these statistics. The estimates of wine available for consumption also excludes wine produced by private individuals with winemaking equipment.

The volume of table wine available is multiplied by 0.11, and the volume of fortified wine is multiplied by 0.18, to calculate the volume of alcohol available in these wines. Results of the Study of the Alcohol Content of Alcoholic Beverages conducted by the DSIR between 1976 and 1987 are used to determine the average alcohol content of table and fortified wine.

## Spirits

The volume of spirits and spirit-based beverages available for consumption is obtained from NZCS figures on locally produced/bottled spirits on which duty has been paid, and from Statistics NZ external trade statistics.

The data used to calculate available spirits is expressed in absolute alcohol content. However, spirit-based beverages which have an alcohol content of less than 23 percent are expressed in litres. The volume of alcohol content in spirit-based drinks is calculated using the five categories used to calculate excise duty. These categories are:

1. not more than 2.5 percent alcohol volume
2. more than 2.5 percent but not more than 6 percent alcohol volume
3. more than 6 percent but not more than 9 percent alcohol volume
4. more than 9 percent but not more than 14 percent alcohol volume
5. more than 14 percent but not more than 23 percent alcohol volume.

The volume of beverage in each category is multiplied by 0.015, 0.045, 0.08, 0.11, and 0.18, respectively. This converts the volume of spirit-based drinks available for consumption to the volume of alcohol available.

## **Alcohol per person**

Statistics NZ quarterly population estimates are used.

## **Cigarettes and tobacco**

The amount of cigarettes and tobacco available for consumption is obtained from Statistics NZ external trade statistics and NZCS figures on tobacco products cleared for local consumption on which duty has been paid.

## **More information**

For more information, click on these links from the technical notes of this release on the Statistics NZ website: [alcohol for consumption statistics](#) or [cigarettes and tobacco statistics](#).

## **Copyright**

Information obtained from Statistics NZ may be freely used, reproduced, or quoted unless otherwise specified. In all cases Statistics NZ must be acknowledged as the source.

## **Liability**

While care has been used in processing, analysing and extracting information, Statistics NZ gives no warranty that the information supplied is free from error. Statistics NZ shall not be liable for any loss suffered through the use, directly or indirectly, of any information, product or service.

## **Timing**

Timed statistical releases are delivered using postal and electronic services provided by third parties. Delivery of these releases may be delayed by circumstances outside the control of Statistics NZ. Statistics NZ accepts no responsibility for any such delays.

## Tables

The following tables can be downloaded from the Statistics New Zealand website in Excel format. If you do not have access to Excel, you may use the [Excel file viewer](#) to view, print and export the contents of the file.

1. Alcohol and tobacco available for consumption
2. Alcohol available for consumption, volume of pure alcohol available