

UK's favourite Christmas spirit revealed with online searches

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Flaming pudding. Credit: Ruth Hartnup

Brandy is the UK's favourite Christmas spirit, according to research into

our festive online searches from the University of Warwick.

Nathan Cunningham from Warwick's Department of Statistics has discovered that during the week of Christmas, UK online searches for brandy have been far higher than for any other alcoholic drink during the last five years.

This is probably due to it being a staple of festive treats, as rich fruit cake, Christmas puddings and mince pies often contain brandy—and are served with brandy butter.

Using Google Trends data from 2012-2016, Cunningham analysed the volume of online searches for our most popular festive spirits—brandy, gin, rum, vodka, and whiskey – looking for a spike at Christmas.

He found that we [search](#) for brandy far more than any other [spirit](#) at Christmas. Rum and vodka came second and third, respectively.

Nathan Cunningham commented:

"In each of the last five years, the [search volume](#) for some of the most popular alcoholic spirits has peaked dramatically around the week of Christmas.

"I found it interesting that there's been such a consistent surge in searches for spirits around the festive period, and wanted to find out which one, more so than any other, we associate with Christmas above and beyond any other time of the year.

"Not being a fan of mince pies or Christmas pudding myself, I feel I'm missing out on the Christmas spirit now! Christmas dessert in my house has always been my mum's lemon cheesecake."

To find out the most searched for spirit over the Christmas period, he didn't want to simply pick the drink with the greatest search volume at Christmas, as that would likely only reveal which one is the most popular in general.

Therefore, Cunningham looked at the standardised search volume for each tittle—subtracting their respective means (the average search volume of each drink) and dividing this by their respective standard deviations (how each search volume varies from the average).

Brandy was the spirit whose Christmas search volume was the most standard deviations above their mean value.

More information: www.nathancunn.com/2017-12-07-christmas-spirit/

Provided by University of Warwick

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