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The Grocer Guide to...

**The
Grocer**

Beer & cider



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Analysis



Flavourful summer

Consumers are reaching out for premium products, giving into indulgences even in times of uncertainty

Weathering the storm is exactly what the beer and cider category has been doing lately. Economic pressures continue to squeeze consumer spending, creating an interesting split in the market – shoppers are either reaching for premium products that deliver quality experiences or looking for value options that won't strain their wallets too much.

However, after several tough quarters, there's a feeling of optimism in the air. Brewers and cider makers are looking ahead to a summer packed with sporting events, hoping these occasions, combined with recent product innovations and warmer weather, will breathe new life into the category.

The overall category has shown

resilience, according to Alexander Wilson, category & commercial strategy director at Heineken UK, who says: "From a value perspective this was driven by the on-trade growing 2%, while remaining flat in the off-trade driven by less price inflation in the off-trade than in the pub and similar volume trends across both channels".

The cider category has shown varying performance across different segments, with premium and value options demonstrating growing popularity compared to mainstream brands. "Despite these challenges, the latest spell of good weather has seen cider rebound back into growth and Kopparberg has seen significant performance during the period, increasing its market share to 48.5% of fruit cider²," reveals Axel Tulip,

senior customer marketing manager at the company.

Pub closures have also had a lower impact than anticipated. "While there have been some closures, on a net basis the number of venues trading in the on-trade is flat year on year (YOY). In fact, the number of wet-led venues has grown 0.7% year on year to 51.4k³," says Craig Clarkson, C&C group off-trade and nationals director.

While it has been a challenging year for drinks producers, Thatchers Cider fourth generation cider maker Martin Thatcher points out that the company has "seen growth across the board, achieving record sales". According to him, Thatchers has now become the No.1 cider brand in grocery mults⁴. The brand's overall success in gaining market share demonstrates that even in

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challenging markets products with the right positioning and quality standards can achieve significant growth.

Premium despite pressures

However, there's a fascinating contradiction in current consumer behaviour. Even as wallets are squeezed, people are finding room for small indulgences that offer moments of peace from economic worries. "The premiumisation of the beer and cider market is driven by a combination of the long-term trend for moderation, and consumers' desire for exploration and indulgence, explains Heineken's Wilson. "With many consumers drinking less, when they do look to drink alcohol, they want an elevated experience. Mainstream premium lager, in particular, is growing through the offering of a mix of smaller, medium and large pack sizes⁵, as well as strong innovation," he adds.

Overall, people are unwilling to compromise on quality, thus keeping an eye out for authentic, trusted brands. "They want a quality experience from a brand they can trust, even if that means spending a little bit more and having a bit less," says Thatchers Cider's Thatcher. "When producers are not solely focused on making great cider, you can really see that reflected in the craft and quality."

For many consumers today, "every penny counts and this means consumers are spending more time understanding the products they are buying and the value they get in return," notes Kopparberg's Tulip. "Our research and performance of the category indicates that yes, consumers are drinking less as a whole or alternatively choosing value products, but they are turning to premium propositions to add value to their in-home occasions."

In the cider segment "as price gaps have closed, value and mid-tier brands have taken a hit, driven by the treating nature of the category and people still wanting to treat themselves in an unstable economy," observes Kopparberg's Tulip.

"When economic pressures point to more price-conscious decision-making the power of tried and trusted brands is critical," notes C&C Group's Clarkson. "Much-loved brands like Magners will be a popular choice for cider-drinkers, who know it is familiar and reliable,

while our investment in consumer and channel marketing will bring fizz to the brand and the category."

Meanwhile, the company's Orchard Pig brand is challenging the conventions of the premium apple category, bringing playfulness alongside taste, says Clarkson. And, with more apples and fewer bubbles it pairs perfectly with food, which plays into more premium occasion, he notes.

"Despite economic pressures, a trend of premiumisation remains across BWS and consumers will still look to treat or trade-up occasions. Quality and value for money is important" he

“Do not underestimate the comfort of familiar brands when economic pressures point to more price-conscious decision-making”

says. "Consumers will still look to try new brands like Menabrea with new national listings with multiple pack sizes in Tesco for example, which brings premium taste and Italian appeal to the beer category."

Similarly, Thatchers' growth across the board is being driven by people prioritising premium products to saving a pound. In face of the economic climate, premiumisation demonstrates "that some brands are struggling, while quality authentic brands like Thatchers are in growth", says Thatcher.

Bringing the pub home

When and where consumers drink should not be forgotten, as more people now trading the pub garden for their own backyard. This year, both the on- and off-trade channels are valuable to consumers for different reasons. "We see customers favour at-home consumption for key cultural moments, with the obvious





Are flavours actually dead?

Innovation in flavours remains a key battleground within the industry as consumer preferences oscillate between traditional and new refreshing combinations.

Jeremy Quaglia, founder of High Limb Cider in Plymouth, Massachusetts, identifies two distinct yet complementary trends emerging in the market. “We’re seeing fruited sours blooming while lighter-lower ABV beverages are gaining momentum as well.” Tapping into this trend High Limb has created a proprietary sour cider base recipe that is crisp and tart, which allows the company to co-ferment with big

juicy fruits like peach and pineapple to provide its customers with a new drink that satisfies their palates.

Thatchers Cider emphasises the importance of quality across flavour innovations. Customers are looking for exciting new flavours, but they want a quality product, not novelty or imitation, says Thatcher. This philosophy has guided its biggest NPD, including its successful blood orange and apple and blackcurrant varieties. In the on-trade, Thatchers Fusion, which offers three different fruit ciders through a single font, is the fastest-selling draught

fruit cider in volumeⁱ demonstrating customers’ demand for quality innovation. Despite this push towards new flavour, Thatcher adds that traditional apple cider still maintains a strong market position, accounting for approximately 70% of all cider salesⁱⁱ.

Interestingly enough, Kopparberg’s Tulip points out how traditional apple cider is evolving to meet changing consumer appeal. “Apple cider, as we know it, historically always enjoyed an over-index of success as a traditional on-trade product. In the past few years, however, there has been a significant shift for the apple

cider category as old and young consumers change their drinking patterns to drink more at home.” Recognising this change in consumption patterns, Kopparberg has introduced its Crisp Apple, offering drinkers the much-loved taste of classic apple cider, balanced with a slightly sweeter profile that the brand is famous for.

The fruit-flavoured segment is maturing in interesting ways, remaining particularly popular during summer with drinkers turning to them as alternatives. The appeal represents growth opportunities by attracting both dedicated cider enthusiasts and new curious consumers.

opportunities in maximising sales being large sporting events, bank holiday celebrations, barbecues and Christmas. On these occasions we’re seeing customers gravitate towards small to mid-sized packs of beer and cider, respectively worth £862m and nearly £375m, with large-sized pack following at £43m⁶” says Heineken’s Wilson. He explains that shoppers are looking for quality products as well as accessible pricing options. Focusing on a mix of mainstream and premium will help stores encourage purchases, he adds. “From Foster’s to Old Mout Fruit Cider, Heineken offers choice for all consumers on different budgets and across different taste profiles,” he says. “Recreating premium occasions at home and providing shoppers with exciting ways to enjoy their drinks through packaging, formats and variety is the right way to address these needs” says Kopparberg’s Tulip “Doing so will see brands rise to top!” He explains

that it’s nothing new for brands to engage and focus on occasions, but really diving deep into understanding their role in those occasions will allow both brands and retailers to achieve standout performance.

On the other hand, C&C’s Clarkson points out how marketing investment remains crucial in the retail industry this summer. “Capturing attention on- and building mental availability will become more important with the uptick in at-home consumption. We have new packaging formats launching into the off-trade in early summer and expect to see similar moves across BWS.”

Moderation and consumption

The moderation trend is here to stay. There is an overall consensus around the growing no- and low-alcohol segment within the category as mindful drinking is reshaping the UK beverage landscape, with Athletic Brewing Company’s co-founder & CEO Bill

Shufelt noting that 90% of UK adults now actively moderate their alcohol consumption⁷. “Mindful drinking represents a significant and enduring change in consumer behaviour,” Shufelt explains, making clear what many industry leaders recognise as more than just a passing trend. As a pioneering pure-play non-alcoholic brewer, Athletic Brewing Company is not simply tapping into this trend. Shufelt notes: “We developed a unique and proprietary brewing process that allows us to produce a range of full-flavoured non-alcoholic beer without compromising taste.” The company has also redefined how non-alcoholic beer is marketed, moving away from a responsibility-driven narrative to one of moderation with broad appeal. Rather than positioning alcohol-free beer for narrow and limiting occasions they wish to promote enjoyment and refreshment across a wide spectrum of occasions. “This would mean working

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to expanding the current audience for non-alcoholic options,” he adds.

With duty changes implemented in February 2025, companies across the sector are responding with innovative lower-ABV products. With the industry demonstrating substantial support for normalising and expanding the no- and low-alcohol category.

This shift is evident in sales figures, as Thatchers reports its Zero product has grown 130% YOY, making it the best-selling low/no apple cider in retail⁸. “We’ve seen it go from being a one-off treat, or something people dabble with, to becoming a fridge staple,” says Thatcher.

Duty changes this year and last have allowed retailers to manage their margin mix more effectively to offer greater value across categories and ranges “through price and promotion with the biggest gains from single bottles being ranged together in the same multibuy offer and 4-packs and multipacks working best on a high low strategy”, says Tulip from Kopparberg.

The C&C Group has also found success with its lower-ABV innovations. Clarkson points to Tennent’s Light as a prime example. “Brewed to 3.4% ABV with fewer calories than the parent brand and gluten-free, it has driven popularity with consumers making choices based on allergies and intolerances,” he says.

The industry’s investment in developing high-quality de-alcoholised products suggests this trend represents a fundamental shift in consumers health-conscious lifestyle priorities. Wilson from Heineken highlights the recent launch of “Inch’s 0.0 – the first de-alcoholised cider in the UK, it is a major advancement for the brand, adding a credible, premium option to the booming no- and low-alcohol market and providing consumers with an additional option”.

Looking beyond the alcohol content, the industry is witnessing consumer’s purchasing patterns change in response to their health-conscious lifestyles choices. Tulip from Kopparberg acknowledges that there is no denying young adults are increasingly choosing to moderate their alcohol intake. “This year, a significant portion of our media, creative and shopper marketing budget is allocated to alcohol-free and I only see the focus on the segment increasing over the

coming years,” he says.

C&C Group’s Clarkson agrees that “moderation continues to impact consumer choices and offering credible no and low options is key within any brand portfolio”.

Moving forward

Looking ahead, the beer and cider category shows promising signs of resilience despite ongoing economic pressures. Market polarisation between premium and value options continues to define consumer behaviour, with shoppers willing to spend more on quality experiences while

remaining price-conscious overall.

This summer’s sporting events offer a crucial opportunity for specific category revival. “It is clear that stout has had a resurgence, with the category performing incredibly well with strong value and volume growth in the total market of +23.7% and +18%, respectively⁹. In the off-trade, specifically, stout has grown +15.6% in value and +11.3% in volume¹⁰” says Heineken’s Wilson.

The shift towards at-home drinking occasions remains significant, with brands adapting their packaging formats and promotional strategies to meet this continued trend. “Innovation across new flavours, packages and a range of taste profiles will continue to be important to consumers. Innovation sales are key to brand growth” adds Wilson. However, consumers also want great value for money, whatever their budget might be, he notes.

Consumers are looking for authentic,



“Producers that focus on sound processes for lower alcohol with full, interesting flavour will get the attention they deserve this year”

Hyper-local connections

The trend towards local sourcing and community engagement continues to gain momentum, with brands emphasising their authentic connections to place and people.

From smaller craft producers, the emphasis on local connection is strong. Jeremy Quaglia, founder of High Limb Cider, sees localness as fundamental to the company's business model. From sourcing the apples it ferments to community involvement, being local is not only the key to its craft, but is also important to the business as part of its community. "If we can create, sell and support a

product we are truly passionate about to those around us, we can build a ripple effect of passion right back at what we do," he says.

Quaglia believes this approach scales beyond local markets "Regionality is incredibly important in the beverage market in 2025," he adds. "Customers can choose any lifeless brand based on price point, but to connect to people by communicating that you're not only in business for them, but more importantly because of them, creates a bond that most larger companies can't emulate."

At Thatchers Cider, meanwhile, being

part of the local community has been core to the brand since its beginnings over 120 years ago. Thatcher explains how Somerset is deeply rooted in Thatchers Cider, with its unique land and climate unparalleled for growing delicious cider apples. All of the company's cider is, and always has been, made at Myrtle Farm in Somerset, using 100% renewable electricity, including power from the 3,500 solar panels on its farm and carbon recovery, reusing CO2 created during fermentation to add sparkle to their ciders.

Meanwhile, for larger companies, community engagement extends

to corporate social responsibility. As Wilson from Heineken explains: "The way we make and serve our beers and ciders can have a significant impact on our customers, communities and the environment." The company's 2,400 leased pub business' around the UK put pubs at the heart of local communities, providing training and jobs for thousands of people and building social connections. "Since 2016, our Brewing Good Cheer campaign has been supporting communities by bringing them together in one of our pubs for a lunch and some good company" he adds.

trusted brands that deliver quality and value when they choose to indulge. As Thatcher from Thatchers Cider observes: "The drinks brands that stand out are those that are specialists in their field, where making great cider is their one and only priority and where they are investing in impactful campaigns."

Meanwhile, fruit variants, creative mixtures and combinations are attracting new consumers to the category. Flavour innovation continues to drive category excitement, though with greater emphasis on quality over novelty.

At Rhode Island's Origin Beer Project, co-owner and head brewer Cheyne Tessier anticipates a shift in lower-ABV offerings. "2025 feels like the year lower-ABV beverages get the attention they deserve," he says, emphasising the evolution from simply reduced alcohol content to more sophisticated "sound processes for lower alcohol with full, interesting

flavour". Tessier also highlights an emerging trend towards crossover styles that blend varied ingredients and fermentation techniques, while also sharing a return to well-crafted classics that will reignite consumers' passion for beer and cider.

The moderation trend has established itself as a permanent feature of the market landscape. With most of UK adults now actively moderating their alcohol consumption, no- and low-alcohol options have transitioned from occasional alternatives to fridge staples for many consumers.

Local connections and sustainability credentials continue to attract consumers looking out for brands with authentic stories and responsible practices. With solar panels at Thatchers' Myrtle Farm and community engagement initiatives by craft producers like High Limb Cider, localness and sustainability have become powerful differentiators in a

competitive market.

As the category navigates through economic uncertainty, the brands that "offer consumers heritage, provenance, varied pack sizes and great value for money, while always delivering on taste, will be in the best position for growth, regardless of where they are positioned in the market", concludes Heineken's Wilson.

Sources

¹ CGA and NIQ – Full Year 2024
² Circana data, Major Mults, fruit cider, value share, 4wks to 19.04.25

³ CGA, outlet universe as of December 2024, CGA OPM 52 w/e 22.02.26

⁴ CGA P02, 2025

⁵ NielsenIQ data to 28/12/2024- Premium Lager Grew +0.5% in Value 2024 vs 2025 Total Coverage

⁶ Nielsen IQ – Full Year 2024

⁷ Impulse Channel

⁸ <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/news/drinkaware-reveals-alcohol-moderation-is-on-the-increase-but-one-in-five-drinkers-are-putting-their->

health-at-serious-risk
⁹ NIQ, Cider, 52 Weeks to 25/01/2025 1

¹⁰ OffTrade Nielsen IQ: Full Year 2024 to 28th/12/2024 and on trade CGA to 28/12/2024

¹¹ Off Trade Nielsen IQ: Full Year 2024 to 28th/12/2024 and on trade CGA to 28/12/2024

Flavours side panel

¹² CGA OPMS P10 2024

¹³ NIQ, Cider, 12 Weeks to 25.01.25

A Birra for all occasions

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KEY BRANDS

Magners
Menabrea
Heverlee
Tennent's Lager
Orchard Pig
Outcider

With summer on the horizon retailers will be busy thinking about their range and Menabrea is offering even greater choice with the launch of its premium Italian birra, now in can for the first time, reveals C&C group channel marketing and planning manager Brid Turner.

Birra Menabrea, which is growing 5x faster than total premium beer with 11% growth YOY¹, has added 4x440ml and 10x440ml can packs to its line-up, she says.

"It's brilliant to have Menabrea now in can especially as we enter the summer trading period," says Turner. "The response has been fantastic, with availability across all leading grocery stores in the UK. Summer is a key time for socialising with friends and family – whether that's a planned event or impromptu catch-up – and many consumers are now favouring cans as the more convenient option."

To celebrate the recent launch, Menabrea is kicking off a seven-figure national campaign that will support key retail partners, with activations including gift-with-purchase, POS, digital media and influencer activity that will maximise awareness and drive rate of sale. Menabrea is also introducing a mass sampling campaign with HelloFresh and Triyt that will see 75,000 cans distributed throughout the GB from now until August.

"We know that when people try Menabrea, they love it," says Turner. "Despite challenges brought about by the cost of living, people are continuing to trade up when it comes to socialising at home, with premium beer



“World beers and Mediterranean lagers remain popular, and Menabrea offers a quality authentic experience at an accessible price point”

outperforming other segments in the category² – so sampling is important for us.”

World beers and Mediterranean lagers remain popular and Menabrea offers a quality authentic experience at an accessible price point that allows people to enjoy that little bit extra, she says. “It also pairs beautifully with food, making it a great option to stock this summer. From BBQs to antipasti, Menabrea complements a range of dishes and our 660ml bottles make a great accompaniment shared over a meal.”

The summer months are some of the most important for retailers with warm weather known to have a more positive effect on beer and cider categories than any sporting event – it therefore presents an opportunity to build loyalty and attract new customers by offering the right range, notes Turner.

“A mix of standard and premium beers in both small and larger pack formats will allow retailers to appeal to a range of tastes and budget. Retailers should think about accessibility, having chilled packs, enabling consumers to enjoy their favourite drinks ready-to-go. Mediterranean beers like Birra Menabrea can help retailers drive footfall during this key season and should be considered a must when planning what to stock.”



Source
^{1&2} IRI MAT to 22.03.25 and
CGA 22.02.25

MENABREA

ITALIAN ALPINE BIRRA

NEW

A BEER AS
FRESH AS
ALPINE AIR

Available in 4x440ml and
10x440ml packs



Magners fizzes into summer

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KEY BRANDS

Magners
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Orchard Pig
Outcider
Tennent's Lager

↙ Magners owner C&C Group is celebrating the start of the cider season with the launch of a new multi-million-pound consumer and channel marketing campaign that is sure to inject excitement and energy into the cider category, reveals C&C Group head of brand Phoebe Small. ‘That’s Magnertism’ brings a powerful burst of energy and nostalgia to the nation, celebrating the brand’s iconic serve over ice – which first revolutionised the cider category back in 2006 – while tapping into the force and the feeling that comes from Magners and making the most of moments spent together, she says.

The integrated campaign will be live across summer on TV, VOD, OOH, digital and social media, as well as activated in the off-trade, ensuring it shows up where consumers are shopping.

As part of the investment, Magners has also undergone a full packaging refresh across all its formats and brand touchpoints. The new modern design incorporates Magners’ iconic yellow, gold and green colour palette, ensuring the much-loved brand is still easily recognisable among consumers. Live from June, it will roll out across channel in the coming months.

As Magners’ biggest investment in a decade this activity will build on strong brand awareness (83%) and reignite consumers love for the original Irish cider – which is the No.1 on-trade packaged apple cider brand in GB¹.

“Typically, cider will pick up sales at the end of April, with volume growing by double-digit percentage points vs March in each of the last three years, and will build steadily until



“As part of its biggest investment in a decade, Magners has undergone a full packaging refresh across all its formats and brand touchpoints”

September²,” says Small. “Apple cider continues to dominate the category, so stocking a trusted brand like Magners should be a focus for retailers.

“Having recognisable brands in the right format can help retailers maximise sales this summer. We’re working hard to ensure smaller and mid-pack sizes are available alongside our larger packs across convenience and grocery stores, so that consumers can enjoy Magners to suit their needs whenever and wherever they want.

“As with beer, there is a drive among consumers to trade up, and retailers should be ensuring shelf space is available for premium cider brands this summer,” she adds. “In the off-trade premium cider volume has grown 15.3%³, while our premium offering Orchard Pig is in double-digit growth⁴ highlighting a desire for quality, premium apple ciders. Featuring more apples and fewer bubbles, Orchard Pig pairs exceptionally well with food, making it a great option for social occasions this summer such as BBQs.

“A range of ciders, in different, easily accessible formats, and with chilled options, will help retailers attract footfall and drive sales this summer.”



Source

¹ CGA outlets, 52 w/e 07.09.24

² CGA OPM

³ Circana, 52 w/e 22.03.25

⁴ Circana, All Outlets GB, 12 w/e 19.04.25



Wm Magners

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The taste of New England

DETAILS

Food Export USA – Northeast

To see the organisation's selection of beers and ciders, visit stand EM1-04 at the BCB International Bar and Beverage Trade Show w: <https://www.barconventlondon.com/en-gb.html>

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Hendler Family Brewing Company (Jack's Abby Craft Lagers)
Henniker Brewing Company
Origin Beer Project
Athletic Brewing Co
Ragged Hill Cider Company
High Limb Cider

 Food Export USA – Northeast is introducing a selection of traditional beers and ciders from the New England states, as a taster to highlight the artistry of the region's craft breweries and cideries. These will be available to sample at the premiering BCB London Drinks Trade Show taking place from 30 June to 1 July 2025 at Tobacco Dock, London.

New England brewers take pride in maintaining the integrity of craft brewing, while not losing their zeal for innovation. The brewing culture enjoys the benefit of the region's soft water, which contributes to its beers' quality. Additionally, it can source many of its ingredients, which are locally grown.

From hazy IPAs to vibrant ciders

UK and US drinking trends often experience synergy and both markets are seeing growth in super-premiumisation. New England's hazy IPAs have built an enviable reputation, reveals Anne Dettmer, in-market representative for the UK & Ireland. "Allagash Hazy IPA offers vibrant, tropical hop notes. While the flagship wheat beer, Allagash White delivers a refreshing balance of citrus and spice, brewed with wheat, coriander and Curaçao orange peel" she says.

"New England enjoys a strong reputation for maintaining respect for its age-old craft of beer brewing – and Jack's Abby Shipping Out of Boston is a rich amber and malty lager balancing caramel notes with a slight hop bitterness," she adds.

With the UK's recent sales growth in black beer, Henniker Brewing's Working Man's Porter, with a chocolate and blackcurrant embrace, achieved Best Porter in New England at the United States Beer Tasting Competition. In contrast, Henniker describes its Picnic Strawberry/Rhubarb Sour Ale, as a symphony of tartness and refreshment.

Established in the UK in 2013 (in tandem with the US) the Dry January movement could have been a one sobriety wonder, yet



“New England brewers take pride in maintaining the integrity of craft brewing”

it has thrived and endured, boosted by some fine developments in no-and-low alcohols. Athletic Brewing Co specialises in no-alcohol beers and has enjoyed great success with its range, an example being its Alcohol-Free Lager, a zero sugar brew with a crisp dry finish.

"New England also boasts vibrant craft cideries such as Ragged Hill's ciders," explains Dettmer. "These are all produced from apples planted and picked in its own orchard, which also is home to the cidery. Its Ice Cider offers aromas of baked apple, honey and woodsmoke, whereas its Russet Ancestrale celebrates aromas of summer hay and peach with lively effervescence.

"Meanwhile, The OG is the first cider High Limb produced and it remains one of its most popular, pressed from apples grown and sourced from Massachusetts."



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Staying on top of the trends

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Old Mout
Strongbow
Heineken®
Heineken® 0.0
Cruzcampo®
Foster's
Birra Moretti

Heineken UK has the broadest range of beers and ciders across brewers in the UK and offers a well-balanced portfolio of versatile, popular brands in every segment of the category, says Alexander Wilson, category & commercial strategy director. As consumer trends are ever changing, retailers can grow their sales by providing a varied offer in beer and cider to meet evolving consumer needs, he says.

"In 2024, we delivered £39m-worth of growth to the beer category – more than any other brewer¹. As such, we can identify key consumer trends that played a role within this, including: world and continental beers; the power of authentic brands with heritage; flavour exploration; and the ongoing taste for classic options," he explains.

Brand performance

"Looking specifically at our beer brands, growth is led by Birra Moretti, Heineken and Cruzcampo, underlining the popularity of both our premium world beers and our classic lagers.

"Our recent beer innovations became three of the best-selling NPIs in 2024, including Birra Moretti Sale di Mare (worth £15.1m²), Foster's Proper Shandy (worth £8.8m³) and Cruzcampo (worth £88m⁴). Of all the NPI launched in 2024, Heineken UK commands an impressive 41%⁵, cementing the business as a leader in this space.

"Stout has become one of the fastest-growing segments in the beer category, and, to meet this growth, we relaunched Murphy's into the off-trade – meeting the demand for stout, with a brand with an amazing heritage and taste."

As for cider, flavoured options have driven penetration among younger



“As consumer trends are ever-changing, retailers can grow their sales by providing a varied offer in beer and cider to meet evolving consumer needs”

consumers, pushing excitement back into the category, he says. "Strongbow, the nation's favourite cider brand⁶, launched Strongbow Strawberry last year, in response to the rising popularity of premium berry-flavoured ciders, but delivering a mainstream option at a more accessible price point.

"Among our premium cider brands, Old Mout recently launched its first flavour in three years, Old Mout Mango & Passionfruit, a combination inspired by trends in the cocktail category."

The evolution of no- and low

Mindful consumption continues to shape the UK's beer and cider evolution, adds Wilson. "Growing numbers of consumers are switching to no- and low-alternatives, such as Heineken 0.0 – the biggest non-alcoholic lager in 2024⁷

– Birra Moretti Zero, and Old Mout Alcohol Free Cider. We recently expanded our range with Inch's 0.0, the first de-alcoholised cider in the UK and the latest credible, premium option in the no- and low- market. At Heineken UK, we always address the needs of both our consumers and retail partners, to cement our position as the beer and cider partner of choice."



Source

¹ NIQ, Total Coverage, YTD to 07.12.24

² NIQ, Total Coverage, Full Year 2024

⁶ Nielsen, Full Year 2023

⁷ Nielsen, YTD 06.07.24

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Leading the charge in fruit cider

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KEY BRANDS

Kopparberg

After more than two decades in the UK, Kopparberg continues to prove why it's the number one fruit cider brand¹. In the past year, despite economic pressures and changing consumer behaviours, Kopparberg has delivered exceptional performance across traditional and emerging cider formats, cementing its position as a brand that consistently drives growth for its retail partners, says senior customer marketing manager Axel Tulip.

“From flavour-first innovation to a flexible format strategy, Kopparberg's approach resonates with drinkers and retailers alike,” he says. “The brand now boasts more customers than any other BWS brands in the UK² and is ranked the most loved cider brand in the UK³.”

Retailer collaboration

At the heart of Kopparberg's success is a deep-rooted commitment to its retail partners. The brand takes pride in being first for trust capability, and collaboration in the Advantage report⁴. “We never take a one-size-fits-all approach,” says Tulip. “We tailor our plans to meet the needs of each retailer and aligning our products, formats and promotional strategy with their business goals. Our partners' success is our success.” Kopparberg's customer-first approach means it consistently



“Flavour-first and flexible formats are always a win both with drinkers and retailers”

brings relevant products to market that drive footfall and repeat purchase, he notes.

NPD that moves the market

In the last year, launches have kept the brand ahead of flavour and format trends.

● **Kopparberg Sweet Vintage:** Apple and Pear ciders at 7% ABV, bringing signature sweetness in every sip.

● **Kopparberg Crisp Apple:** Taps into the resurgence of apple cider – particularly with younger drinkers.

● **Kopparberg Mango:** This bold tropical cider meets growing consumer demand for exciting summer flavours.

● **Variety packs:** The best-selling variety pack in total BWS⁵, helping shoppers explore flavours like Strawberry & Lime and Mixed Fruit.

● **Alcohol-free variety pack:** With more shoppers and penetration than any low/no brand in total BWS, it delivers great taste without alcohol.

Blockbuster summer ahead

Kopparberg's ability to innovate, collaborate and lead in cider is no accident – it's the result of years of investment in flavour, formats and forward-thinking category management, adds Tulip. “Retailers this summer should look no further than Kopparberg – it has what it takes: the product, positioning and partner-first mindset to help retailers maximise their sales under the sunshine season.”

Source

¹ Circana data, IRI All Outlets, Value Sales, 52wks to 19.04.25

² Kantar, Penetration tracker, 52wk/e 29 Dec 2024

³ BrandVue, Savanta, The UK's most loved drinks brands 2024

⁴ MyAdvantage report 2024, Beer/Cider

⁵ Circana data, Major Multis, CWD Value Rate of Sale, 12wks to 22.03.25



MORE VARIETY MORE REASONS TO STOCK

THE BEST SELLING
VARIETY PACK
IN BEER AND CIDER



Source: Circana data, Major Mults, CWD Value Rate of Sale, 12wks to 22.03.25.

be [drinkaware.co.uk](https://www.drinkaware.co.uk)

KOPPARBERG

Natural evolution for cider

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KEY BRANDS

Thatchers Gold
Thatchers Haze
Thatchers Juicy Apple
Thatchers Blood Orange
Thatchers Apple & Blackcurrant
Thatchers Katy
Thatchers Vintage
Thatchers Zero

 Family cider maker Thatchers has launched the drink of the summer, Thatchers Juicy Apple – a mouth-wateringly refreshing, easy-drinking cider that has shaken up the category, attracting younger adults and new audiences, says fourth generation cider maker Martin Thatcher.

This fresh new cider is powered by sunshine, quite literally, made with sun-drenched apples, using 100% green electricity – including power from the 3,500 solar panels on the roof of Myrtle Farm, he notes. “So, it’s as good for the environment as it tastes in the glass.

“At Thatchers, we’ve been working in partnership with nature for 120 years,” he says. “We don’t just send our pomace for energy recovery, we capture all the CO2 created during fermentation and use it to add sparkle to our cider, we work with the Bumble Bee Conservation Trust to ensure our orchards are bee-friendly, and we plant wildflower meadows and build five-star hotels for nature to increase biodiversity. For us, as a 120-year-old family business, sustainability isn’t just about good PR, it’s about ensuring we protect what we have for the generations to come.”

This year Thatchers planted 13,000 trees in 50 acres of new orchard to help meet increased demand for its ciders. The family spent three years regeneratively farming the land before planting the first tree to ensure only the tastiest apples are grown.

Research shows young adults (under 45) seek out brands that ‘share their personal values’ and ‘contribute to environmental causes’¹. “By putting the spotlight on our environmental



“The fresh new cider, Juicy Apple, is made with sun-drenched apples, using 100% green electricity. So, it’s as good for the environment as it tastes in the glass”

credentials, we are clearly enticing customers,” says Thatcher. “Juicy Apple has quickly become the No.1 cider innovation, growing the category more in the last 12 weeks than any other brand launched in the last 12 months.”

On-shelf standout

The great-tasting cider has been given bright, stylish, eye-catching packaging for great shelf standout. “The experience of enjoying one of our ciders starts from the moment you see the brand, right through to when the delicious flavour hits your lips,” he says. “So, the look and feel of the product is as important as what is inside.”

To support the launch of Juicy Apple, Thatchers is investing in a multi-million pound advertising campaign to drive consumer demand and give retailers an opportunity to capitalise. “We’ve harnessed new channels to talk to younger audiences where they are, in ways that resonate – working with leading content creators across digital channels, using social media and YouTube, and investing in advertising on streaming services and VOD.

All of these factors combined have led to Thatchers Juicy Apple being the drink of the summer, with customers viewing it as ‘modern’, ‘worth paying for’, ‘the brand for me’, ‘something different’ and “refreshing”.



Source

¹ True Digital, Fight for Footfall
² Savanta, 52 weeks to January 2025

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