



There are Six Wine-Drinker Consumption Frequency Segments. Four of Them Matter.

Editorial Comment

Since 1995, Wine Market Council has provided the wine industry with authoritative data on the demographics and wine-related behaviors of U.S. wine drinkers. A fundamental data point that has been tracked since the council's first study is the breakdown of wine consumption frequency among the 79 million U.S. adults who drink wine. Wine drinkers in the Council study are defined as those who drink wine more often than once every 2-3 months. However, those who drink wine at that frequency and state a preference for wine (vs. beer or spirits) are also considered to be "wine drinkers."

The chart below displays the six wine consumption frequency segments that are tracked, ranging from daily wine drinkers to those who drink wine once every 2-3 months.

You can see that the "80/20" principle of retail sales comes close to describing wine consumption in the U.S., in that 32% of wine drinkers (those with "daily" or "more often than once a week" consumption) account for 79% of all wine drinking occasions. At Wine Opinions, we categorize the daily and more-than-once-a-week group as "Frequent" wine drinkers. Our nearly two decades of wine consumer research shows that they are the primary drivers of the market for wines in every price segment and of every package size and type.

A plurality of U.S. wine drinkers (45%) enjoy wine either once a week or 2-3 times a month. The once-a-week segment is only a slightly greater percentage of wine drinkers than the 2-3 times a month segment, but they account for nearly twice the percentage of total wine occasions as the 2-3 times a month segment.

Together, the "once-a-week" and "2-3 times a month" segments are categorized by Wine Opinions as "Occasional" wine drinkers. They account for 19% of all U.S. wine-drinking occasions.

The "once a month" and "once every 2-3 months" wine drinking segments together represent 23% of U.S. wine drinkers, but they account for only 2% of all wine-drinking occasions. Wine Opinions categorizes this group as "Infrequent" wine drinkers.

Most of the wine market research conducted by other companies is based on survey respondents they categorize as "Regular" wine drinkers. The companies running these surveys define "regular" wine drinkers as those who drink wine once a month or more often. I am of the opinion that this practice dilutes the value of their survey findings. The wine preferences and behaviors of survey respondents representing 1% of U.S. wine consumption are, in my opinion, irrelevant.

Wine Opinions consumer surveys always are comprised of statistically significant numbers of respondents in the four segments of the Frequent and Occasional wine drinker categories. We disqualify respondents who drink wine once a month or less often.

Having sufficient numbers of Occasional wine drinkers is especially important in research on wines such as Prosecco or Moscato, that are largely driven by this category (which skews toward females in their 30s). Furthermore, the history of the U.S. wine market shows us that tomorrow's Frequent wine drinkers will come from today's Occasional wine drinker category.

At Wine Opinions, our guiding principle in constructing consumer surveys is this: "Pose the right questions, in the right manner, to the right audience." The importance of the "right audience" cannot be overstated.

John Gillespie
Wine Opinions Founder and CEO

Wine Drinker Segments and Categories

Frequency Segment	Yearly Occasions Per Capita	Percent of Wine Drinkers	Total Occasions Per Year*	Percent of Total Occasions	Category
Every Day	365	6.8%	2,482	25%	Frequent = 79%
More than 1 x Week	208	25.4%	5,283	54%	
Once a Week	52	23.5%	1,222	12%	Occasional = 19%
2-3 Times a Month	30	21.2%	636	7%	
Once a Month	12	11.7%	140	1%	Infrequent = 2%
1 x 2-3 Months	5	11.4%	57	1%	
TOTAL	672	100%	9,820	100%	

*Yearly occasions x percent of wine drinkers x 100

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