

Clarissa's Guide To



Non Alcoholic Alcohol

Clarissa Kleveno 2026

INTRO

Refraining from alcohol as a lifestyle choice is a growing trend. In the past 5 years, the non-alcoholic drink market has more than doubled. I've written this guide for people who are interested in the world of non alcoholic alcohol but don't know where to start.

Where to Buy

You can find NA (non alcoholic) beverages in most places where you can buy alcohol. Your typical grocery will have a few options (usually NA beers), but I have found fancy grocers have a bigger range of options. Liquor stores like Total Wine and More and BevMo! have NA sections.

The Cost

Unfortunately, non-alcoholic alcohol options are often just as expensive as their alcoholic counterparts. For some types of drinks, this makes sense, since the creation process is exactly the same, and then they de-alcoholize it. For some types of drinks I'm convinced it's an unnecessary markup.

Alcohol Content

Some non-alcoholic drinks (mostly beers) do still contain a small amount of alcohol. The number is very low (usually under 2%) but something to note if you are completely trying to abstain.



★ CIDERS



Man, if I miss one thing, it's getting to try all the different flavors of cider. Some NA cider is de-alcoholized cider, some is just juice. I think both are good. My recommendations: **Excelsior Ground Control Cherry Cider** and **2 Towns Pacific Pineapple**. Both offer something a little beyond standard apple juice, which is my complaint with most NA cider.

BEERS



I've heard NA beers used to taste terrible, but these days they're pretty good! Most major brands have an NA version, including **Heineken**, **Guinness** and **Budweiser**. NA beers seem to be mostly of the IPA variety, which infuriates me as a fruity beer lover.

Golden Road Mango Cart was my favorite beer before I stopped drinking, so I was so pleased to learn there is a NA alcohol version. My other recommendations for fellow fruity beer lovers are **Partake Peach Goose** and **Bravas Raspberry Goose**.

SPIRITS



NA spirits fall into two categories: Exact replicas of hard alcohol, and just tasty. There is a NA version of most spirits out there including NA tequila, gin and bourbon. I am mostly drawn to the just tasty kind, like botanical spirits, like **Wilderton Bittersweet Aperitivo**.

For those looking for a more traditional experience, I'd recommend **Pathfinder**. It's incredibly popular, and offered at many restaurants. I've heard it compared to an NA gin.

MOCKTAILS ★



If they aren't using a NA spirit, there are a couple other things that people use to replace alcohol and add a "bite" to mocktails. Most commonly, I see vinegar, ginger, and spicy pepper extract. In my opinion, the best ones are ginger-based. Overall, mocktails are rarely worth it to me to order out because of the cost.

For canned mocktails I like **Soleil Seltzer** in the **Mint Moji**, **Ginger Mule** and **Lime Margarita** flavors. They are cheap and versatile: I enjoy them as-is or with a sweetener and mint leaf to make it fancy. They're great to bring to a gathering, where drinkers can add alcohol if they'd like.

If you want something fancier you can try For **Bitter For Worse** NA cocktails. My favorite flavor is their **Rose City Fizz**.

OTHER RECS ★

Here Today is a brewery located near the waterfront downtown. Look, I just said NA mocktails aren't worth it, but Here Today has an option I've never seen before: every cocktail lets you choose which spirit you want, including many NA options or you can remove the spirit entirely and the drink costs \$7 instead of \$14!! I've never seen mocktails that cheap anywhere else.

Cheeky and Dry is a non-alcoholic bottle shop in Phinny Ridge. They have tons of NA spirits and wines. They also have lots of resources for sober space and events on their website cheekyanddry.com

The NA Sommelier puts on classes, tastings, and events centered around alcohol-free beverages. Check out Juanita on instagram, or her website thenasommelier.com



★ CONCLUSION

Around 2021, I gave up alcohol. I simply realized I wasn't really enjoying it. I didn't really enjoy the feeling of being drunk and already rarely had more than 2 drinks. It would tend to upset my stomach severely the next day. One day I just stopped, and found I didn't even miss it, so I never looked back. That felt like the first major decision in my adult life that I made just for me. I just felt right, and I am proud of that decision to this day.

I hope you find whatever balance you are looking for, and enjoy some tasty NA drinks along the way!

