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Beer Trends in Costa Rica

Report Categories:

CSSF Activity Report

Beverages

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Report Highlights:

Since 2010, Costa Rica has joined the craft beer trend with increased imports of craft and specialty beers as well as local microbreweries producing unique brands such as "Segua" and "Libertas". Several additional microbreweries started to appear over the following years, many of them guided by the experience of expat residents coming from the United States. Due to its geographic location, Costa Rica is not able to grow the raw materials for beer and depends heavily on imported raw materials. Around 2012 a few companies started to import and sell the required ingredients (such as malt, hops or yeast), the equipment and tools, and also started to teach in workshops how to brew beer. This has accelerated the creation of new breweries and helped to expand the market for craft beer.

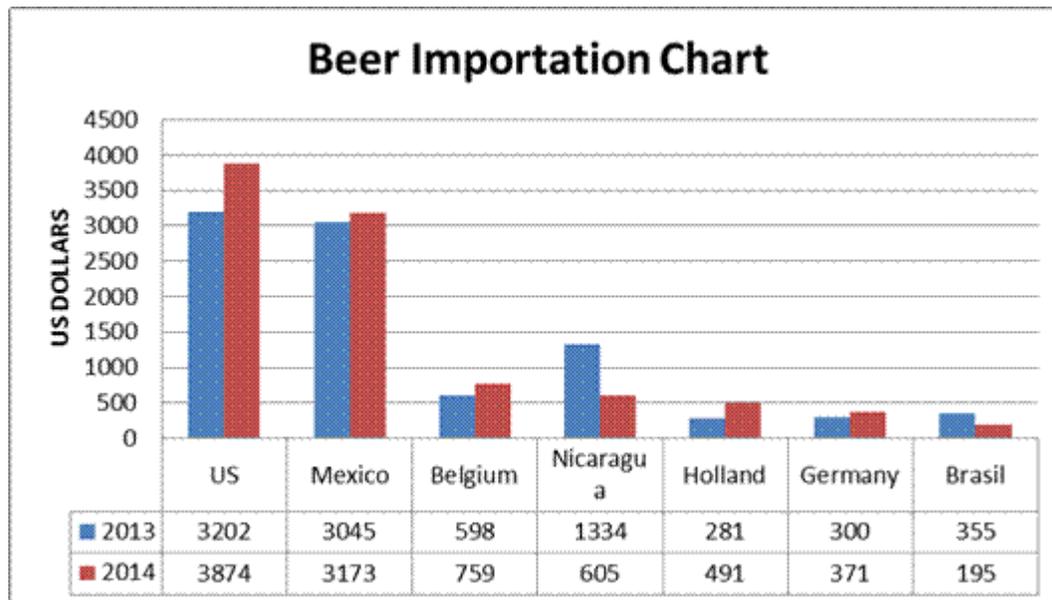
General Information:

The beer industry in Costa Rica - including traditional local, craft and imported beer – has been increasing annually by more than 11% in the past few years. The estimated local consumption per capita is from 32.9 to 34.4 liters

Part of this increase can be seen from the traditional markets during different occasions such as soccer games, holiday vacations and parties. However there has also been an increase in the last few years of local producers of craft beer that are creating a special interest in tasting different and original products. In just a few years, approximately 15 microbrewers opened their business and they are investing with technology, equipment and creativity attracting local consumers in this new market with the prospect of beers with new and different textures, aromas and colors.

While this emerging demand is still quite small compared to that of the traditional well-known Costa Rican beers such as Imperial, Pilsen which dominate the domestic production and market, local consumers have shown increasing interest to taste new flavors and importers are also ready to bring new brands in order to explore this trend.

Data offered by the Promoter of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica (Procomer) showed that beer imports grew 47% from 2011 to 2014. Beer from United States, Mexico and Nicaragua are the main imports. Importers and craft beer breweries such as Grupo Pampa, Treintaycinco, Costa Rica's Craft Brewing Company, Cervecería Costa Rica and Cofradía Brewing are examples of companies that are experiencing growth in their business due to this new opportunity.



For example, the current beer portfolio of Grupo Pampa includes the distribution of seven types beer five of them imported from Mexico: Sol, Tecate, Dos X and Carta Blanca and one from Holland: La Trappe.

Group Pampa sells its products in chain and independent supermarkets, liquor stores, bars, hotels and restaurants presented an average growth of 15 % in beer imports in the last four years.

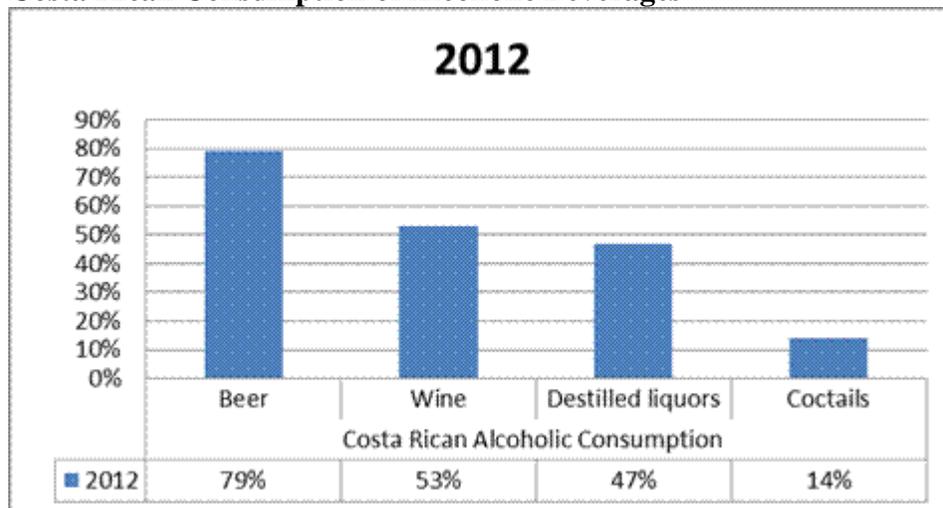
Brewery Costa Rica manages the distribution of 10 different beers, between local and imported. Brands like Imperial, Pilsen, Bavaria, Kaiser and Rock Limón and imported beers such as Corona, Gallo, Toña, Budweiser and Paulaner.

Treintaycinco an example of a local craft beer company that has in its portfolio 12 types of beer and two brands that vary twice a month in order to offer variety and sophisticated products to their clients. This company went out to the marketplace in the 2013 and its production has increased 300% in one-year.

Cofradía Brewing started the craft beer production in the 2014 and they are currently offering four beers of permanent way and varied seasonal like the Wild Berries Ale.

By 2014 the impact of the microbreweries on the local market prompted Florida Ice & Farm Co. one of the larger subsidiaries of food and beverages of the market to start its own craft beer division.

Costa Rican Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages



University of Costa Rica statistics

In the last three years Costa Rica has been organizing a local craft beer festival where local breweries in Costa Rica show their products, its being growing from 400 attendees in 2012 to around 3000 in the 2014 edition. This shows the significant growth of the industry and the newly acquired taste for different kind of beers for the local Costa Ricans.

