

# SAB and AB InBev launch locally-brewed alcohol-free beer

In an effort to encourage responsible drinking, South African Breweries (SAB) and AB InBev Africa have introduced Castle Free, an alcohol-free beer brewed in South Africa...



Vaughan Croeser, brand director, Castle Lager; Andrea Quayle, vice president of marketing Africa and Ricardo Tadeu, AB InBev president Africa.

Castle Free is South Africa's first homegrown 0.0% alcohol beer, brewed with homegrown ingredients and the same standards as its mother brand – Castle Lager. Castle Free complies with South African Legislation on labelling regulations to be called an alcohol-free beer because it contains less than 0.05% alcohol by volume (ABV) of liquid (<0.05g/100ml).

## Smart Drinking Goals

The launch of Castle Free, a no-alcohol beer, delivers on SAB and AB InBev's Public Interest Commitments made to the South African government during the business combination process at the end of 2016 to introduce initiatives that reduce alcohol harm in South Africa. Amongst others, SAB and AB InBev committed to introduce and promote new no- and lower-alcohol products to the South African market to encourage consumers to make lower-alcohol choices, including through brewing these products in South Africa.

SAB and AB InBev have made an investment of more than R30-million to develop and brew Castle Free in South Africa. This commitment is driven by the companies' Smart Drinking Goals aimed at fostering a culture of smart drinking amongst consumers and reducing the harm caused by the misuse of alcohol. At a global level, AB InBev is committed to a set of Smart Drinking Goals which include ensuring that no- and lower-alcohol beers represent at least 20% of the organisation's global beer volume by 2025.

"At SAB we believe that smart drinking choices affect everyone, every day and want every experience with beer to be a positive one. We are fostering a culture of smart drinking globally to reduce the harmful use of alcohol," says Ricardo Tadeu, zone president, SAB and AB InBev Africa.

"To ensure a long-term and sustainable reduction in harmful drinking, we believe that consumer behaviours need to shift. SAB and AB InBev have a key role to play in contributing to this change."

"As part of the Smart Drinking Goals, we are helping empower consumers to make smart drinking choices by enabling access to no- and low-alcohol options, as well as robust health information about our products."

The companies have said that they're making a deeper investment in evidence-based initiatives that measurably shift social norms and behaviours to reduce the harmful use of alcohol.

"As a non-alcohol beer, Castle Free provides people with the freedom of choice while still enjoying the taste of beer. They are able to enjoy all the sociability of a beer but without the alcohol. Castle Free is about ensuring people feel a sense of belonging and acceptance even when consuming an alcohol-free beer," says Vaughan Croeser, brand director, Castle Lager.

## **Promoting pacing**

The brand is targeted at men and women who are existing beer drinkers and who want more freedom and choice while enjoying beer without the alcohol. Castle Free allows consumers to practice 'pacing' which refers to complementing the consumption of alcohol beers with alcohol-free beers as a means of moderation. It allows for a lower intake of alcohol over longer periods allowing the body to break down alcohol at a steady rate, therefore less accumulation of alcohol. A 'pacing pack' has also been introduced which includes both Castle Free and Castle Lager.

"We encourage pacing amongst consumers as a safer and smarter option. This is why our Smart Drinking Squad, who are tasked with helping to address the harmful use of alcohol, will be taking to the streets to educate people about pacing and to encourage its practice," says Tadeu.

Castle Free will hit shelves in trade in mid-November 2017 and will be available in a limited edition 250ml sampling can, a limited edition 12-pack, a 340ml non-returnable bottle and 500ml can. It will be distributed to more than 4,800 taverns and 554 counter serve outlets. In addition, around 800 taverns across South Africa will be upgraded with Castle Free branding. Castle Free is not for sale to under 18s.

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