

A deep dive into CHINA's container glass market

Fueled by a rising demand for sustainable, high-quality packaging across beverages and cosmetics, CHINA's container glass market is on a sharp upward trajectory. In the following in-depth analysis, we explore key trends, growth drivers and current innovations that are shaping the future of glass packaging in the world's largest glass-producing nation.

The China container glass packaging market is poised for a significant rise, projected to grow from an estimated 10.53 million tonnes in 2025 to 12.89 million tonnes by 2030. This expansion, occurring at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.13 percent, reflects broader global trends toward sustainable, high-quality packaging - trends where glass remains a leading material.

Long prized for its strength, clarity, and non-reactive properties, glass continues to assert its value across multiple industries. Nowhere is this more evident than in packaging, where its durability and ability to preserve flavour make it indispensable, particularly in food and beverage storage. As consumers become more discerning and environmentally conscious, these attributes are bringing glass packaging into sharper focus. At



the heart of this shift lies glass' core advantage: sustainability. Glass is 100 percent recyclable and this feature is more relevant than ever in a world actively seeking alternatives to plastic. In China, an already well-established glass manufacturing infrastructure is helping to meet the growing demand for greener packaging solutions. The recyclability of glass not only curbs waste but also diminishes dependence on virgin raw materials - a dual benefit driving its adoption in the packaging ecosystem.

China's commanding presence in the global glass arena is underscored by its 2023 export value of nearly USD 26 billion, according to World's Top Exports (WTEx). As the world's top glass exporter, China's influence on global trends is profound. Its ability to produce glass containers at scale and with efficiency allows it to set benchmarks in quality, volume and innovation.

A CLEAR CHOICE: WHY BEVERAGE BRANDS STILL TRUST GLASS

One sector that continues to rely heavily on glass is alcoholic beverages. Glass packaging preserves



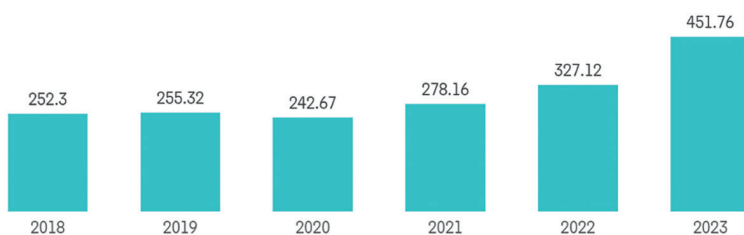
aroma, flavour and alcohol content due to its non-reactive nature. This is particularly critical in the beer segment, where exposure to light and air can spoil the product. Most beer bottles are crafted from dark-coloured glass to protect against UV-induced spoilage - a testament to the material's vital role in quality assurance. China's alcoholic beverage consumption underscores the relevance of such packaging. Banco do Nordeste projects that the

nation's annual consumption will reach around 51.6 billion litres in 2023. This immense volume necessitates robust and reliable packaging - an arena where glass remains the preferred material. Beer, specifically, represents a major growth vector. Its sensitivity to light and temperature fluctuations necessitates packaging that shields and preserves, making glass the go-to material. The dark tint of beer bottles serves a functional purpose: preventing photochemical reactions that can alter taste. This added layer of protection is critical during distribution and shelf storage, ensuring consumers receive products as the brewer intended.

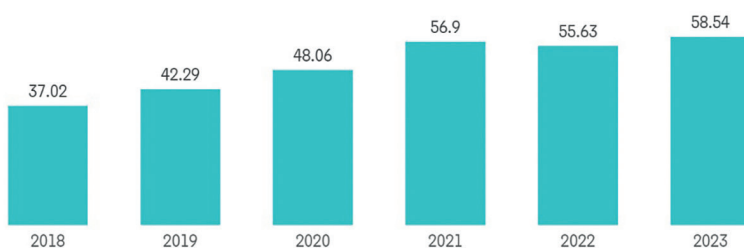
BOTTLED BRILLIANCE: INNOVATION AMID RISING COSTS

Yet, the container glass industry in China does not exist without its headwinds. The rising cost of soda ash -making up over half of the total raw material cost in glass production- poses a significant challenge. These fluctuations threaten margins and open the door for competing materials like PET and bioplastics. Still, innovation is underway. Glass manufacturers are improving production efficien-

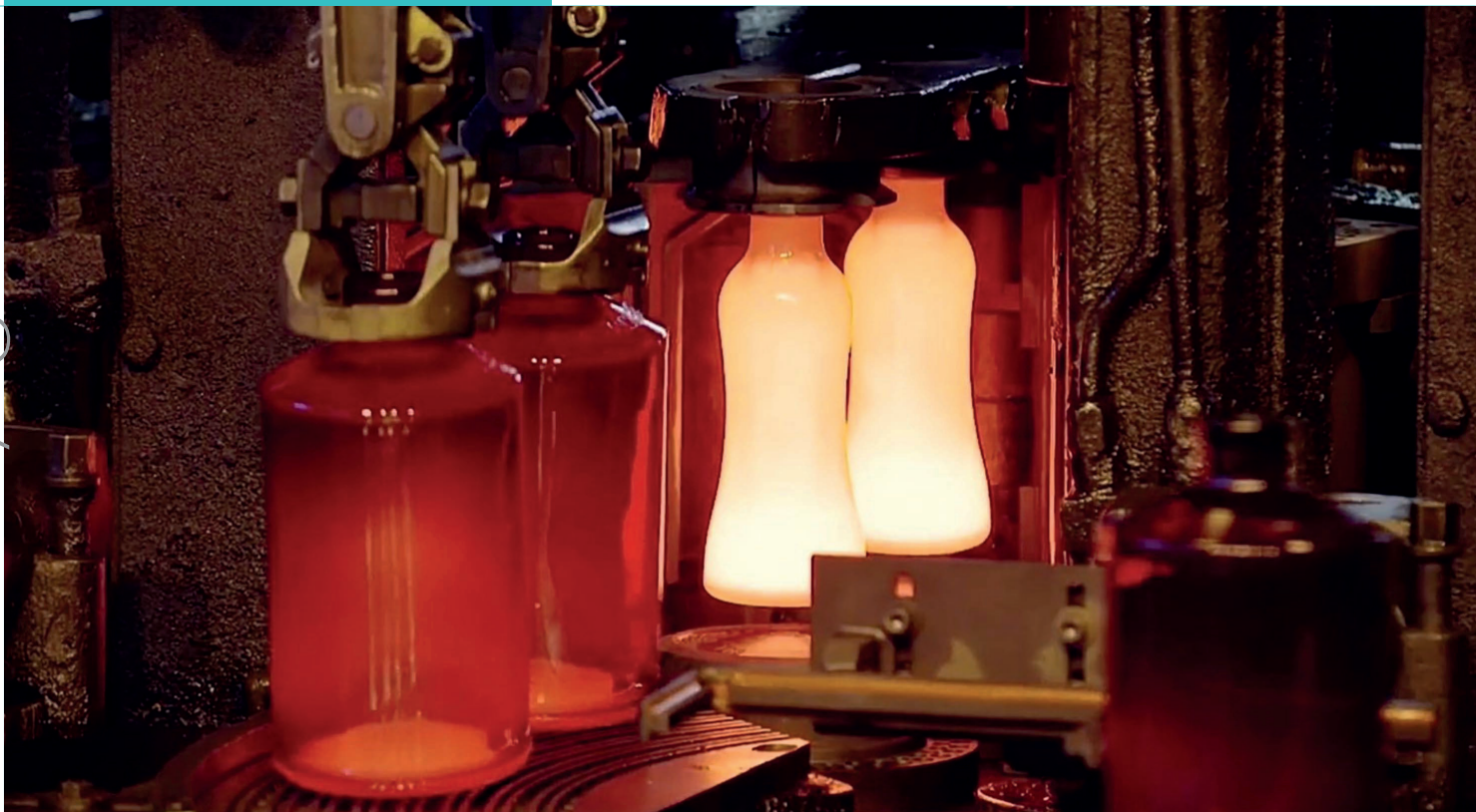
Export Value of Beer, In USD Million, China, 2018 - 2023



Retail Sales Value of Beauty and Cosmetic Products, In USD Billion, China, 2018 - 2023



INDUSTRY GROWTH



cies, experimenting with alternative formulations and investing in advanced recycling facilities to minimize dependency on virgin inputs. Despite these challenges, the trajectory remains upward. Chinese manufacturers are turning to technologies that produce lighter and stronger glass containers - solutions that preserve glass's core benefits while addressing transportation and logistical concerns. The emphasis on premium packaging is also growing, particularly in high-end cosmetics and spirits, where aesthetics and quality intersect.

A SPOTLIGHT ON MARKET DYNAMICS

Alcohol remains a cornerstone of the container glass market in China. Glass's resistance to air, temperature shifts and light makes it ideal for packaging alcoholic beverages, which can be particularly sensitive to environmental factors. These protective traits help maintain the integrity and taste of the product over time - an essential aspect for manufacturers and consumers alike. In an era where sus-

tainability is more than a buzzword, glass offers a compelling narrative. Fully recyclable and endlessly reusable without degradation in quality, glass meets the rising expectations of both environmentally conscious consumers and global regulators. As urban centers across China experience rising disposable incomes and shifting lifestyles, demand for both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages in glass is surging. Traditional favorites like rice wine, grape wine, beer, whiskey and baijiu all have deep roots in Chinese culture. Baijiu, in particular, enjoys widespread popularity. According to HKEXnews, the Nongxiang flavour category alone generated approximately CNY 286 billion (USD 40.42 billion) in 2021

- accounting for more than half of total baijiu revenues. Projections indicate this figure will grow to CNY 312.9 billion (USD 44.22 billion) by 2026, underlining continued consumer preference. However, the rise of aluminum cans has created competition. Lightweight, efficient and cost-effective, cans have gained favour, especially in mass-market segments. For over a decade, aluminum has dominated the beverage can market in China. Yet, glass still holds ground in premium and craft segments, where it is associated with superior taste preservation and an upscale consumer experience. In terms of exports, the numbers tell a compelling story. UN Comtrade reports that Chinese beer exports





reached USD 451.76M in 2023, a considerable leap from USD 327.12M the year before. As Chinese beer brands expand globally, the need for quality packaging solutions grows alongside, offering fresh opportunities for the domestic container glass industry. To meet this rising demand, many container glass companies are scaling operations—investing in new production lines, adopting cutting-edge technologies and exploring innovative design approaches that cater to both domestic consumers and international markets with evolving regulatory and aesthetic demands.

BEYOND THE BOTTLE: COSMETIC GLASS ON THE RISE

Another driver of growth for the container glass market is the booming cosmetics industry. With rising consumer incomes and increasing emphasis on appearance and personal care, cosmetic brands are broadening their product lines and leaning into premium packaging. Glass is an obvious choice - offering customization, elegance and functionality that plastic alternatives often lack. The National Bureau of Statistics of China reported that in 2022, per capita annual spending on cosmetics stood at approximately CNY 407 (USD 57.5). That number is expected to rise to CNY 600 (USD 84.8) by 2025 - outpacing even the growth of disposable income. This increase signals not just a cosmetic boom, but a shift toward quality and luxu-

ry - territory where glass packaging thrives. As the e-commerce market expands, so too does demand for secure, visually appealing and durable packaging - qualities that glass uniquely provides. The ability to maintain product integrity while enhancing shelf appeal makes it the packaging of choice for online sales channels. Moreover, cosmetic exports continue to rise, fueling further demand for upscale packaging formats. From perfumes and serums to luxury creams and makeup items, glass provides both aesthetic refinement and protection against contamination. Brands

are increasingly opting for glass containers to emphasize exclusivity and elevate product presentation. This pivot is also in step with global sustainability goals, as many consumers seek out brands that prioritize environmentally responsible packaging.

PREMIUMIZATION AND SUSTAINABILITY AS DEMAND DRIVERS

Retail sales figures reflect this momentum. The National Bureau of Statistics of China noted that cosmetics sales reached USD 58.54 billion in 2023, up from USD 55.63 billion in 2022. As more consumers gravitate toward high-end offerings, demand for premium glass containers is expected to accelerate. Ultimately, this trend towards premiumization is reshaping expectations across industries - from beverages to beauty. Container glass manufacturers in China are responding with bold innovation, fresh investment and a renewed focus on design, sustainability and performance. ■

