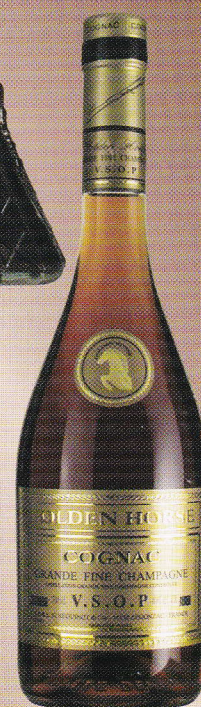


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Golden Horse

Grande Fine Champagne French Cognac



that there are many ways to discover the wonderful aromas and flavours in the Hennessy range. The tendency today is for consumers to explore Hennessy VS in cocktails and long drinks, while the prestige range of Hennessy XO, Paradis Extra and Hennessy Richard tend to be savoured neat or on ice."

In February over 30 new Hennessy cocktails were created and promoted by six of Sydney's leading bartenders. From these, 'Pow-Pow', created by Julia Serna from Hemmesphere, was selected as the best cocktail. Pow-Pow includes Hennessy VS with black grapes and paw-paw muddles with vanilla sugar, a splash of lime juice, crème de peche and apple juice. The cocktail 'Sexual Chocolate' was another favourite, as was 'Street Car', both of which boast Hennessy VS as the main alcoholic ingredient. Together these cocktails are leading the Cognac revival among younger drinkers. It appears that the cocktail craze is helping to revitalise the whole of the Imported Brandy category.

However, Arquilla, producers of Janneau Armagnac, believe their product has remained as an after dinner drink. "I don't think cocktails have intruded much in this market," said Arquilla's Rik Pauw. He said quality was the key to their sales. "Janneau Armagnac is brilliant, golden with depth of flavour and a hint of prunes and vanilla," he said.

Similarly, Greek grape Brandy Metaxa has retained its popularity without an image change. The spirit has earned worldwide recognition for its quality, colour and taste and has been marketed very well all around the world, having a large number of dedicated lovers. However, Imported Brandy can be quite difficult to find and has created a kind of hysteria worldwide concerning its supply. Metaxa is generally available in three versions: Three Star, Five Star, and Seven Star. Each star represents a year that it's been aged in oak barrels, thus the Seven Star is the most aged and selected type. It continues to be consumed neat rather than as a mixer or in cocktails. But the flow on effect of other Imported Brandies becoming popular in cocktails is sure to affect these sales, even if they are continued to be drunk traditionally.

The effect of price

Katon of Import House said the current Imported Brandy market was focused on price to a certain extent, but this was certainly not the only factor pushing sales. "Consumers are motivated to purchase our Golden Horse due to a number of different factors," he said. "Price is certainly one contributing factor, along with the superior quality." According to Katon, price is also a way to introduce Cognac to a younger market. "To entice and lure the next generation of drinkers to Cognac and Brandy, we have priced our Cognac at an affordable price in comparison to other brands," he said. "Since younger people are more price sensitive, pricing it as such will mean it is more affordable to them."

Jason Bowden from Rémy Martin also believes price is not necessarily an issue if consumers want the best quality Cognac. All Rémy Martin Cognac is categorised as 'fine champagne', all the grapes having come from either the Grande Champagne or Petit Champagne areas, and all are distilled with lees. Bowden says people don't mind paying that bit extra for the guaranteed quality his brand ensures.

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