

No cheers for Zim wines and spirits

By [Dumisani Ndlela](#)

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It's no longer cheers for local wine and spirit lovers. Come August, they will pay more for wines and spirits, after finance minister Tendai Biti increased customs duty on these products.



Excise duty on wines and spirits had been maintained at modest levels for quite some time. The reason, Biti said, was to “promote consumption of quality products which are not hazardous to society.”

But simply because current rates are low compared to what is charged in the region, Biti said wine and spirit lovers will have to fork out more: excise duty on wines will go up from 10% to 15%, and that of spirits will increase from 15% to 20%. There is already a retail tax of 15% on these items.

African Distillers (Afdis), which makes a range of wines and spirits, including brown spirits (whisky, brandy, and golden rum), white spirits (gin, rum, vodka, ouzo) and a variety of wines (sparkling wines, still wine and fortified wine), could be hit harder by this move. It reported in February that demand for its products had been weakened by consumer impoverishment in Zimbabwe.

ABOUT DUMISANI NDLELA

Dumisani Ndlela is a Zimbabwean journalist specialising in business and financial reporting, with experience reporting on commodities, stock and financial markets, advertising, marketing and the media. He has previously reported from a number of regional countries as well as from the UK and Germany on commodities and regional integration. He can be contacted on dndlela@yahoo.co.uk.

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