

# the **RED CUP** Q&A



**separating alcohol fact from fiction**  
EVERY TUESDAY IN THE DAILY WILDCAT

## **Q** What do I need to be cautious of when drinking in other countries?

**A.** Laws, culture, and customs vary greatly between countries and regions of the world. You, the savvy traveler, will get to know the laws before departure so you can be a safe, legal, and respectful visitor.

In some nations, alcohol is completely forbidden because of religious laws, so prepare to abstain from drinking in certain areas. Countries with large Muslim populations often have the strongest alcohol laws (and penalties). In other countries, consumption may only be allowed in small amounts, for religious purposes, in tourist locations, or in homes.

Where and when you can drink may differ by location. Alcohol sales may be banned on certain days of the week or at particular times of the day or night (Thailand). You may be limited to purchasing from government-run stores, or only in approved visitor areas.

Minimum drinking ages vary from 14-25 around the world. Since the 1980s, the legal age for alcohol purchase and consumption in the United States has been 21. Contrast that with Jamaica where there is no minimum legal drinking age if alcohol is provided by others. Our northern neighbors in Canada allow drinking at age 18 or 19, depending on the provincial laws. To the south, 18 is the law in Mexico. In Germany, 14-15 year olds may drink in the company of parents in restaurants. Teens, ages 16-18, are allowed to purchase wine and beer in Belgium.

Clearly, it's always best to have a designated, sober driver. The Scandinavians are adamant about alcohol-free driving: Norway's maximum DUI limit is 0.02 BAC (blood alcohol concentration) which is one quarter the level most US states allow (0.08). Drunk driving may result in loss of driver's license, steep fines, and even imprisonment.

If you meet the age requirements when traveling abroad, please enjoy the local drinks in moderation, have a DD, and be a gracious visitor in pubs, homes, and public areas. Cheers, salud, sláinte, skål, prost!



**wildfact**

**In Estonia, stores may sell alcohol only between 10am and 10pm.**



**Got a question about alcohol?**

Email it to [redcup@email.arizona.edu](mailto:redcup@email.arizona.edu)



[www.health.arizona.edu](http://www.health.arizona.edu)

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