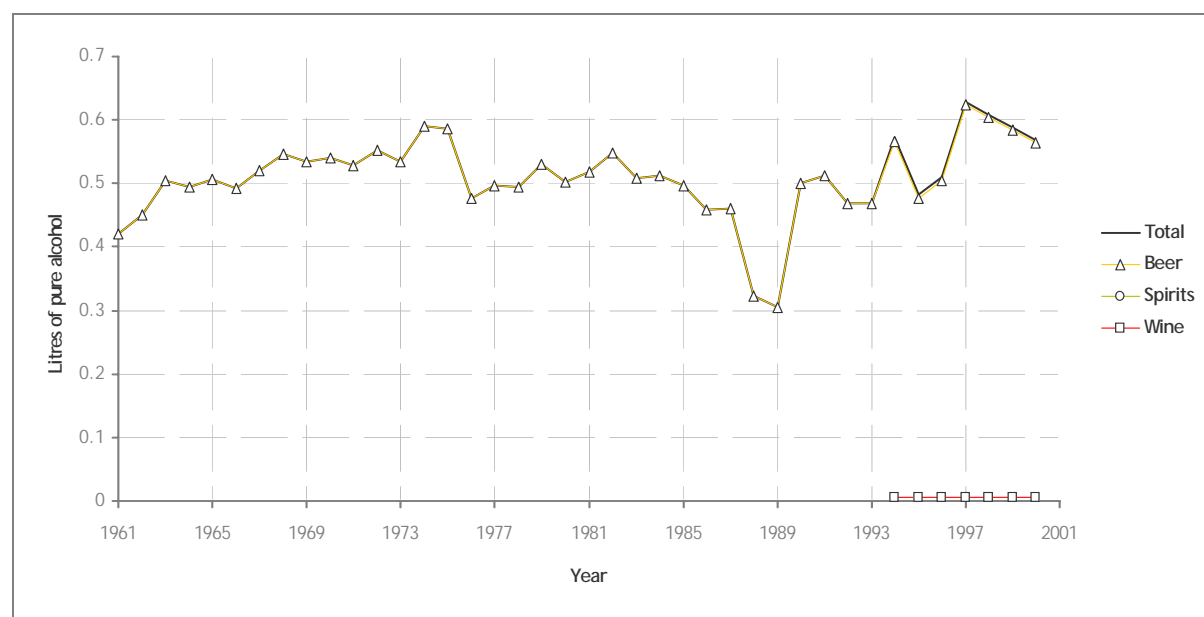


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Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)



Note: No data on spirits available, and no data on wine prior to 1994.

Sources: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), World Drink Trends 2003

Traditional alcoholic beverages

The Bhutanese consume *ara*, an alcohol distilled from the brewing of locally produced rice, barley and maize.¹

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

Cirrhosis of the liver caused the third highest number of recorded deaths in Bhutan in the year 2000. Of the deaths recorded in hospitals, the second highest was caused by injuries. Alcohol consumption is an important factor in both these problems.²

Country background information

Total population 2003	2 257 000	Life expectancy at birth (2002)	Male	60.2
Adult (15+)	1 331 630		Female	62.4
% under 15	41	Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)	Male	93
Population distribution 2001 (%)			Female	92
Urban	7	Gross National Income per capita 2002	US\$	590
Rural	93			

Sources: Population and Statistics Division of the United Nations Secretariat, World Bank World Development Indicators database, The World Health Report 2004

References

- [Anonymous]. *The people and their lifestyle* (<http://www.geocities.com/skarmtt/about/people.htm>, accessed 13 April 2004).
- [Anonymous]. Alcohol – wider implications. *Kuensel Online*, 16 November 2003 (<http://www.kuenselonline.com/article.php?sid=950>, accessed 9 February 2004).

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1	Definition of an alcoholic beverage (minimum volume %)	5
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2 Price of alcoholic beverages		
<i>Off-licence</i>	<i>Usual quantity (ml)</i>	<i>Price (Ngultrums)</i>
Average locally produced or most consumed beer	Most consumed beer is imported from outside country	35/bottle
Average and most consumed table wine	650	300/bottle
Average locally produced or most consumed spirits	750	70/bottle
If it exists, other special or different local alcoholic beverage, Ara Sing Chang, Bang Chang (10–50% alc. vol).	750	30/bottle
Average Non-alcoholic soft drink	1500	45/bottle

2 a	Change in price during the last five years	Increased
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3 Taxation of alcoholic beverages		
3 a	General sales tax or VAT (Value Added Tax)	Yes
3 b	Percentage of the tax	50% on beer (7–20%)
3 c	Duty-paid, excise or tax stamps or labels	No
3 d	Level of alcohol tax (percentage of the retail or selling price)	
	<i>Beer</i> (approx. 4.5% alcohol by volume)	5%
	<i>Wine</i> (approx. 12% alcohol by volume)	12–14%
	<i>Spirits</i> (approx. 40% alcohol by volume)	20–60%

4 Drink-driving legislation		
4 a	Maximum legal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) when driving a car*	Not determined
4 b	Frequency of Random Roadside Breath Testing (RBT) of drivers*	No RBT*
4 c	Geographical distribution of RBT use	NA
* Although there is no BAC and RBT system, drunken driving is prohibited. Road and Surface Transport and Royal Bhutan Police strictly monitor this policy.		

5 Restrictions on consumption and availability		
5 a	Legal age limits for buying alcohol	
	<i>On-premise (years)</i>	<i>Off-licence (years)</i>
Beer	18	18
Wine	18	18
Spirits	18	18

5 b	Restrictions on alcohol consumption in different public domains	
	Health care establishments	Legally forbidden
	Educational buildings	Legally forbidden
	Government offices	Legally forbidden
	Public transport	Legally forbidden
	Parks, streets etc.	No restrictions
	Sporting events	Partial restriction
	Leisure events (concerts etc.)	No restrictions
	Workplaces	Voluntary agreement

5 c	Level of state control on production and sale of beer, wine and spirits		
	State monopoly (full state control)		
	<i>Beer</i>	<i>Wine</i>	<i>Spirits</i>
Production	Yes	Not produced but import is fully controlled by the state.	Yes
Retail sale	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Licence is required (partial state control)		
	<i>Beer</i>	<i>Wine</i>	<i>Spirits</i>
Production	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retail sale	Yes	Yes	Yes

5 d	Existing restrictions for the off-licence sale of beer, wine and spirits		
	<i>Beer</i>	<i>Wine</i>	<i>Spirits</i>
Hours of sale are restricted*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Days of sale are restricted**	Yes	Yes	Yes
Places of sale are restricted	Yes	Yes	Yes
Density of outlets is restricted	Yes	Yes	Yes
* Bar timing is after 1 pm only			
** Every Tuesday is observed as dry day where serving of alcohol is restricted			

5 e	Level of enforcement of existing sales restrictions	Partially enforced
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6 Alcohol advertising and health warnings			
6 a	Alcohol advertising allowed and exists in some form	No	
6 b	Health warnings legally required on the advertisement	No	
6 c	Health warnings of any kind legally required on the <i>containers/bottles</i> of alcoholic beverages	No	
6 d	Regulation of alcohol advertising in different media		
	<i>Type of Media</i>	<i>Beer</i>	<i>Wine</i>
	National TV	Legally forbidden	Legally forbidden
	Cable TV	Restricted	Restricted
	National radio	Legally forbidden	Legally forbidden
	Local radio	Legally forbidden	Legally forbidden
	Newspapers/magazines	Legally forbidden	Legally forbidden
	Billboards	Legally forbidden	Legally forbidden
	Points of sale	Restricted	Restricted
	Cinema	Legally forbidden	Legally forbidden

7 Alcohol sponsorship and promotion			
		<i>Beer</i>	<i>Wine</i>
	Alcohol industry sponsorship of sporting events	No restrictions	No restrictions
	Alcohol industry sponsorship of youth events	No restrictions	No restrictions
	Sales promotion in the form of serving <i>free alcohol</i> (complying with existing age and other sales restrictions)	No restrictions	No restrictions
	Sales promotion in the form of <i>sales below cost</i> e.g. two for one, happy hour (complying with existing age and other sales restrictions)	No restrictions	No restrictions

8 Level of enforcement of existing advertising and sponsorship restrictions indicated in the two previous questions	
Advertising	Not enforced
Sponsorship	Not enforced

Bhutan: Published Studies

Advertising and promotion of alcohol is not permitted. Lack of manpower is the major constraint in enforcing current regulations. Financial constraints hamper drink driving detection. Lack of human and financial resources hampers public information and education. (World Health Organization Country Office Bhutan, quoting information from the Government of Bhutan, 2006)

There is no stigma attached to alcohol use. The usual barriers and deterrents to using alcohol inherent in other societies are not as apparent in Bhutan. Alcohol is a part of almost all social occasions, including childbirth. Until recently it was not a taboo for Bhutanese children to drink at an early age. Now many women are drinking beer and wine. Common home made wine varieties used traditionally as food beverages have alcohol content of less than 5%. Studies have shown that as much as 50% of the grain harvests of households are used to brew alcohol. Home made alcohol production exceeds industrial production. Alcohol production and sale has become a livelihood for a large number of people. In certain areas home made alcohol is the only source of cash income to farmers. Alcohol one of the five leading causes of deaths in all age groups. Drunk driving is the major cause of accidents. (Dorji C. **The myth behind the alcohol and happiness.** The Second International Conference on Gross National Happiness. St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada 2005
(<http://gpiatlantic.org/conference/papers.htm> accessed 23 November 2006)

