



## Gen Z NOT the Generation of Moderation, Survey Reveals

by The IWSR Drinks Market Analysis, [www.theiwsr.com](http://www.theiwsr.com)

*According to a new IWSR Bevtrac survey, Gen Z drinking is now broadly in line with other generations.*

IWSR's latest Bevtrac survey of consumer sentiment shows that Gen Z is not shunning alcohol any more than older consumers, and in some cases may be pushing back against the moderation trend.

Across the 15 markets covered by the Bevtrac survey, the proportion of Gen Z legal drinking age (LDA+) adults who claim to have consumed alcohol in the past six months has risen from 66% in March 2023 to 73% in March 2025.

The upward swing in participation is even more pronounced in specific key markets over the same timescale: from 46% to 70% in the U.S., from 66% to 76% in the U.K. and from 61% to 83% in Australia.

While the overall rate of 73% is still lower than the participation rate of all adults (78%) the survey found that that behavior among Gen Z consumers who are drinkers is no longer significantly different from the behavior of other generations.

In addition to increased participation, the Bevtrac survey also identified several trends among Gen Z LDA+ drinkers that indicate their behavior is increasingly in line with the behavior of previous generations in their 20s.

\* They are more likely to partake from a wider range of categories of beverage alcohol than drinkers as a whole (Gen Z LDA+ drinkers reported consuming over five categories on average in the last six months, as opposed to just over four categories for Boomers).

\* They are slightly more likely to drink spirits than all adult drinkers as a whole.

\* They are significantly more likely to drink beverage alcohol at a bar, restaurant or club than adult drinkers as a whole (nearly half of Gen Z LDA+ drinkers reported on trade as their last location, as opposed to just over a third of all adult drinkers).

Moderation remains a growing trend across all age groups, but Gen Z LDA+ drinkers are not, as widely believed, at the forefront of this change. When asked to agree or disagree with the statement "I am actively choosing to drink more," Gen Z LDA+ drinkers were more likely to agree with this statement than any other generation.

When Gen Z LDA+ drinkers do moderate, they follow different patterns than other generations. They are the generation most likely to engage in intermittent abstinence (nearly 60% of Gen Z LDA+ drinkers as opposed to just over 40% of all adult drinkers).

"Moderation has been a growing trend among all drinkers for several years, but the idea that Gen Z LDA+ drinkers are somehow fundamentally different from other age groups isn't supported by the evidence," said Richard Halstead, IWSR COO of Consumer Insights. "For instance, we know that beverage alcohol consumption correlates with disposable income, and Gen Z came of age during a cost-of-living crisis. Rising prices have been especially

*continued on page 3*

## DISCUS Leads Trade Mission of U.S. Distilleries to Japan

The Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS) led a trade mission of 11 U.S. distilleries to Tokyo and Osaka, Japan, from September 8-12 to promote the diversity and premium quality of U.S. spirits.

The trade mission was supported by funding through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Market Access Program (MAP), which helps promote American agricultural products in international markets.

DISCUS hosted trade activations in both cities, including an exclusive evening event in Tokyo for Japanese spirits media. Across both events, more than 160 Japanese buyers, importers, media representatives and on-trade professionals sampled a curated selection of American spirits.

The MAP-supported trade events were part of DISCUS' market export campaign, "Cheers! Spirits from the USA", which aims to educate the hospitality industry, adult consumers and media in key spirits export markets on the taste, heritage and style of American distilled spirits.

DISCUS' trade mission to Japan represents a return to the market after a three-year hiatus. Japan remains a vital market for U.S. spirits, ranking as the sixth-largest export destination for U.S. spirits and fourth largest for American whiskeys. In 2024, U.S. spirits exports to Japan exceeded \$100 million, underscoring the strong demand for premium American products.

"It is an exciting time to return to Japan and engage directly with the hospitality industry and adult consumers to share the craftsmanship and rich history of American distilled spirits," said Joel Matticks, DISCUS Export Promotions Manager. "We are thrilled about the growing interest in American spirits and look forward to deepening our ties through continued education and collaboration."

Visitors to the DISCUS activations sampled a range of American whiskeys and other American spirits from some of the most innovative distilleries in the U.S. Featured distilleries included:

- Arizona Distilling Co.
- Brother's Bond Bourbon
- BroVo Spirits
- Koval

*continued on page 3*