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ALL ABOUT ALCOHOL

LIQUOR TRADE DELIVERED ANOTHER GROWTH YEAR IN 2015



SHARELINES



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Liquor delivered another year of growth in 2015, according to the [Distilled Spirits Council of the United States \(DISCUS\)](#). Domestic sales were up 4.1 percent and volumes up 2.3 percent.

One driver of growth was demand for American whiskeys—Bourbon, Tennessee and Rye—booming at home and abroad, with 7.8 percent growth in that category.

According to DISCUS, imported

The U.S. ranks second among trading nations with total trade in spirits valued at \$9.17 billion in 2014, according to an analysis from Datamyne. The UK ranked first with \$9.43 billion. The U.S. ranked third as an exporter of spirits, with \$1.97 billion, behind France with exports valued at \$4.58 billion, and the UK with \$8.33 billion.

The U.S. is the top importer of liquor, with 2014 imports of \$7.19 billion, while Germany is the distant second with imports of \$1.72 billion.

The DISCUS data shows that 42 percent of all hard alcohol purchased in the United States is imported. This is a significantly bigger share than is the case for [wine or beer](#), where imports stand at 23 percent and 13 percent, respectively. It is estimated that the United States imported \$7.26 billion of liquor in 2015, three percent more than in 2014. Liquor import values have been steadily increasing every year since 2009.

Whiskeys are America's favorite liquor import, accounting for almost a third of U.S. hard alcohol imports. In 2015, whiskey imports totaled \$1.99 billion, with Scotch and Irish whisky accounting for \$1.69 billion. [Vodka](#) is in second place with imports valued at \$1.57 billion in 2015. Other top imports include brandy and tequila.

In 2015, U.S. distillers exported \$1.96 billion in hard alcohol, slightly lower than in 2014. [Bourbon](#) was the number-one US export, with \$728 million in 2015 shipments.