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# Consumption Culture of Indigenous Beverages: An Explorative Study of Fruit Wines of Meghalaya (India)

*Culture de consommation des boissons indigènes : Une étude exploratoire des vins de fruits de Meghalaya (Inde)*

15 December 2021.

**Sharad Kumar Kulshreshtha Ashok Kumar**

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PREO

# Consumption Culture of Indigenous Beverages: An Explorative Study of Fruit Wines of Meghalaya (India)

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## Introduction

- 1 Tourism is a dynamic and competitive industry divided into different sectors, namely, Accommodation, Recreation and Entertainment, Transportation, Travel Services and Food & Beverage Services. Wine is an important segment in food and beverage service and has a very rich history. The Old Testament in the Bible gives evidence of the existence of wines, but there is a definite evidence of its use in China in 2000 BC and in Egypt in 3000 BC<sup>1</sup>. Wine is an alcoholic beverage obtained from the fermentation of the juice of freshly gathered grapes<sup>2</sup>. Several wine producing regions around the world have promoted wine tourism in order to get economically benefitted. The Growers' associations and others in the hospitality industry in wine regions have spent significant amounts of money over the years to promote such tourism (wine tourism, 2009). Fruit wines play a major role in Indian wines; these are fermented alcoholic beverages made from a variety of base ingredients (other than Grape). They may have additional flavours taken from fruit, flower and herb. Fruit wines are usually referred by their main ingredient. Wine tourism is a form of the niche tourism and it is a new entrant to the world tourism system. The wine tourism has significantly developed in the countries like Italy, France, Australia, Hungary, South Africa and it is one of the central tourist motivation for destination development, but in India it has not yet carved its remarkable position, still there is a significant growth of wine tourism if it is explored in the efficient and effective manner. Today, wine tourism is acknowledged as a growing area of special-interest tourism throughout the world and it is an increasingly important tourism component of for many wine-producing regions. With its wide range of benefits, including foreign-exchange earnings, the creation of both full- and part-time jobs, and the generation of secondary economic activity, wine tourism is emerging as a

lucrative industry sector with the ability to generate substantial long-term wealth and sustain steady tourism growth for these regions<sup>3</sup>.

## About Meghalaya

- 2 The State of Meghalaya was carved out of Assam in April 1970 and was declared a full-fledged State in January 1972. It covers an area of 22,429 sq. km with a population of about 23 lakhs. This small population, comprising only about 0.2% of the nation's population, has made distinctive contributions to the national heritage as well as economy. The State has most of its land covered by hills interspersed with gorges and small valleys. The state is gifted with dense forests and rivers cascading down rolling terrain, it is one of the most scenic state among the North Eastern States.
- 3 The state has been the provider of energy to the region not only in the form of electric power and coal but also in form of food and Beverages. As the state is termed as “Scotland of the East”, the state capital Shillong can be termed as “Liverpool of India” for being the growth centre for jazz, rock and pop music since the days of the Beatles. Dance and music is a way of life in Meghalaya and there is no celebration without dance and music. Meghalaya, endowed with nature's gift and collective endeavour of the society, has made the state economically stable and it is one of the very few states in the country which can boast of such achievements.

## Wine Tourism

- 4 **Wine:** Wine is an alcoholic beverage obtained from the fermentation of freshly gathered grape juice. It refers to the fermented by-products of grapes (*Vitis Vinifera*) but it may include any undistilled alcoholic fruit product obtained after fermentation. The alcoholic content varies from 10 to 14%<sup>4</sup>.

## Fruit Wines

- 5 Fruit wines are un-distilled alcoholic beverages usually made from grapes or other fruits such as peaches, plums or apricots, banana, elderberry or black current etc. which are nutritive, more tasty and mild stimulants<sup>5</sup>. Fruit wines are usually referred to by their main in-

redient (e.g., plum wine or elderberry wine) because the usual definition of wine states that it is made from fermented grape juice. In the European Union, wine is legally defined as the fermented juice of grapes. Fruit wine is commonly called *country wine*. Fruit wines are fermented alcoholic beverages made from a variety of base ingredients (other than grapes); they may also have additional flavours taken from fruits, flowers, and herbs. This definition is sometimes broadened to include any fermented alcoholic beverage except beer (Wikipedia).

- 6 Fruit wines have traditionally been popular with home winemakers (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winemaker>) and in areas with cool climates such as North America and Scandinavia; Africa, India, and the Philippines etc. The modern fruit wine may be used more widely as an aperitif, an accompaniment to meals or even used in food and can be considered parallel to grape wines. This wider use and the basic idea of fruit wine as an alternative to grape wine is a new concept<sup>6</sup>. Fruit wine is undergoing gastronomic renewal. New, scientific cultivation and productions methods and the use of local varieties of fruit, primarily apples and cherries, based in local “terroir” are bases for new types of fruit wine with high gastronomic value. Producers are experimenting with new fruit varieties, new cultivation methods (using different fertilizing methods, land areas, harvest times, apple and cherry varieties etc.) and new production methods (storing temperature, fermentation, chemical control etc.).

## Reasons for Growing Interest in Wine Tourism

- 7 Wine tourism has been growing because of interest in wine in general. Additionally, in many cases, government provides assistance to wine producers. The Resource Guide for start-up suggests that “as government officials have become aware of the wine industry’s potential to create economic opportunities in rural communities, they have increasingly supported initiatives such as plantings of vines and orchards, other capital investments and sales and marketing campaigns”. Governments realized the benefits of wine production for the local economy. The wine producing regions are promoting wine tourism realizing the returns it provides in smaller investments as com-

pared to other forms of tourism. Another reason for the increased response to the wine industry is due to the change of values in society resulting in an increased interest in environmental issues. The 'green' tourist activities are gaining popularity due to increased interest in environmental issues. That is why agro- and eco-tourism have become a popular trend<sup>7</sup>.

## **Economic and Social Benefits of Wine Tourism**

- Increasing the number of visitors and repeat visits
- Extending length of stay and money spent by visitors
- Enhancing visitor satisfaction by increasing activities for tourists
- Broadening the market segment.

## **Motivations for Wine Tourists to Visit**

8 The motivation for tourists visiting wine regions varies depending on the attributes such as interest, age and nationality. There ten major reasons for tourist's motivations are:

- To taste wine.
- To gain the knowledge about a product/ industry.
- To experience wine setting, this can include meeting a winemaker and tour of vineyards and Wine cellars.
- To enjoy the beauty of countryside, learn about farming, agri-tourism & rural tourism.
- To appreciate the combination of local food and wine. This kind of vacation has its own Name, which is culinary tourism.
- To enjoy and participate in wine festivals and special events.
- To enjoy the romance and elegance of wine culture.
- To appreciate agriculture and art.
- To gain knowledge about "green" and eco-tourism.
- To enjoy the health aspects of wine.

## **Classification of Wine Tourists**

9 For developing the wine destinations and to market the wine tourism products, it is essential to understand who are the winery visitors?

On the basis of their perceptions regarding the important attributes within wineries and wine regions, which might include a wide range of attractions and activities, wine tourist can be classified into three categories.

10 The three main categories of wine tourists are:

- Accidental or Curious wine tourists
- Interested wine tourist and
- Dedicated wine tourist

**Table 1 - Classification of Wine Tourism.**

Open Door Wine Tourism	Edutainment	Disneyland Wine Tourism	Eventification
Cellar door wine Tourism Receiving people for wine tastings and cellar visits	Education+ entertainment Harvesting workshop Blending session Vineyards/orchards nature walk Cooking classes	Big budget project Often mixed with general tourism	One time events focussed on wine Eg. Wine festivals Fete du vin Gastro walks Village harvest festival etc.

Compiled by the authors.

**Table 2 - Classification of Wine Tourists.**

Accidental visitors or curious tourists	Interested wine tourists	Dedicated wine tourists:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wineries seen as a tourist attraction of the region visited.</li> <li>• A cellar door visit is an opportunity for a social occasion with friends or family.</li> <li>• Below average knowledge of wines, but moderately interested in wine.</li> <li>• Interest and curiosity aroused by drinking wine, road signs, brochures or general tourism promotion.</li> <li>• Moderate income and education.</li> <li>• May purchase at winery but unlikely to join the mailing list.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cellar door visit is an enhancement to their trip, but not the prime motivation for visiting the region.</li> <li>• Moderate to high interest in wine.</li> <li>• Moderate to high income, usually tertiary educated.</li> <li>• Likely to have visited other wine regions.</li> <li>• Likely to purchase wine at winery.</li> <li>• Likely to join a mailing list.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wine lovers who visit wine regions frequently as an integral part of a trip.</li> <li>• Above average knowledge of wine.</li> <li>• Extremely interested in wine and winemaking.</li> <li>• Mature, high income, high education level.</li> <li>• Likely to purchase wine at winery.</li> <li>• Likely to join mailing list.</li> </ul>

Compiled by the authors.

## Wine Tourism as Special Interest Tourism (SIT)

- 11 The emergence of special interest tourism (SIT) is viewed as an evidence of the increasing diversity of holiday interests of the early twenty-first century leisure society<sup>8</sup>. Wine tourism, as special interest tourism (SIT), encompasses a wide range of experiences built around tourist visitation to wine outlets, wineries and wine regions<sup>9</sup>. One of the most widely used definitions of wine tourism is from visitor's perspective. Wine tourism is now acknowledged as a emerging area of special-interest tourism throughout the world, and it is an increasingly important tourism component for many wine-producing countries. The wine sector has shown significant growth in the last five years in India and the tourism related activity has also increased, particularly in Maharashtra<sup>10</sup>. Wine tourism has been growing because of tourists interest and governments assistance to wine producers. The Resource Guide for start-up suggests that government officials have become aware of the wine industry's potential to create economic opportunities in rural communities<sup>11</sup>.

## Wine Tourism in India

- 12 The Ministry of Tourism (MOT), Government of India has been taking a number of initiatives to promote tourism in the country. They have adopted various tourism themes in order to increase the incursion of tourists. Wine tourism is the latest among all forms of tourism, although many eyebrows were raised by this theme, as India has always been seen as a country oriented towards culture and heritage. However, after much of brainstorming, the government has identified the significance of wine tourism in India and promoted it in the form of special interest tourism. Although relatively new, wine tourism in catching up with other areas and would soon give good competition to other tourism themes (Wine Tourism in India, 2009).
- 13 In India, an impressive progress has been made in development of technologies for preparation of wines from grapes, mango, apple, peach, pear, plum, cashew –apple, pine apple, pomegranate, banana, berry, strawberry and kinnow<sup>12</sup> by wine refers to the fermented-any but it may include (*Vitis Vinifera*) products of grapes undistilled alco-

holic fruit product obtained after fermentation the amount of wine. Compared to grapes production of another fruits are very small. In India, wine industry is in infancy stage<sup>13</sup>. The alcoholic beverages with characteristic flavour of the particular fruit like apple, pear, plum, apricot, cherry and mango are broadly termed as fruit wines.

- 14 The term wine route has a broader meaning from the tourist point of view which connects several wine producing regions. This route is further characterized by the natural attractions like mountains, hills, heritage place, vineyards, testing rooms, ethnic restaurants, and spiritual places nearby areas, local traditions and museums. In other words tourist following the wine route gets the opportunity to enjoy the wide range of experience like visiting vineyards, tasting of wine, wine making process, wine and food harmony, and local food and tradition. They can even try the culinary specialties of the region and buy products that characterize the area whilst enjoying the scenery<sup>14</sup>.
- 15 India is a country with an ancient winemaking tradition but a very new and emerging wine producing industry. Wine tourism is gaining significant momentum in India. Many vineyards in India have in place their own tasting rooms so that the wine lovers can enjoy travelling to and exploring the wine regions in India. Wine Tourism in catching up with others and would soon give a good competition to other tourism themes. India is emerging as a good quality wine producer in the world.

**Table 3 - Wine Producing Regions in India.**

Nasik Region (Maharashtra State):	This is the largest wine grape producing region in the country. This region includes Pune, Nasik and Ahmed Nagar. Many top wineries are located in this area including Chateau d'Ori and Sula Wines.
Sangali Region (Maharashtra State):	This region includes Solapur, Sangali, Satara and Latur.
Bangalore Region (Karnataka State):	This is located to the North of Bangalore City. The famous Grover Vineyards is situated here.
Himachal Region:	This area is located in northern part of India. It is an emerging region for wine production.

North Eastern Region:	This region includes the 8 north eastern states of the country. Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya are the main wine producing states.
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Mohanty et al. *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, July 2015, Vol. 8, No.2.

## Wines in Meghalaya

- 16 Fruit wines in Meghalaya will have a niche market at its best, where the excess quantity of fruit abundant in the areas can be processed. Meghalaya has plenty of fruits such as pineapple, banana, strawberry, passion fruit and sohiong, etc., that would make decent wines once the proper focus and commercial exploitation is made feasible. All this is possible only if and when the government of takes some positive steps to allow harnessing of the fermentation potential of its abundant fresh fruits. The production of indigenous beverages may serve as a good source of income for livelihood of the ethnic groups and a source of revenue to the state. The production may be encouraged at the level of cottage and small scale industry. The wine making from local fruits could also grow gradually as a cottage industry and then commercialized into an industry, which would automatically boost the economy of the state as well generate employment to unemployed local youths.
- 17 Fermented alcoholic beverages have been widely consumed by people in almost all countries for centuries<sup>15</sup>. These fermented beverages are usually prepared from locally available raw materials using age-old techniques<sup>16</sup> and their art is believed to pass down by cultural and traditional values to subsequent generations with the processing being optimized through trial and error<sup>17</sup>.

**Table 4 - Indigenous Wines of Meghalaya.**

SL.NO	NAME OF THE WINE	BASIC INGREDIENTS AND BOTANICAL NAMES	SEASONALITY
1	Cashew nut apple	Cashew Nut Apple ( <i>Anacardium occidentale</i> )	March to October
2	Cherry wine	Cherry( <i>Prunus cerasus</i> L.)	Throughout the Year
3	Orange Citrus sinensis (L.)	Orange ( <i>Citrus sinensis</i> )	Throughout the Year

4	Ginger wine	Ginger( <i>ZingiberOfficinale</i> )	Throughout the year
5	Mulberry Wine	Mulberry( <i>Morus</i> )	May to August
6	Strawberry Wine	Strawberry( <i>Fragaria</i> )	December to march
7	Passion fruit Wine	Passion fruit( <i>Passiflora</i> )	May to July
8	Blackberry Wine	Blackberry( <i>Rubus</i> )	May to September
9	Plum Wine	Plum( <i>PrunusDomestica</i> )	May to September
10	Banana Wine	Banana( <i>Musa</i> )	Throughout the year
11	Jackfruit Wine	Jackfruit( <i>ArtocarpusHeterophyllus</i> )	May to September
12	Peach Wine	Peach( <i>PrunusPersica</i> )	May to September
13	Pear Wine	Pear( <i>Pyrus</i> )	May to September
14	Pine Apple	Pineapple ( <i>AnanasComosus</i> )	March to October

Compiled by the authors.

## History of Wine Making In Meghalaya

- Meghalaya is a state blessed with many types of fruits, some of which are indigenous fruits.
- Wines are produced as a hobby of natives of Meghalaya since British period.
- In Christianity and ethnic tribal culture wine consumption as part customary practices.
- During the British colonial era, an English man Tom Harold Douglas Hunt established the first winery, Mawphlang Distilleries. The Mawphlang distillery employed around 250 villagers.
- Its cherry wine, cherry brandy and plum brandy was sold and distributed all over India. *The London Times*, published a special article on Hunt's wine company.
- Winemakers are capitalizing on this, utilizing resources thereby helping farmers and tourism sector. and may be promoted as a cottage industry
- Department of Horticulture, Govt. of Meghalaya, RRTC and NEEPCO has helped the wine makers.
- The wine makers sell their products through cellar door sales.
- The main channel of marketing is through word of mouth.
- Wine festivals and other indigenous events are organized to promote tourism in the region.

## Production of Indigenous Beverages Of Meghalaya

- The ethnic communities of North East India follow almost identical system for fermentation, but they use different types of plants species in the starter culture preparation process, which are believed to add as an intoxicating property of the liquor<sup>18</sup>.
- Rice beer is an integral part of life of several ethnic communities and it is known in different names in different places. It is called sake in Japan, Iao-chao in China, tape ketan in Indonesia, Khao- mak in Thailand, daru, kali, pachwai and hadia in India.
- Even the rice beer is known with different names in the different states of North East India<sup>19</sup>.
- Almost all tribes are fond of drinks and consume during every ceremony, festivals, marriages, funeral feasts and offer it to their Gods and deities<sup>20</sup>.

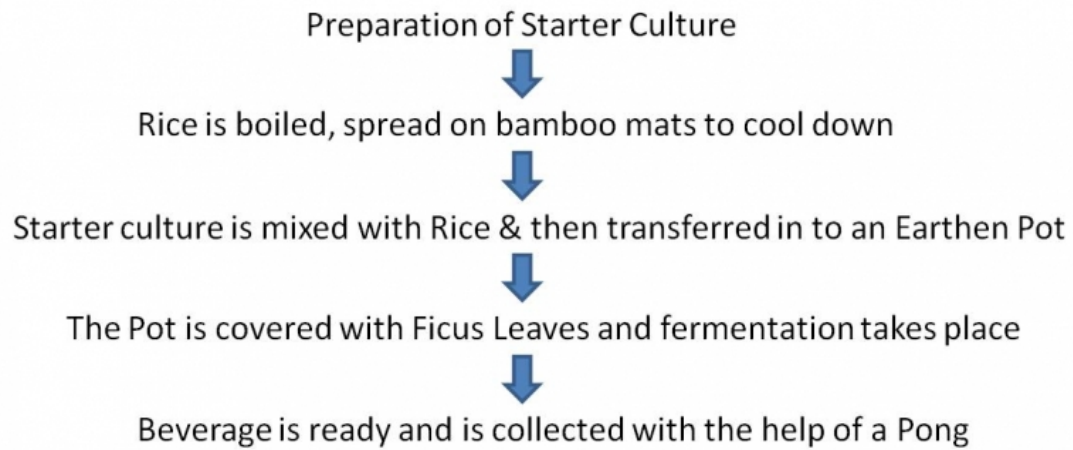
## Production of indigenous beverages

Figure 1 - Official Indian propaganda against alcohol abuse.



Sharad Kumar Kulshreshtha and Ashok Kumar.

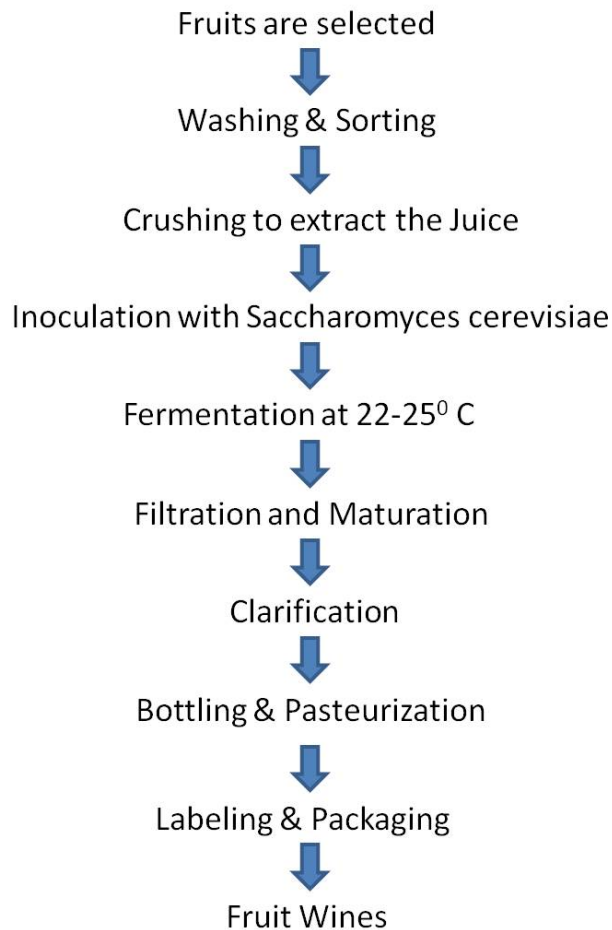
**Figure 2 - Production of indigenous beverages.**



Source: Authors Compilation.

## **Production of fruit wines**

**Figure 3 - Production of Fruit Wines.**



Source: Authors Compilation.

## Rewiew of related literature

- 18 Consumption practices of beverages vary substantially among different countries of the world. An understanding of such differences can help researchers, clinicians, and policymakers to develop prevention, diagnostic, and treatment measures as well as overall alcohol policies that are appropriate for a given country<sup>21</sup>. Alcoholic beverage consumption patterns vary considerably among different countries and even among different ethnic groups within one country. These variations in drinking patterns include, the types of beverages consumed and preferred, occasions associated with the consumption, drinking levels that are considered normal, and population subgroups for whom drinking is considered acceptable. Television, movies, and

scholarly publications have depicted and investigated differences in drinking traditions to such an extent that people throughout the world are increasingly aware of drinking patterns in cultures other than their own of different ethnic backgrounds<sup>22</sup>. The consumption of alcoholic beverages in India predates British colonization. However, in comparison to other countries, alcohol consumption was not considered central to normal social life or daily meals in pre-colonial India. Nevertheless, in certain tribal groups throughout the country alcoholic beverages still are considered “a gift to humankind and, in turn, were reverently offered to the nature gods and other sacred powers”<sup>23</sup>. Each of the North Eastern States of India has a highly diverse and multicultural population, and major differences exist between their urban and rural areas. Moreover, these states have distinct histories of traditional alcohol production and consumption as well as widely contrasting contemporary drinking patterns and alcohol-related problems<sup>24</sup>.

- 19 The different states of India have rich cultural variability with respect to ethnic, religious, and linguistic groups. The drinking patterns observed in the nation reflect that variability, and results obtained in specific regions of each country can be generalized only to a limited extent. For example, one cannot accurately characterize the drinking patterns of all Indian ethnic and cultural groups based on findings for just one of those groups. In this research article, the information presented on consumption culture & practices is based on investigations conducted in Shillong, a city in the north eastern state of Meghalaya. Additional information on Indian drinking practices in this article is based on two ethnographic studies of alcohol consumption conducted among the Rajput, a military caste in north-western India<sup>25</sup>. In order to highlight the role that indigenous beverage consumption plays in a culture or country, researchers commonly use the terms “wet” and “dry.” Wet cultures are those in which alcohol consumption is a highly valued part of social life. Conversely, in dry cultures, alcohol consumption typically is considered aberrant behavior<sup>26</sup>. Some differences exist in the alcoholic beverage preferences of various population subgroups. For example, although both men and women drink, women tend to prefer wine. Also, young people consume beer and wine more frequently than other alcoholic beverages<sup>27</sup>. Few general population studies of alcohol consumption pat-

terns have been conducted in India, and those that do exist were conducted primarily in the late 1970s, shortly after prohibition policies by the federal government and individual states were reversed. Furthermore, although various epidemiological studies have been conducted in specific regions of India, their generalizability to the entire country is questionable, at least in part because of methodological problems<sup>28</sup>. The most consistent finding in all of the studies was that men are the primary consumers of alcoholic beverages. However, the percentage of men who had consumed an alcoholic beverage in the previous year varied widely among different regions, ranging from 16.7 percent in Madras City in southern India to 49.6 percent in a Punjab village in northwest India<sup>29</sup>. Conversely, the alcohol consumption rates among women were consistently low (i.e., less than 5 percent)<sup>30</sup>. In a study of a clan of Rajput in the city of Khaalapur, Dorschner<sup>31</sup> identified three types of drinkers: abstainers, social drinkers, and alcoholics. Of the men included in the study, 44.5 percent were abstainers, 16.4 percent were social drinkers, and 39.1 percent were heavy drinkers or alcoholics. Thus, although slightly more than one-half of the men consumed daru, spirit, or “English alcohol,” moderate social drinking was not the norm among those drinkers. In contrast, all the women in the study were abstinent. These overall drinking patterns are consistent with national epidemiological studies conducted in India but contrast sharply with those of Asian countries and many Western countries. One reason for the specific drinking patterns in India may be the strong advocacy of abstinence by Indian religious groups. For example, among the Hindus (who make up more than 80 percent of India’s population) alcoholic beverages are forbidden for Brahmins and other upper-caste groups who are strict vegetarians. Members of all other caste groups who are meat eaters (e.g., the warrior, farmer, and scavenger-untouchable castes) are permitted to drink. Muslims also are not supposed to drink, although some Muslim men consume alcohol. Finally, Buddhists and Jains, who are strict vegetarians, are forbidden to drink. In addition, political prohibition policies in certain states may contribute to Indian drinking patterns. Another epidemiological study conducted in the rural areas of Rajasthan demonstrated that although alcohol consumption had become accepted among men, it was still infrequent among women<sup>32</sup>. However, drinking by women

was more accepted in certain castes, particularly on festive occasions, such as weddings<sup>33</sup>. In general, by the early 1980s alcohol consumption apparently had become an accepted leisure activity for men who were married and living in small families (i.e., husband, wife, and no more than three children) in this rural area<sup>34</sup>.

## Research gap

- 20 There has been little direct research on documentation undertaken on Indigenous beverages of Meghalaya. Fruits wines are unique feature of Meghalaya which is prepared by native tribes (Khasi Garo and Jaintia).
- 21 There is an urgent need to document these indigenous beverages and about consumption culture which highlights :
- Its indigenous knowledge, skills involved preparation .
  - Indigenous practices of developing wine as tourism products.
  - Wines may evolve as special interest tourism in Meghalaya.
  - Scope of wine centric tourism entrepreneurship development.

## Objectives of the study

- 22 The proposed study has been conceptualized with the following objectives:
1. To highlight the consumption culture and preparation of Indigenous beverages of Meghalaya.
  2. To study the role of indigenous beverages/fruit wines in transforming a unique

## Research methodology

- 23 Area of Study: State of Meghalaya.
- 24 This research work is based on the quantitative component of ethnographic study, combining direct observation with interviews of local natives. We have made observations of the destinations and interviews with the producers, members of Forever Young Club, Meghalaya wine makers association in Shillong, Sohlia, Sohiong, and Umran. The secondary data sources includes reputed journals of tourism research,

books, web sites, national and local newspapers, Reports from Department of Tourism, Government of Meghalaya, Department of Horticulture, Government of Meghalaya.

## Consumption of alcohol in India

- Alcohol has been associated with many societal issues ranging from crimes, accidents, poverty, and ill-health.
- On the other hand, the immense economic benefits it gives not only to people directly involved in its production and sale but to the Government is hard to ignore. The excise revenue estimated in Delhi for the year 2018-19 is Rs 4700 Crore.
- With Rs 29,672 Crore in the previous year, Tamil Nadu is the top earner from the sale of alcohol among Indian states<sup>35</sup>.
- With an estimated worth of \$35 billion, the alcohol market in Indian is the third largest in the world<sup>36</sup>.
- The legal drinking age ranges between 18 to 25 years depending on individual state law, and with 53% of the population above 25 years, India provides as a huge market for alcoholic beverages (India Demographic Profile, 2018).

**Table 5 - State-wise alcohol consumption per capita per week (in ml) as of 2018-19.**

State/UT	Indigenous Beverages	Beer, Imported Alcohol, Wine
Andaman & Nicobar Island	656	532
Andhra Pradesh	561	104
Arunachal Pradesh	749	346
Assam	304	19
Bihar	266	17
Chandigarh	37	42
Chhattisgarh	120	27
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	2,533	498
Daman & Diu	252	1,079
Delhi	55	86
Goa	47	108
Gujarat	53	3
Haryana	89	43
Himachal Pradesh	149	73

Jammu & Kashmir	32	7
Jharkhand	320	14
Karnakata	23	102
Kerala	94	102
Lakshadweep	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	133	12
Maharashtra	65	19
Manipur	155	6
Meghalaya	74	49
Mizoram	29	2
Nagaland	159	23
Odisha	146	20
Puducherry	154	144
Punjab	141	50
Rajasthan	80	43
Sikkim	41	307
Tamil Nadu	20	85
Tripura	163	2
Uttar Pradesh	34	5
Uttarakhand	38	43
West Bengal	74	12

National Sample Survey Office (The Hindu news report) and <https://www.mapsofindia.com/my-india/india/alcohol-consumption-in-india>.

## Legal age of consuming alcohol in India

**Table 6 - Legal age of consuming alcohol in India by states.**

LEGAL DRINKING AGE	STATES OF INDIA
18 Years	Andaman Nicobar islands, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Mizoram, Pondicherry, Rajasthan, Sikkim
21 years	Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Goa, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttarakhand
25 years	Delhi, Chandigarh, Meghalaya, Punjab, Haryana

Dry States	Nagaland, Manipur, Lakshadweep, Bihar, Gujarat
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Joseph, Z. & Thomas, J. *Atna Journal of Tourism Studies* 2018, Vol. 13, No. 2, 29-40.

## Consumption culture in India and Meghalaya

- India is one of the fastest growing and the third largest market for alcohol in the world.
- According to the Business Wire (2017) the alcoholic beverage market in India is growing at a CAGR of around 7.72% over a 10 year period and will reach a value of INR 5.3 trillion by the fiscal year 2026.
- As per the 2014 World Health Organisation's report on alcohol and health, 30% of Indians regularly consume alcohol and per capita consumption of alcohol annually stood at 4.3 litres.
- India's association with alcohol goes way back into history. Alcoholic beverages and its effects are mentioned in ancient historic texts and writings. Ayurveda mentions its use as well as the consequences of its misuse.
- The subject of alcohol is included in the state list under the seventh schedule of the Constitution of India. This means that rules regarding the sale and consumption of alcohol are a state issue and each state and union territory has adopted a different approach towards its alcohol policy.

## Food and wine harmony

- The choice wines with the food are based on the sommelier's suggestion or with their own experience.
- Indigenous beverages like rice beer may be consumed with any meal during festivals, ceremonies etc.
- Wine is a perfect partner for food.
- Dry white wine goes well with fish and fatty foods.
- Red wines may be served with red meats, games.
- Sweet wines are served with sweets and desserts.

## Responsible beverage service policies and practice in India

- Restriction with respect to the location of the shops
- Sale of alcohol is not allowed in most states on

1. 2nd October
  2. Republic Day
  3. Independence Day
  4. During Government elections and counting
  5. Prevention of public peace
- Sale of alcohol is prohibited to
    1. People with a mental disorder
    2. A person already intoxicated
    3. A person suspected to take part in any unlawful activity, riot or the disruption of public peace
    4. Excise officials, police officers, railway servants and motor bus chauffeur, on duty or in uniform
    5. A person under the minimum age limit set by the state<sup>37</sup>.

## Conclusion

25 The state of Meghalaya produces indigenous beverages ranging from Rice Beer to Fruit wines. The fruit wines are prepared from the fruits grown in abundance, few of them are exotic in nature. The indigenous tribes of Meghalaya, Khasi, Garo and Jaintia produces these beverages using their traditional knowledge and skills which passes on from generation to generation. The history of wine making in Meghalaya links with the British colonial period. Fruit wine lovers and producer visits have the potential to increase local tourism to a larger extent. Meghalaya has a rich agro-biodiversity and a leading producer of exotic fruits. Fruit growers and wine producers within the same area could give basis for fruit wine routes; consumption of modern high quality fruit wine could also become a more wide-spread if the other stakeholders such as local restaurants and hotels are included in the overall marketing of local tourist destinations.

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## English

Every destination has its own ethnic values and cultural diversity which reflects through its languages, costumes, custom and traditions, mythologies, beliefs, rituals, cultural events and finally local food and beverages. All these ethnicities are quite alluring to attract anyone towards culture and special interest tourism. Nowadays tourists and visitors are experiencing local culture, arts and handicraft, traditional dance and music, relishing local ethnic delicacies, delicious cuisines, as well as tasting local beverages etc. In respect of beverages especially, wines play an important role for wine lovers to explore such wineries, vineyards, fruit orchids, wine festivals for experiencing winemaking, wine tasting, wine pairing, wine consumption or purchase etc. Winemaking has existed throughout Indian history but was particularly encouraged by the Romans, Egyptians and European nations. Wine is an alcoholic beverage obtained from the fermentation of the juice of freshly gathered grapes, the fruit of the vine plant. According to the legal regulations of European Union, the wine is the product obtained after the fermentation of freshly gathered grapes whereas; wine can be made from other types of fruits. These wines are referred to as fruit wines, and named after the fruit which is used in their preparation (for example Strawberry wine).

Meghalaya is also known as 'Abode of Clouds' is a state in North East India and is a home of 3 tribes namely- *Khasi*, *Garo* and *Jaintia*. Before 1972, it was part of Assam, a state of North East India. Indigenous wine making is part of very old tribal tradition culture where they prepare wine with available local fruits with indigenous knowledge and practice, used to consume these wines during some tribal festivities. During the British colonial period, there was enough time for blending and enriching wine making knowledge with indigenous and British culture. Co-mixing of culture and wine consumption is greater influence to local people to explore varieties of fruits wines in Meghalaya. Fruits wine is also festivities beverages here. Meghalaya is blessed with a variety of agro biodiversity and vivid climatic conditions which favours cultivation of different types of horticultural products like fruits, vegetables, flowers etc. Meghalaya also has so many indigenous species of fruit plants which may not be found anywhere else in the country. These native tribes still continue such indigenous customary practices of wine making from these fruits and vegetables. The horticultural wealth of the state in terms of fruits includes *Peach*, *Plum*, *Pear*, *Pineapple*, *Banana*, *Jackfruit*, *Sohpieh*, *Sohiong* (*Black cherry*), *Sohsang*, *Sohphoh*, *Sohlang*, *So-hbrap* (*local names of Pasion fruit*), *Sohmon*, etc. All these fruits and passion fruits have most preferred for wine making and also well have been considered well known in fruit wines among local and wine tourist. Meghalaya has planned to venture in the area of fruit wines. These fruit wines and indigenous beverages are consumed during occasions and rituals throughout the year.

The production of indigenous beverages such as local fruit wine may serve as a good source of income for rural livelihood of the ethnic groups and a source of revenue to the state. Since both the food and wine promotes a destination by motivating a tourist to visit to a particular tourist destination. Hence, the production may be encouraged at the level of cottage and small scale industry to promote the rural tourism and entrepreneurship development. In this context, the *Shillong Wine Festival* organised by *Meghalaya Wine Makers Association* and other indigenous fruit festival will preserve, promote and also help create awareness not only on the art of indigenous wine making practices but also its commercial potential as tourism industry.

The future of these Indigenous fruits wine making may be more prosper and sustainable when it may promoted by the state government as a cottage industry by providing suitable standard benchmarking facilities such as *Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI)*. The wine festival of Shillong attracts wine connoisseurs and wine tasters from across the world. In spite of these potentials the wine making is not legalising in Meghalaya, the natives prepare and serve it for self or festivities consumption only. The Government should legalise fruit wine making in the perspective of a job opportunity to encourage entrepreneurship among the youth and also in promoting tourism. Wine tourism includes visits to wineries, vineyards/orchards and restaurants famous for special local wines, as well as organized wine tours, visits to wine festivals and other special events. Wine tourism is now accredited as special-interest tourism (SIT). Wine tourism carves a niche sector that could help in developing the social and economic status of the Meghalaya.

This explorative study highlights link between wine consumption with traditional tribal culture, and how are the natives of Meghalaya still continue these traditional fruits wine making practice as part of indigenous tribal culture which same as remains century ago. This paper is based on the qualitative component with ethnographic study, combining direct observation with interviews of local natives of Meghalaya. This paper will focuses on indigenous wine making and consumption as part of ethnic tribal culture, how these fruit wines are transforming a unique tourism product for attracting wine tourists and also promote Meghalaya as a nascent emerging wine tourism destination.

## **Français**

Chaque destination a ses propres valeurs ethniques et sa propre diversité culturelle qui se reflète à travers ses langues, ses costumes, ses coutumes et traditions, ses mythologies, ses croyances, ses rituels, ses événements culturels et enfin sa nourriture et ses boissons locales. Toutes ces ethnies sont assez séduisantes pour attirer les voyageurs vers un tourisme culturel à part entière. Aujourd'hui, les touristes et les visiteurs découvrent la culture locale, l'art et l'artisanat, la danse et la musique traditionnelles, savourent des délices locaux, des cuisines délicieuses, ainsi que des boissons locales, etc. En ce qui concerne les boissons en particulier, les vins jouent un rôle important pour les amateurs qui peuvent ainsi explorer les caves, les vignobles, les festivals vinicoles pour découvrir le travail en chais, la dégustation, l'association des vins, la consommation ou pour acheter du vin, etc. La viticulture a toujours existé dans l'histoire de l'Inde, mais elle a été particulièrement encouragée par les Romains, les Égyptiens et les nations européennes. Le vin est une boisson alcoolisée obtenue par la fermentation du jus de raisins fraîchement cueillis, le fruit de la plante de vigne. Selon la réglementation de l'Union européenne, le vin est le produit obtenu après la fermentation de raisins fraîchement cueillis, alors que, matériellement, le vin peut être fabriqué à partir d'autres types de fruits. Ces vins sont appelés vins de fruits et portent le nom du fruit utilisé dans leur préparation (par exemple, le vin de fraise).

Le Meghalaya, également connu sous le nom de "Demeure des nuages", est un État du nord-est de l'Inde où vivent trois tribus : Khasi, Garo et Jaintia. Avant 1972, il faisait partie de l'Assam, un État du nord-est de l'Inde. La fabrication de vin indigène fait partie d'une très ancienne culture de tradition tribale où l'on prépare du vin avec les fruits locaux disponibles, avec le savoir et la pratique indigènes, vins consommés lors de certaines festivités tribales. Pendant la période coloniale britannique, il y eut suffisamment de temps pour mélanger et enrichir les connaissances en matière de vinification avec les cultures indigènes et britanniques. Ce mélange culturel incita davantage les populations locales à explorer les variétés de vins de fruits à Meghalaya. Le vin de fruits est également une boisson de fête dans cette région. Meghalaya a la chance de bénéficier d'une grande biodiversité agricole et de conditions climatiques très favorables à la culture de différents types de produits horticoles comme les fruits, les légumes, les fleurs, etc. Meghalaya possède également de nombreuses espèces indigènes de plantes fruitières que l'on ne trouve peut-être nulle part ailleurs dans le pays. Les tribus indigènes pratiquent, de manière coutumière, la fabrication de vin à partir de ces fruits et légumes. La richesse horticole de l'État en termes de fruits comprend la pêche, la prune, la poire, l'ananas, la banane, le jacquier, le Sohpieh, le Sohiong (cerise noire), le Sohsang, le Sohphoh, le Sohlang, le Sohbrap (noms locaux du fruit de Passion), le Sohmon, etc. Tous ces fruits ont été préférés pour la fabrication du vin et sont également bien considérés, en tant que vins de fruits parmi les locaux comme chez les touristes. Meghalaya a opté pour s'aventurer dans le domaine des vins de fruits par ailleurs consommés lors d'occasions et de rituels tout au long de l'année.

La production de boissons indigènes telles que le vin de fruits locaux peut constituer une bonne source de revenus pour les paysans et pour l'État. Or, la nourriture et le vin sont tous deux des produits très attractifs pour les touristes. Ainsi, la production peut être encouragée au niveau de l'artisanat et de la petite industrie pour justement promouvoir le tourisme rural et le développement d'entreprise. Dans ce contexte, le festival du vin de Shillong, organisé par l'association des viticulteurs de Meghalaya et d'autres festivals de fruits indigènes devrait permettre de préserver, de promouvoir et de sensibiliser non seulement à l'art des pratiques viticoles indigènes, mais aussi à son potentiel commercial en tant qu'industrie touristique.

L'avenir de la production de vin à base de fruits indigènes pourrait être plus prospère et plus durable si le gouvernement de l'État en faisait une industrie artisanale en développant des installations d'évaluation comparative standard appropriées telles que la Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI). Le festival du vin de Shillong attire les connaisseurs et les dégustateurs de vin du monde entier. Malgré ce potentiel, la fabrication du vin n'est pas légalisée à Meghalaya, les indigènes le préparent et le servent uniquement pour leur consommation personnelle ou pour les festivités. Le gouvernement devrait légaliser la fabrication de vin de fruits dans la perspective d'une opportunité d'emploi pour encourager l'esprit d'entreprise chez les jeunes et aussi pour promouvoir le tourisme. Le tourisme du vin comprend des visites de caves, de vignobles et de restaurants réputés pour leurs vins locaux spéciaux, ainsi que des visites organisées de vignobles, des visites de festivals du vin et d'autres événements spéciaux. L'oenotourisme est désormais accrédité en tant que tourisme d'intérêt spécifique (SIT). L'oenotourisme se taille ainsi une niche qui pourrait contribuer à développer économiquement et socialement la Meghalaya.

Cette étude exploratoire met en évidence le lien entre la consommation de vin et la culture tribale traditionnelle, ainsi que la manière dont les indigènes de Meghalaya continuent à pratiquer la vinification coutumière des fruits dans le cadre d'une culture tribale locale qui existait il y a plus d'un siècle. Cet article se concentre sur la fabrication et la consommation de vin indigène dans le cadre de cette culture indigène, sur la manière dont ces vins de fruits deviennent un produit touristique unique pour attirer les visiteurs amateurs de vin et sur la promotion de la Meghalaya en tant que destination émergente de tourisme du vin.

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### **Mots-clés**

tourisme, tourisme de vins de fruits, pratiques traditionnelles, tourisme d'intérêt spécifique, Meghalaya

### **Keywords**

tourism, fruit wine tourism, traditional practices, special interest tourism, Meghalaya

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