

Mindful Drinking for the Sober-Curious

ILLUSTRATION + WORDS BY AMANDA WEISBROD

Ever since Dry January was introduced to the U.S. in 2013, the sober curious movement has grown from a niche community to a full-blown cultural shift. But what does sober curious even mean? And how exactly does one practice “mindful drinking?” Find the answers to these questions and learn more about where the non-alcoholic beverage industry has been and where it’s headed below.



Tips + Tricks for Mindful Drinking



hit pause + reflect

Without judgment, ask yourself about the intentions behind your desire to drink. Is this what you really want right now? Or are you giving in to impulse?



make a game plan ahead of time

If you’re planning to drink alcohol at a gathering or what not, decide what and how much you’ll drink before you go so you can keep yourself accountable.



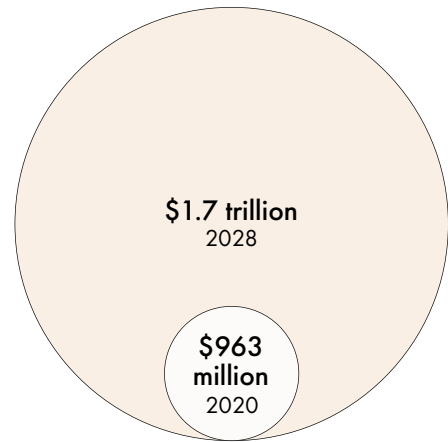
order your drink first

Place your booze-free drink order first and your friends might even follow suit! This also alleviates the pressure to say “I’ll have what they’re having” due to social norms.



savor every sip

Take the time to drink slowly and enjoy all of the intricate flavors of your beverage, alcoholic or otherwise. If you don’t like what you’re drinking, then don’t drink it!



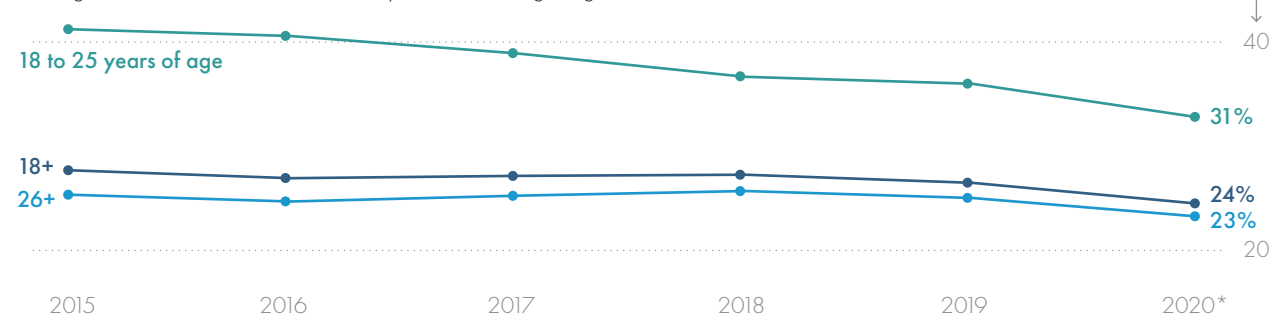
The Zero-Proof Market Grows

Fior Markets, a market analyst company, reports that the non-alcoholic beverages market is expected to increase by 200% over the next 6 years.

Say “Goodbye” to Binge Drinking

Binge drinking, i.e. consuming more than four alcoholic beverages in one sitting, is detrimental to one’s health and well-being. But the percentage of adults who have said they’ve had an episode of binge drinking within the last month is on a steady decline, lending weight to the sober-curious movement.

Percentage of adults surveyed who reported binge drinking within the past 30 days.



*NOTE: SAMHSA’s data collection method changed in 2020 from previous years because of the coronavirus pandemic. The data for 2020 is an estimate based on data procured in Q1 and Q4 of that year; actual data from Q2 and Q3 is not available.

Just How Sober-Curious Are We?

Breaking down Google search trends provides insight into what people are interested in at any given moment, and in our case, we’re focused on the sober-curious movement. Each graph below measures the popularity of search terms compared to its most popular moment (100) versus times when its popularity is so low there isn’t enough significant data to map out (0). When mapped together, the data of all terms is compared to the highest moment of popularity out of all terms, resulting in different perspectives on the numbers.

mindful drinking (n.)

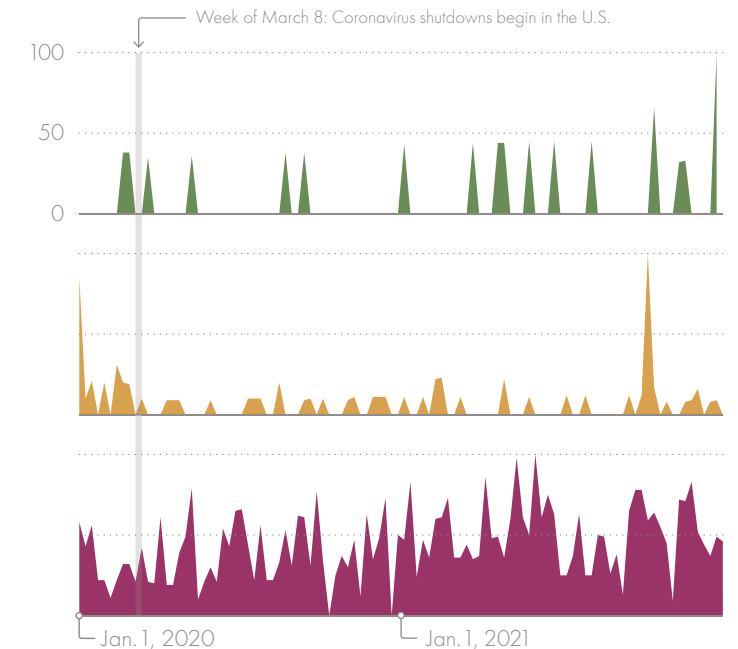
The practice of being intentional, curious, and mindful about the reasons why one drinks and how much alcohol one consumes.

sober-curious (adj.)

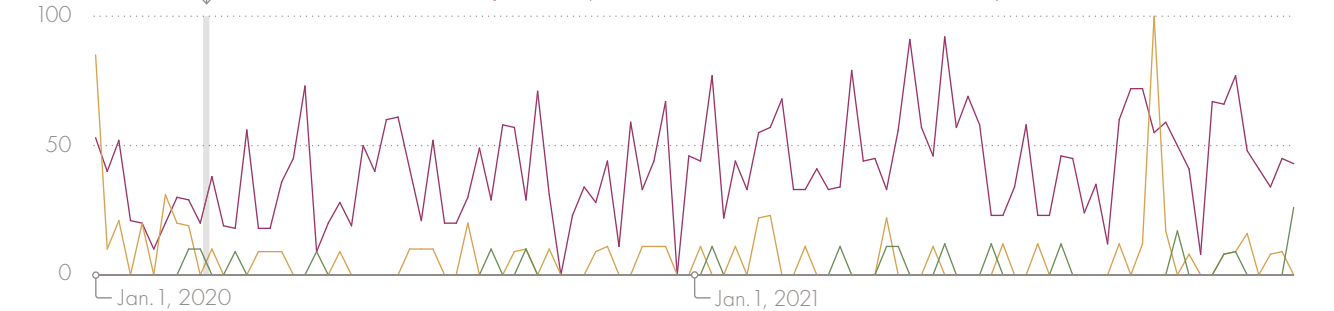
The state of being curious about how and if alcohol serves one’s life anymore while questioning the expectations of alcohol culture.

zero-proof (adj.)

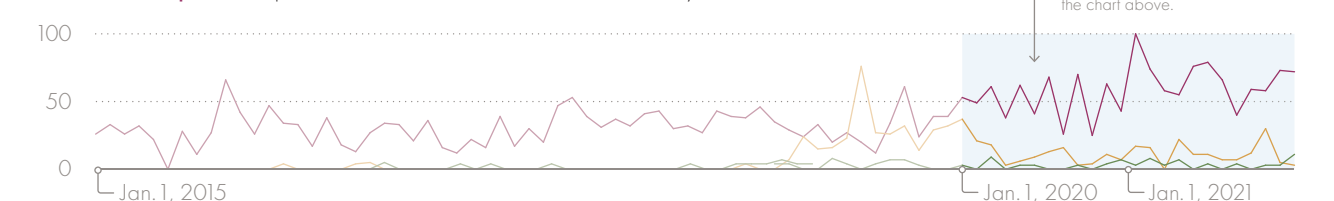
A description of spirits, cocktails, ales and other drinks that feature little to no alcohol often crafted to imitate alcoholic beverages.



This graph shows the relative popularity of Google search trends for **mindful drinking**, **sober-curious** and **zero-proof** compared to one another each week from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021.



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Sources: 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health published by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; “What Is Mindful Drinking? How It Can Help Your Mental Health” by healthline.com; May 2021 Market Forecast by fiormarkets.com; Google trends data; “What does it mean to be sober curious?” by verywellmind.com.