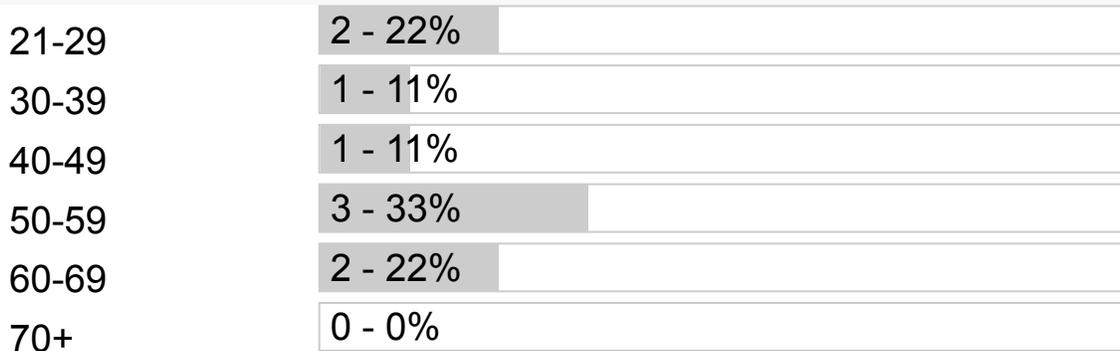


SRV - Vodka

Transcript of the focus group discussion as of 2022-12-15

Demographic Information - Age [responses remain private]

Please check the range below that includes your current age:



Jan S

60-69

Brian K

21-29

Johnny

60-69

paige1313

30-39

xt

50-59

Chuck schick

50-59

Betsy L

50-59

Pdiddu

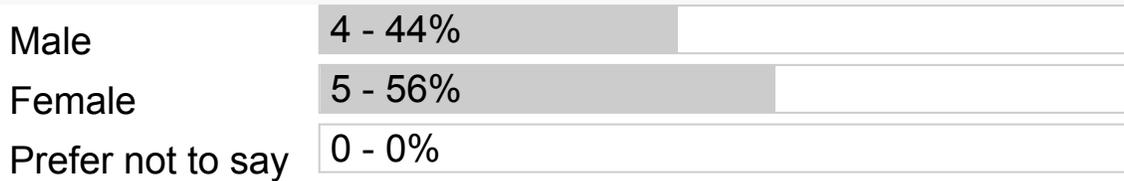
40-49

Alena L

21-29

Demographic Information - Gender [responses remain private]

What is your Gender?



Jan S

Female

Brian K

Male

Johnny

Male

paige1313

Female

xt

Male

Chuck schick

Male

Betsy L

Female

Pdiddu

Female

Alena L

Female

Demographic Information - Geography [responses remain private]

Which of the following best describes where you live?



Jan S

Suburban

Brian K
Suburban

Johnny
Suburban

paige1313
Suburban

xt
Suburban

Chuck schick
Suburban

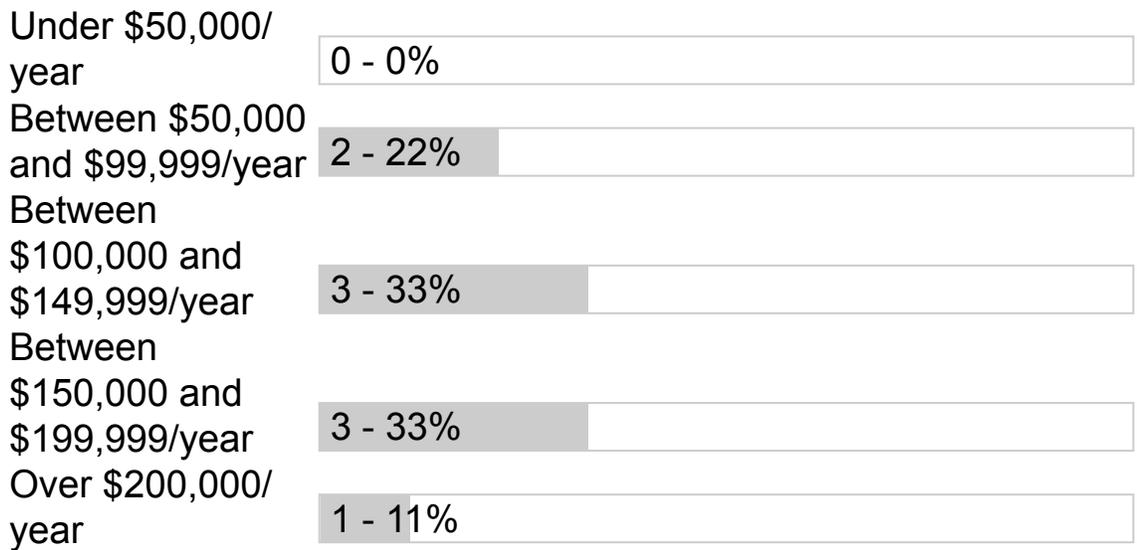
Betsy L
Urban

Pdiddu
Suburban

Alena L
Suburban

Demographic Information - HHI [responses remain private]

Choose the range below that contains your total annual household income. (Best estimate)



Jan S

Over \$200,000/year

Brian K

Between \$100,000 and \$149,999/year

Johnny

Between \$150,000 and \$199,999/year

paige1313

Between \$100,000 and \$149,999/year

xt

Between \$150,000 and \$199,999/year

Chuck schick

Between \$100,000 and \$149,999/year

Betsy L

Between \$50,000 and \$99,999/year

Pdiddu

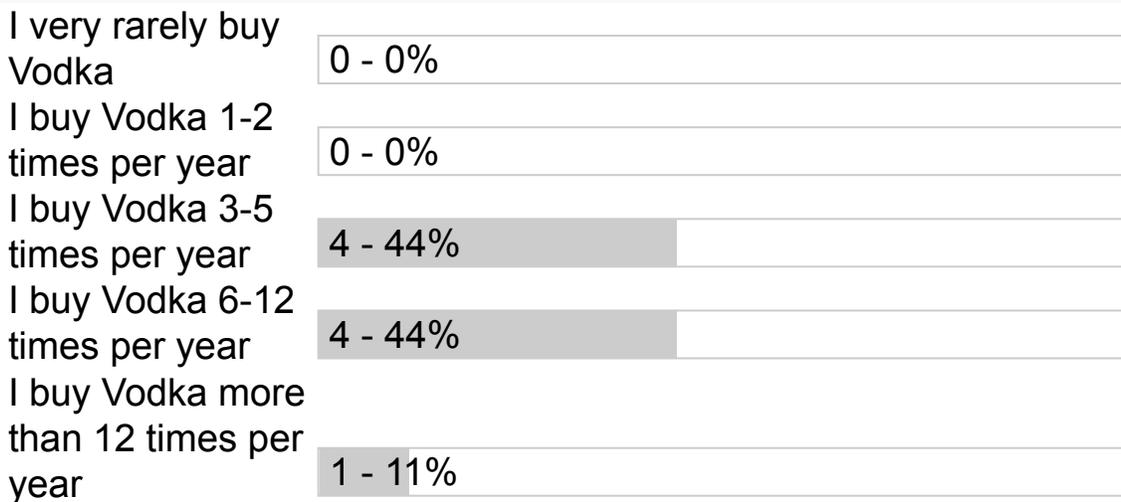
Between \$150,000 and \$199,999/year

Alena L

Between \$50,000 and \$99,999/year

Demographic Information - Vodka Purchase Frequency [responses remain private]

Indicate the choice below that best approximates the frequency of your Vodka purchases in a retail store or online shopping site.



Jan S

I buy Vodka 6-12 times per year

Jennifer E Moderator

Do you have gift vodka? At the holiday or birthdays? If so, is packaging important or the story behind the brand? Or something else?

Jan S

I'm thinking this means do I give vodka as a gift. I don't. I'm more likely to give beer as a gift because I drink that more often and I'd be worried that vodka drinkers already have a favorite brand.

Brian K

I buy Vodka 3-5 times per year

Johnny

I buy Vodka 6-12 times per year

paige1313

I buy Vodka 3-5 times per year

xt

I buy Vodka more than 12 times per year

Jennifer E Moderator

Do you host a lot of parties or events? Do you ever give vodka as a gift? Holiday or birthdays?

xt

Host primarily family, close friends. Gift yes....but If I gift, Im not gifting "my" brand as people consider it mid tier at best....I'll gift Titos, Kettle generally

Chuck schick

I buy Vodka 6-12 times per year

Jennifer E Moderator

Do you host a lot of parties or events? Do you ever give vodka as a gift? Holiday or birthdays?

Chuck schick

No, I don't get vodka as a gift... I usually do wine if I'm giving a gift for the holidays are birthday

Betsy L

I buy Vodka 6-12 times per year

Jennifer E Moderator

Do you host a lot of parties or events? Do you ever give vodka as a gift? Holiday or birthdays?

Betsy L

I have given Vodka as a gift. I host 3-5 parties a year.

Pdiddu

I buy Vodka 3-5 times per year

Alena L

I buy Vodka 3-5 times per year

Jennifer E Moderator

Do you host a lot of parties or events? Do you ever give vodka as a gift? Holiday or birthdays?

Alena L

When I do host (not often) I offer a handle of vodka as a way for guests to mix their drinks.

Vodka Preferences

Which of these factors is most important to you when you buy Vodka?

- Calorie count
- Sugar content
- Added health benefits (probiotics, antioxidants, etc.)
- Low alcohol level or non-alcoholic
- Distilled multiple times to remove impurities
- Gluten-free
- Attractive Label
- Shape of the bottle
- Price
- Taste
- Other (please specify)

Why is it the most important factor to you?

Which would be second-most important? Why is that?

Betsy L

sugar content, taste, what its made from and of course price.

paige1313

calorie count, taste, price - and brand recognition - is it a known brand?
what's the story behind the brand

Jennifer E Moderator

what is a good threshold for a calorie count?

Chuck schick

Which of these factors is most important to you when you buy Vodka? -
Distilled multiple times to remove impurities - Price - Taste Why is it the
most important factor to you? ... Don't like impurities ... Love, a good deal
... I like the flavor of uniqueness Which would be second-most important?
Why is that? Taste

Jennifer E Moderator

Would you say that you can tell unfiltered vodka? What makes the
flavor better for you? What do you consider a 'good deal' - an offer or
the quantity? both?

Chuck schick

I guess it's about the mood I'm in and I'm always mixing it and I'm
not really drinking straight vodka so a winner a cocktail is different
from the summer cocktail. I'm always looking for a good deal.

paige1313

does the distilled thing really work? I always see that as part of the
marketing but wasn't sure if that was a real thing or just a gimmick ?

Jan S

Taste - I'm buying it to enjoy the taste Second - Other. I try to buy from local providers if they are available. I prefer to support businesses in my area.

Jennifer E Moderator

Thanks for your answer - so you like buying local, would knowing the brand story help? Even if it wasn't local? But the name and the people behind the brand on the bottle?

Jan S

The brand story DOES help - whether or not it's local.

Alena L

Attractive label- all about the aesthetic Price- budgeting

Jennifer E Moderator

Thanks for your answer- is the label - brand aesthetic something you would be proud to show off in your home bar or be seen drinking? Would you pay more for the recognition or does it have to align with your set budget?

Alena L

The aesthetic does not correlate to price; I believe taste does that. If the brand's aesthetic is visually attractive I would show it off at home.

xt

Taste and price. I'm always looking for value. I don't pay up for marketing.

Jennifer E Moderator

Thanks - would you say then that price is more important than brand design? Would you want a brand that you can display in your home bar or be seen drinking?

xt

Not important to me.

Brian K

The most important factor for me is the taste. A good tasting vodka is much more enjoyable than a bad tasting vodka with lower calories or sugar. The second most important factor to me is Price. Being a college student I prioritize spending money on essential things so if I'm purchasing vodka I'll pick a reasonably priced one.

Jennifer E Moderator

Thanks! Does the brand story matter? Does that help you make a decision to buy?

Johnny

Taste is most important to me - because I don't want to drink it if I don't like how it tastes. Price is #2 - because I don't think the really pricey Vodkas are worth all the extra \$money, so I generally buy mid-price brands.

Jennifer E Moderator

What makes a vodka too pricey? What is the threshold for you?

Johnny

I would say my target is up to \$20/bottle. There is good selection in

the \$15-\$20 range - between the good quality value priced brands, any couponing, and the sale prices in the store I see no reason I need to go over \$20/bottle. The value brands make it easy because I don't have to have a coupon or wait for a sale. I would say Svedka is in that category. If Absolut is on sale, great. If not, I'll go with Svedka.

Vodka Selection

Do you always buy the same brand of Vodka? The same flavor of Vodka?

If not - help us understand how you make your purchase decision

If so - is there anything that would make you consider trying another brand?

If so, what?

What would motivate you to try a new brand of Vodka?
(Examples - In-store display, promotional offer, on-site taste test, something else)

Betsy L

Yes i buy the same brand. If i taste somthing in the store I would consider buying it. I also like to now who I am buying from and how its being made

paige1313

I usually am loyal to one brand but like to try new products. I am a sucker for a nice looking bottle or something that looks cool. I also like to read reviews - if the reviews are good and it seems like something I would like I

wouldn't hesitate to buy. I would try something new for a dinner party or an event with my friends to get their opinions. If they like it, then I can be the one who turned them on to the new vodka. In order to consider another brand, I would have to make sure it was comparable priced to the one I usually buy and would ask friends if they ever heard of it or tasted it before. I also don't want to find a brand that's super cheesy - the worst if alcohol brands that try to hard and use models or make it really cheesy - let real people with real reviews tells the story. Some alcohol brands are pushing models and barely dressed people in their ads - it makes it feel like old school advertising and it's not cool

Chuck schick

Do you always buy the same brand of Vodka? The same flavor of Vodka? No, I like a good deal as well as what my mood is for the day. If so - is there anything that would make you consider trying another brand? Yes If so, what? Promotion... Taste test What would motivate you to try a new brand of Vodka? Pretty girls giving me sample taste (Examples - In-store display, promotional offer, on-site taste test, something else)

Jennifer E Moderator

Does the motivation to buy have anything to do with the brand story or where the vodka comes from? How often do you purchase a different brand?

Chuck schick

Hi purchase something about once a month... And the story is not really a big deal to me

Jan S

No, I don't always buy the same brand. I don't buy flavored vodkas unless I'm making a cocktail from a recipe that requires one. I look for local brands, sometimes even if I haven't already tasted it I'll buy a local brand. If

there's not a local brand or I'm trying to decide between multiple brands I'll usually decide based on the label...not looking for anything in particular, just a visual or maybe something that makes me think it's a smaller business. I would probably NOT buy a brand with a large display because it would make me think the company had a lot of money to be able to afford that much advertising. I'd probably opt for something that made me think it's a smaller business. I want to do what I can to try to keep small businesses in business.

Jennifer E Moderator

How often do you try different recipes for new drinks? Would a bartender giving you a tutorial or instructions on how to make the latest drink influence you to purchase a different brand or flavor of vodka?

Jan S

I try new recipes at holidays and in the dummer (tiki drinks). The bartender idea is a "maybe" for me. Something that might work is if I was proactively contacted around the holidays (email or whatever) with a couple of recipes so I wouldn't have to search online or in recipe books for them.

paige1313

are their local vodka brands? I guess I never really looked - I didn't realize you would make small batches - I may start looking for some in my area

Jan S

There are in Chicago! It seems to be kind of a growing area - local distilleries - following the craft beer trend.

Alena L

Always buy the same brand because I'm a creature of habit but I would be influenced to bug a new brand if one of my favorite social media accounts tried it and endorsed it.

Jennifer E Moderator

Would you consider a recommendation from a top bartender or someone in the entertainment community (influencer) as someone who could inspire you to try something new? If yes, what would they need to tell you or share?

Alena L

I would consider someone in the entertainment business an influencer. Also people I follow on social media who have a huge following. They would need to explain the taste and whether or not it is easy to digest.

xt

Yes. I buy the same vodka repeatedly. To try something new I'd need it to be price competitive and a compelling story and then of course taste good. Coupon/discount would compel me to try something new.

Jennifer E Moderator

Would a loyalty program influence you to purchase more or try something new?

xt

In my world, a loyalty program is only valuable for something I'm already "loyal" towards. I really don't think a loyalty program would compel people to switch brands, especially vodka. They would have to be a pretty regular vodka consumer to even be relevant for a

loyalty program. If they are THAT regular they are probably sticky in there present loyalty. They arent the consumer you seek. IMO

Brian K

I usually do pick the same brand of vodka, word of mouth or an attractive label would persuade me to pick another brand.

Jennifer E Moderator

Would you consider a recommendation from a top bartender or someone in the entertainment community (influencer) as someone who could inspire you to try something new? If yes, what would they need to tell you or share?

paige1313

do you ever read the reviews?

Johnny

I don't always buy the same brand, but generally buy one of three or four favorites. I don't buy any flavored vodkas because I prefer to add my own flavor(s) with mixers or garnishes. I might consider trying a new brand if I read or hear about something that it has that is unique. I might be motivated by an in-store taste test. If I like the taste of the Vodka, and the person running the testing is helpful/knowledgeable, I will generally help them out by buying a bottle. Even more likely if they give me a coupon when I taste it.

Jennifer E Moderator

Would a loyalty program influence you to purchase more or try something new?

Johnny

If the store has a loyalty program that influences me to keep going to that store. I don't buy enough bottles to think that a vodka brand's loyalty program is going to be attractive enough to sway my purchase decisions. Maybe if a brand periodically ran "Enter to Win" promotions for things like Super Bowl tickets or Final Four tickets or World Cup 2026 tickets I would try that brand. But, I would not want to pay a big price premium to enter.

Johnny

I might be swayed if a brand worked a deal through the store to give me "double points" or something that would be attractive within the store's existing loyalty program.

Flavored Vodka questions

When do you prefer to drink flavored versus unflavored vodka?

Why do you prefer to drink flavored versus unflavored vodka?

Betsy L

unflavored Vodka I like to mix my own flavor into it.

paige1313

It would depend on the recipe and if the flavor tasted fake. If you are using a natural flavor and it enhances a specific cocktail recipe then I would try it. I am not opposed to mixing it up - literally.

Chuck schick

When do you prefer to drink flavored versus unflavored vodka? Depends if

I wanna get drunk or I want to be a mixologist Why do you prefer to drink flavored versus unflavored vodka? I guess it comes down to what is the circumstances online getting the vodka...

Jennifer E Moderator

Would samples inspire you to try flavored? A new recipe? Of if there was something unique like all natural flavors?

Chuck schick

Samples ..yes An example of a cocktail to make

Jan S

I only buy flavored vodka if I'm making a cocktail recipe that calls for it. I think just because I'm not used to drinking flavored vodka, and my typical vodka drink would be made with just one mixer which would provide the flavor instead of the vodka.

Jennifer E Moderator

Would samples inspire you to try flavored? A new recipe? Of if there was something unique like all natural flavors?

Jan S

Samples would get me to try it. I always try samples when they're offered in stores. I look for recipes around holidays and during the summer. Recipes get me to use new liquors as long as there aren't a LOT of unique ingredients that wouldn't be used beyond that recipe - I don't like to buy a bunch of ingredients that I will only use once.

Alena L

I drink unflavored and mix it with a soda, juice etc.

Jennifer E Moderator

Would samples inspire you to try flavored? A new recipe? Of if there was something unique like all natural flavors?

Alena L

I would try something flavored if given the opportunity of free samples

Jan S

Me too

xt

I only drink unflavored vodka. Flavored vodka seems unserious for a person who really enjoys vodka.

Jennifer E Moderator

Would samples inspire you to try flavored? A new recipe? Of if there was something unique like all natural flavors?

xt

Possibly but I doubt my reaction would be positive enough to compel me to buy it. It would really have to wow me.

Jan S

That's a good way to put it!

Brian K

I don't ever drink flavored vodka, I already don't enjoy the taste of vodka and the flavored types make it much worse.

Jennifer E Moderator

Would samples inspire you to try flavored? A new recipe? Of if there was something unique like all natural flavors?

Johnny

I only drink unflavored vodka. I prefer to add my own flavors to the raw vodka, because that way I know 100% what I am getting.

Jennifer E Moderator

Would samples inspire you to try flavored? A new recipe? Of if there was something unique like all natural flavors?

Johnny

Yes, if I could sample a flavored vodka I would be more likely to buy one. For example, if the lemon or lime flavor was very natural tasting, then I could make a vodka+soda without needing to buy fresh lemons or limes. I have started to see a bunch of new flavors of vodkas on the shelf that don't always sound appealing, so samples would probably be the only thing that could convince me to buy a bottle.

Jan S

Me too!

Brand Story Questions

What is your favorite Vodka brand?

When you think about your favorite Vodka brand, are there histories or traditions that make you feel good about buying that brand?

What are those?

What do you think are some elements of a story that would make you want to buy?
(examples: the founder, the history, specifics about the recipe)

Betsy L

I love grey goose. My family have been drinking it for years. I also like Chopin Vodka but i can never remember the name. Unforntunatly i dont have any back ground stories for Vodka.

Jennifer E Moderator

What do you love most about Grey Goose?

Betsy L

It's very smooth

paige1313

Belvedere and Gray Goose - I like that Belvedere touts their awards and maybe it's a marketing tactic but their ads are on point (Daniel Craig is a spokesperson and not a mediocre woman in a bikini), the reviews are good and it's made with Polish Rye...which makes it different. It is also less of hangover and appears to be smoother. I like Gray Goose since it's served almost everywhere, tastes pretty good, and doesn't cost too much. It's also

a respectable name to take to parties and have on your bar.

Chuck schick

What is your favorite Vodka brand? Absolute works for me When you think about your favorite Vodka brand, are there histories or traditions that make you feel good about buying that brand? I really don't care about it... It's all promotion What are those? What do you think are some elements of a story that would make you want to buy? I guess the best example is Templeton Rye and it's an old recipe that was handed on down that got lost and they brought it back to life again what is a good backstory (examples: the founder, the history, specifics about the recipe)

Jan S

I like Chicago vodka and CH Distillery vodka because they're from Chicago. I prefer to support local businesses. If those aren't available then I'll usually get Tito's or Absolute, just because I know the names. Things about a brand that would make me want to buy it are: — values of the owner or founder (quality, care, desire to provide something that's missing in the market) — doing something good (supporting social causes, donating to things I believe in, employing people who need help)

Alena L

Tito's. I don't know anything about the history but the memories that I have associated when I drink Tito's are always positive and fun!

Johnny

True! Something about Tito's makes for good memories.

Jan S

That's a good reason!

xt

My regular brand is Smirnoff. I know it's unsexy but I have conducted multiple blind tastings over the years. Freq we'll have 4-6 bottles gifted to us from parties. It makes for a great sample set. I've found in blind tastings Smirnoff regularly is 1 or 2 in flavor and smoothness. Beats Ketel one always. Tito's is close second.

Johnny

This is something I want to try for myself!

Johnny

Also, It makes me think there is an opportunity for a challenger brand to do a "Pepsi Challenge" against one of the leading brands to try to grab market share.

Jan S

This makes me want to pay attention to Smirnoff.

Johnny

Me too!

Brian K

My favorite vodka brand is probably Tito's. There aren't any history or traditions I associate with it, but a patriotic or inspirational history would make me want to buy.

Johnny

Absolut is my favorite brand. It is a very old brand and known for high quality. It also has a history of great ad campaigns. I find that Brand Stories

that tell me why the founder decided to go into business are interesting. If the founder saw an opportunity that no one else saw, and risked everything to pursue it, that is like an added Story bonus. David and Goliath brand stories are always good.

Jan S

I like those founder stories, too!

St. Royale Brand Vodka

If you saw a vodka named “St. Royale”, what are the first thoughts that come to your mind about the brand name (without knowing anything else about it)?

Does it seem appetizing? Why or why not?

Does it seem like an upscale or downscale brand?

Is there a brand on the market that you would think would be similar to St. Royale in terms of taste and price?

Which brand do you think would be most similar to St. Royale?

What would you expect to pay for a 750ml bottle of St. Royale?

Betsy L

Umm sounds like a place where it's made, upscale brand like absolute in taste and price. somewhere between 23-33 per bottle.

Johnny

Now that you mention it, St. Royale does sound like a place name. Like maybe somewhere in France or Belgium.

paige1313

It sounds premium - like it's from an exotic location or has some high end properties to it it seems like a more upscale brand. I would say a premium brand like Clix or something like that.... or Belvedere - I would expect to pay \$50 - \$100

Chuck schick

If you saw a vodka named "St. Royale", what are the first thoughts that come to your mind about the brand name (without knowing anything else about it)? Something regal Does it seem appetizing? Why or why not? I don't know if I would use the word appetizing... I would just say, it is presenting itself as a high-end brand... Does it seem like an upscale or downscale brand? Upscale Is there a brand on the market that you would think would be similar to St. Royale in terms of taste and price? Grey goose Which brand do you think would be most similar to St. Royale? Absolute What would you expect to pay for a 750ml bottle of St. Royale? 40 bucks

Jan S

At first it makes me think of Europe. But Royale makes me think of New Orleans. It also makes me think of monks. The name St.Royale makes me think of a brandy or wine. Seems inconsistent with vodka to me. It doesn't seem appetizing. Makes me think old, aged, golden. I prefer to think of vodka as crisp and clear. It seems downscale. I can't think of a similar vodka brand. I think more of brandy or some other type of liquor I wouldn't normally keep stocked at my home. For some reason the name really turns me off. I don't pay attention to price much, but I think this would be cheaper than well-known brands like Absolut, Tito's, Smirnoff...maybe it would cost about \$10.

Alena L

It seems like a luxury vodka that I would find at a yacht party. I would pay \$25 for a bottle.

xt

Idk. Seems a little contrived. Like it's trying too hard to be catchy. Sounds Canadian as well. I'd expect to pay 10/12 for a 750ml

Jan S

I think so, too. The name just doesn't seem like vodka to me.

Jennifer E Moderator

Do you think shortening the name to Royal Vodka makes better sense and not trying too hard?

Jan S

Yes, that seems better to me. Gets rid of the "old" feeling that having St. in the names gives.

Brian K

It sounds like it's made in another country. It doesn't sound very appetizing because I'm unfamiliar with it. It sounds like a downscale brand. I can't think of any brand that it would be similar too.

Jan S

Same here.

Johnny

First thing that came to my mind is that it's probably positioning itself as a luxury brand. It does seem appetizing, just because it seems like a luxury good - it's probably not bad. I think it is upscale. I would say it is probably trying to be like Grey Goose or Absolut. I would expect to pay around \$20-\$30 on sale.

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Please provide the Email address where you would like us to send you the \$20 Amazon eGift Card as a thank you for your participation.

This section is private, so other participants will not see your Email address.

We will not use this Email address for any purpose other than sending you the eGift card.

THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING!

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Johnny

n/a