Polling – Lattes and Chardonnays

Summary

In Australian political discussion, if someone calls you a "chardonnay drinker", "latte sipper", or alleges that you enjoying soy milk or almond milk or any milk produced other than by bovine lactation, they are saying something broader about who you are.

Such claims are used to imply that you support progressive policies, live in the inner city, and therefore are to be disparaged as being not a 'real Australian'. Such drinks are evidently consumed primarily by people of certain political persuasions in certain parts of the country.

While it is unclear in which direction the causation is supposed to go, and quite why drinks should be so important, the political trope is well entrenched. But is it accurate?

The Australia Institute surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,459 Australians in November 2018, about the hot drinks and alcoholic drinks they consume most often.

Respondents were given lists of each and asked which they drink 'sometimes – at least once or twice a year', and of these, which they drink 'often – a few times a month'.

The results show that lattes, non-dairy milk and chardonnay are enjoyed by people of all political persuasions in all parts of the country. At the same time, people in all voting groups and locations were far more likely to drink other kinds of drinks.

Those who drink lattes, non-dairy milk or chardonnays live overwhelmingly outside of the inner city, either in outer parts of capital cities or outside capital cities.

Four in five regular chardonnay drinkers are not in the inner city. It's about the same for all other alcoholic drinks.

Inner city dwellers (10km from CBDs) are just about as likely as other groups to be a regular chardonnay drinker. They are a little more likely to drink all alcoholic options, but like people in other area, chardonnay is not a frequent choice.

Most regular chardonnay drinkers are voters for major parties. This is true of regular drinkers of any alcoholic drink.

LNP voters were most likely to drink chardonnay at least once or twice a year. Twice as many regular chardonnay drinkers vote for the LNP as vote for the Greens.

LNP voters were most likely regular drinkers of red wine and full strength beer; One Nation voters were most likely regular spirits drinkers; Labor and Other voters were more likely to regularly drink light beer. But the differences were small; those drinking any drink looked much like those drinking any other drink.

The story is similar for hot drinks. The differences between groups were small.

Most regularly consumed were black tea, cappuccinos and flat whites. Less than one in ten respondents regularly consume hot drinks with non-diary milk and less than one in third regularly consume soy lattes.

Note that even these low numbers represent around a million regular non-dairy drinkers and around half a million regular soy latte drinkers.

Lattes themselves were a popular choice for people from all areas, just behind flat whites. Inner city dwellers were a little more likely to drink all hot drinks, in particular espressos and long blacks.

For each drink, between 70% and 80% of regular drinkers live outside of the inner cities, and 30% to 40% live outside the capitals.

Despite some small differences, no voting group had a monopoly on any drink. Most regular drinkers of any drink vote for the major parties.

Voters of all persuasions are more likely to be drinking black tea, hot chocolates, flat whites or indeed any other hot drink, than soy lattes.

Majors party voters were the most likely to be regular drinkers of cappuccinos or flat whites.

Greens drinkers were about as likely as other voters to be regular non-dairy drinkers. They were a little more likely to drink soy lattes, but much more likely to drink herbal tea.

Most who often drink lattes, chai lattes, soy lattes or any non-diary milk are not Greens voters. Indeed, regular drinkers of lattes, chai lattes and non-dairy hot drinks, were twice as likely to be LNP voters as Greens voters. Amongst the small numbers who regularly drink soy lattes, about as many were LNP voters as Greens voters.

The results overall suggest the political trope seeks to divide and oppose groups that in reality are very much like each other.

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Alcoholic drinks

Given a list of alcoholic drinks, respondents were asked which they drink 'sometimes' – once or twice a year – and then of those, which they drink 'often' – a few times a month.

15% said they don't drink alcohol at all. Men were more likely to select more drinks than women. This aligns well with ABS data.[1]

Respondents selected 2.9 on average for 'sometimes' and 1.7 on average for 'often'. Figure 1 shows results by drink.

Figure 1: Which alcoholic drinks do you drink - 'sometimes' or 'often'?
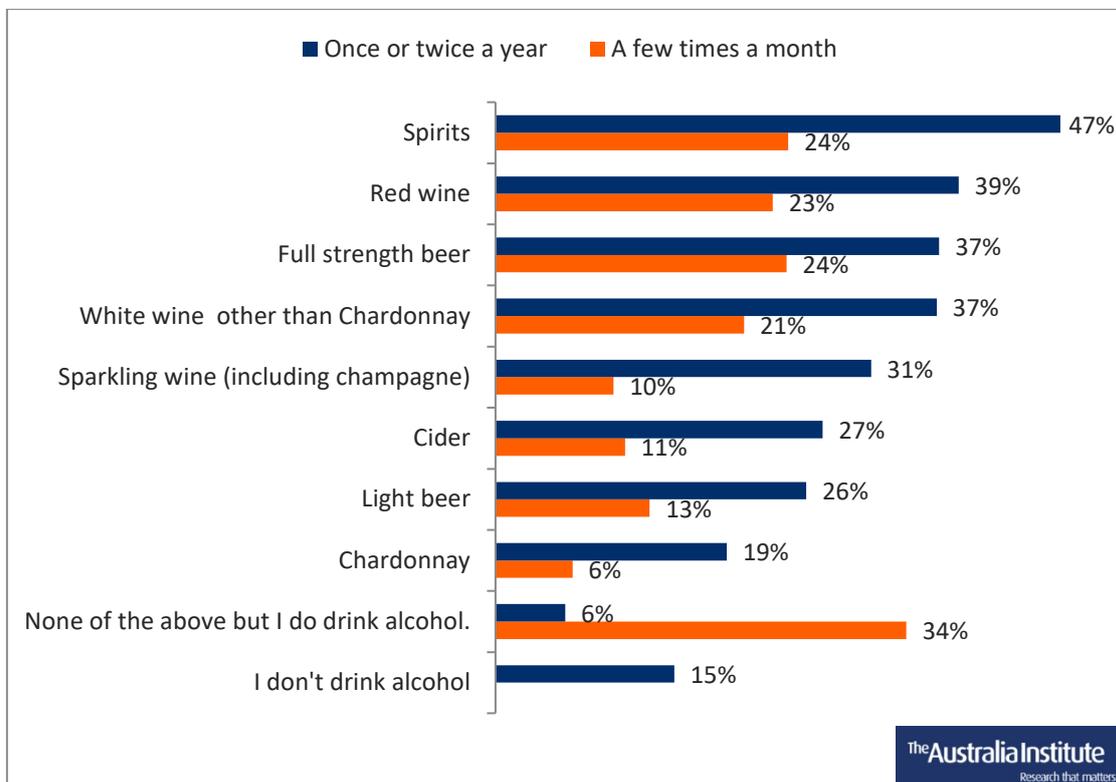
6% said they drink none presented. 34% said they don't drink any of these 'often'.

Chardonnay was chosen by fewer people than other drinks. 19% said they drink it sometimes and 6% said they drink it often.

37% said they sometimes drink white wine other than chardonnay, while 21% said they drink it often.

Nearly one in two said they drink spirits sometimes; one in four drink them often. Nearly two in five sometimes drink red wine or full strength beer. Nearly one in four drink them often.

By location

Do 'chardonnay drinkers' live in the inner city? Are inner city drinkers all that different?

To find out respondents were split into three groups: inner capital city, outer capital city, and outside capital city.[2]

Inner city dwellers were a little more likely than others to drink most drinks (Figure 2). So while they were a little more likely to drink chardonnay, this was not a defining feature.

Inner city dwellers were about as likely as other groups to drink chardonnay often (Figure 3). They were more likely to drink all other drinks often, and more likely than people in other areas to be regular drinkers of red wine or white wine.

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[2] Respondents were split into groups by ABS classifications for Greater Capital Area and everywhere else. Those in the Capital areas were further divided into those in the 'inner city' and those outside. The inner city is here postcodes within 10km of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide or Canberra.

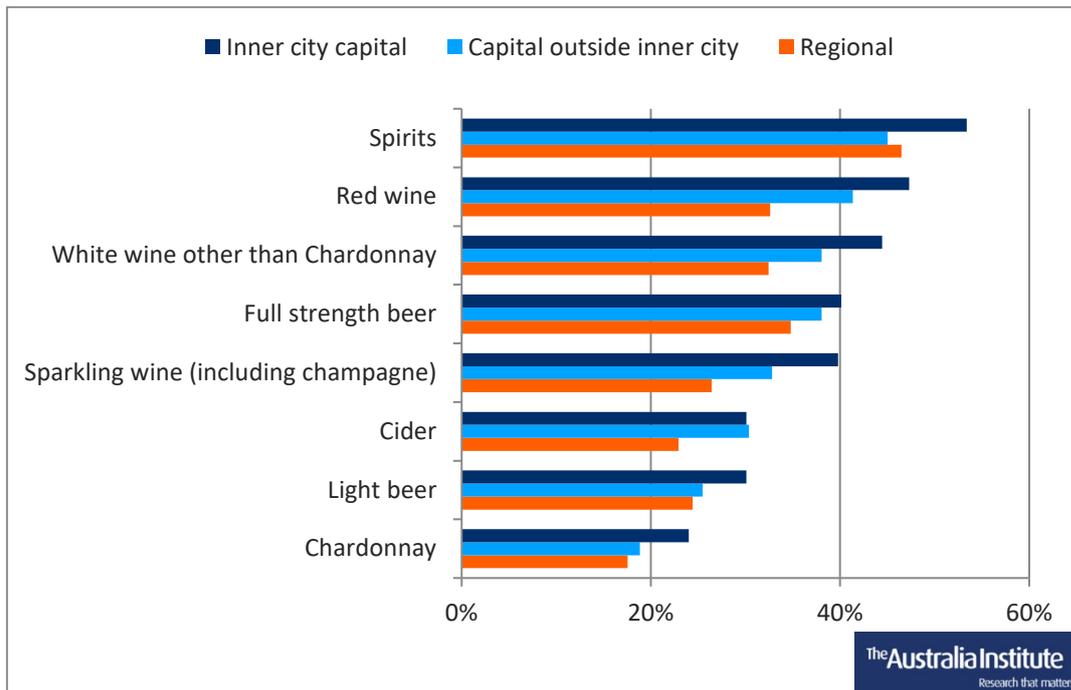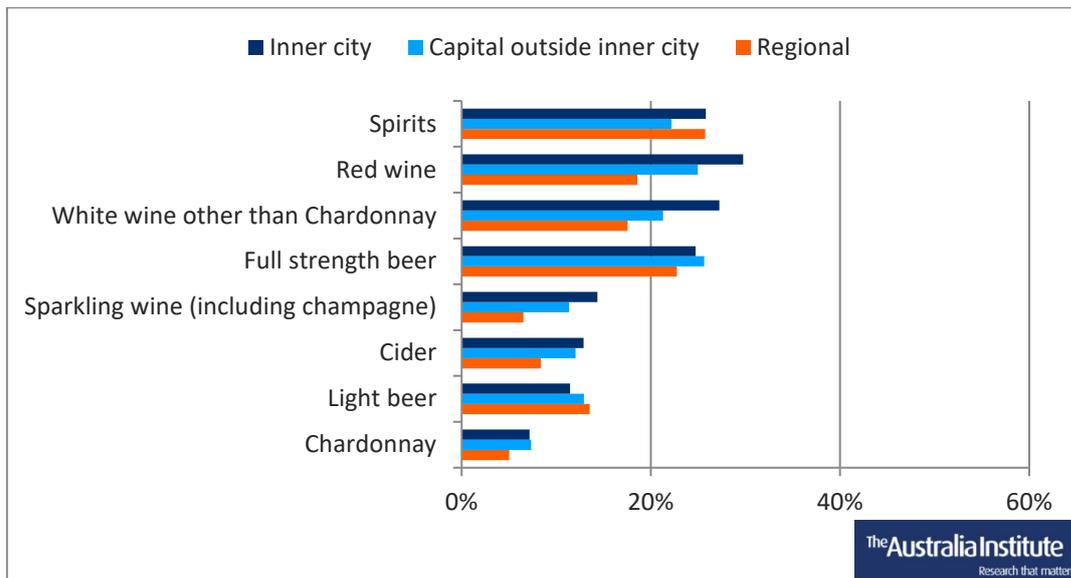**Figure 2: Which alcoholic drinks do you drink sometimes? - by location**

Legend: ■ Inner city capital ■ Capital outside inner city ■ Regional

Categories (top to bottom): Spirits, Red wine, White wine other than Chardonnay, Full strength beer, Sparkling wine (including champagne), Cider, Light beer, Chardonnay

X-axis: 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%

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Figure 3: Which alcoholic drinks do you drink often? - by location

Legend: ■ Inner city ■ Capital outside inner city ■ Regional

Categories (top to bottom): Spirits, Red wine, White wine other than Chardonnay, Full strength beer, Sparkling wine (including champagne), Cider, Light beer, Chardonnay

X-axis: 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%

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The differences between people from different areas were so small that they made little difference to the overall geographic spread of drinkers of each drink.

Regular chardonnay drinkers live across the country, just like those who drink any kind of alcoholic drink.

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Most chardonnay drinkers do not live in the inner city. In fact four in five regular chardonnay drinkers lived either in the outer areas of capital cities or outside of capital cities altogether.

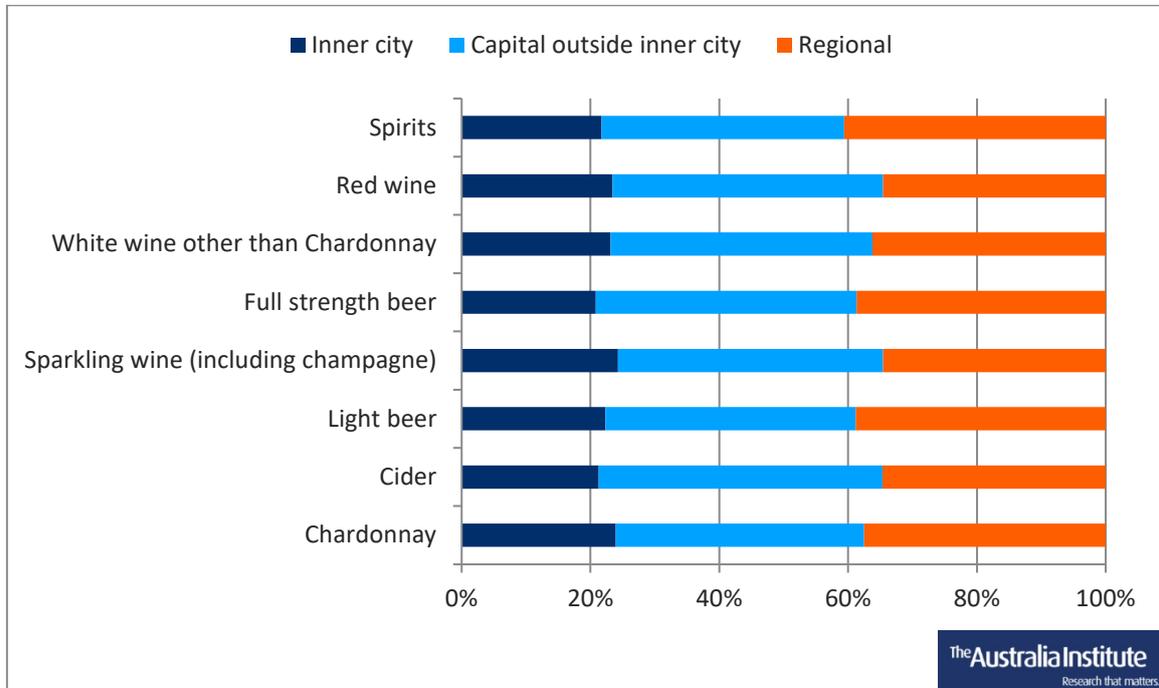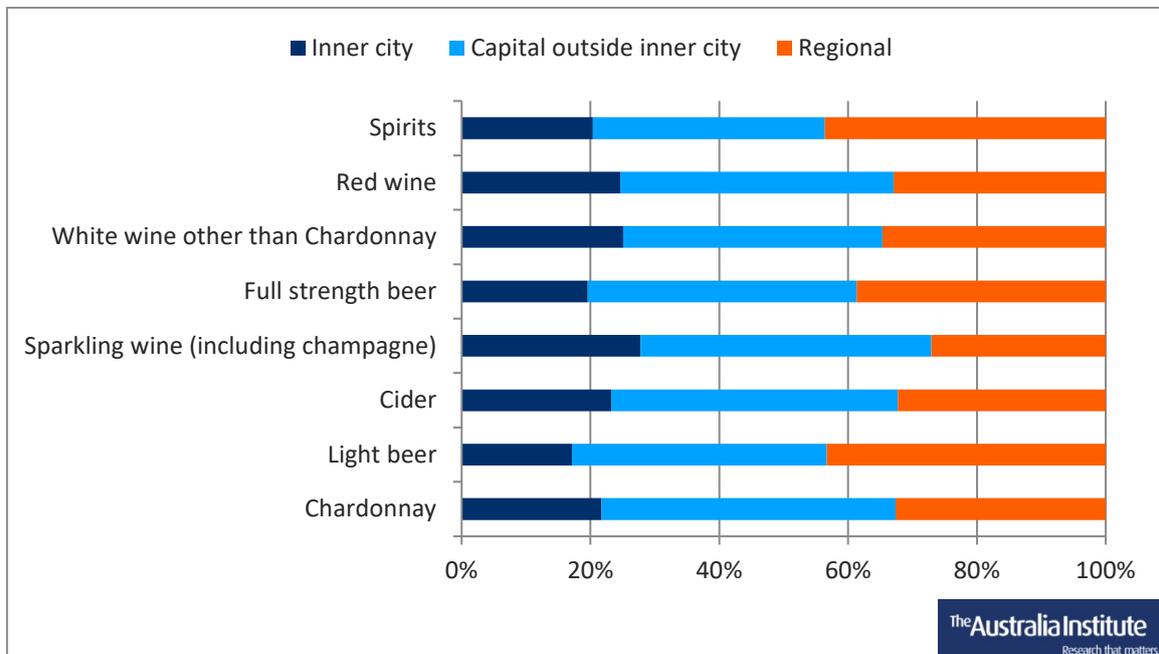**Figure 4: Location of those who drink each drink sometimes**

**Figure 5: Location of those who drink each drink often**

By voting intention

Talk of 'chardonnay drinkers' implies a particular political persuasion. Crudely, it is typically linked to people who would be likely to vote Green.

But there were only modest differences between the drinking preferences of voters for different parties (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Which alcoholic drinks do you drink sometimes? - by voting intention
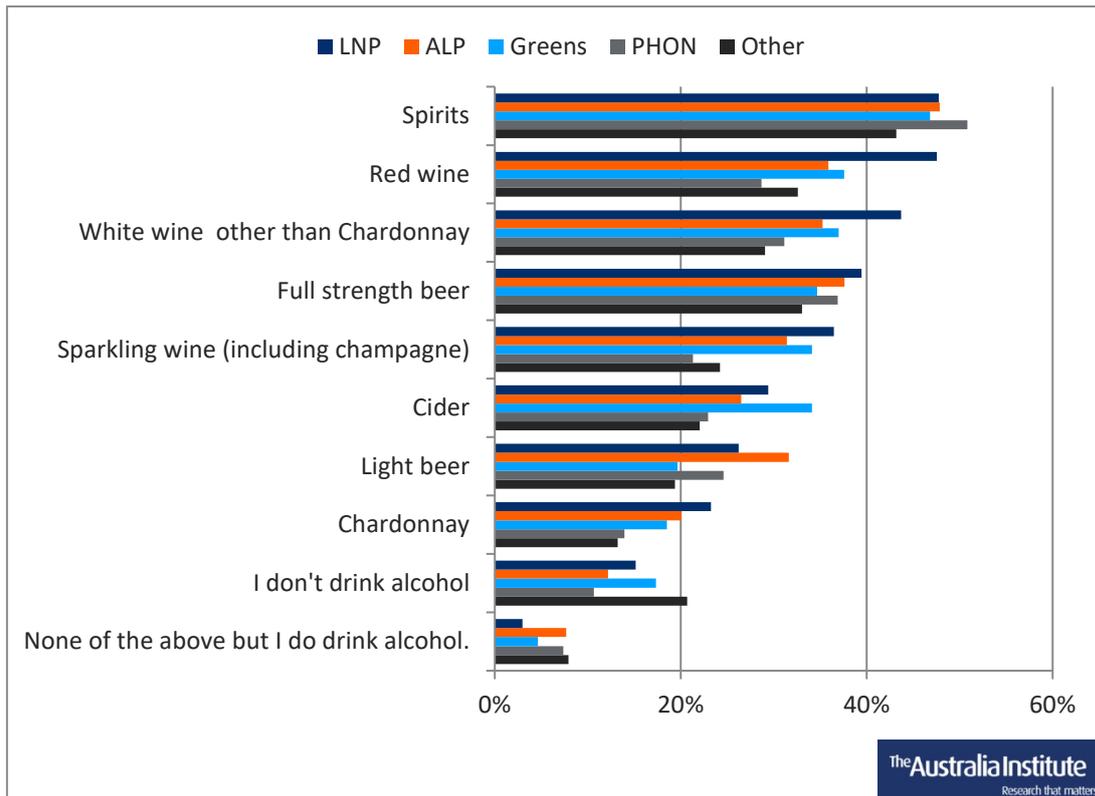
LNP voters were most likely to sometimes drink chardonnay.

In general LNP voters were most likely to sometimes drink wine of all kinds.

ALP voters were most likely to sometimes drink light beer; Greens voters were most likely to sometimes drink cider; One Nation voters were most likely to sometimes drink spirits; Other voters were mostly likely not to drink alcohol.

But these differences were modest and only became a little more pronounced when looking at regular drinking preferences (Figure 7).

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Figure 7: Which alcoholic drinks do you drink often? - by voting intention
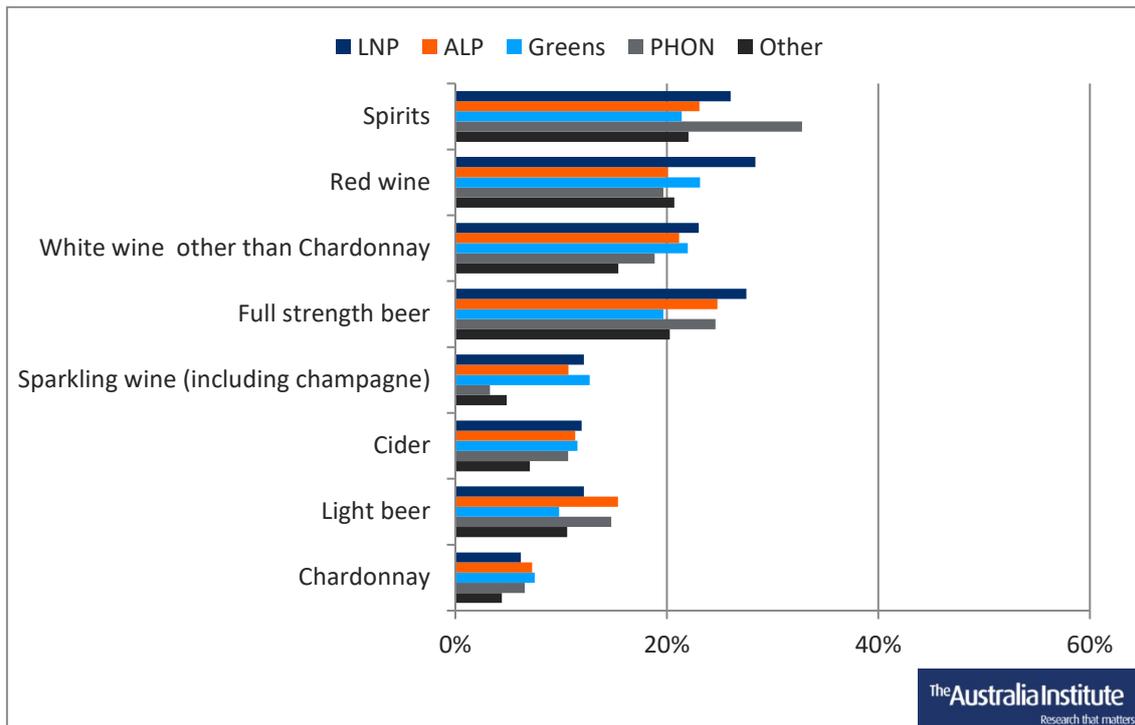
LNP, ALP, Greens and Other voters were just about as likely as each other to regularly drink chardonnay, all within the margin of error.

LNP voters were much more likely to be regular drinkers of red wine, and a little more likely to often drink full strength beer, followed by ALP and Other voters.

While Greens voters were more likely to drink cider sometimes, they were no more likely to drink it often.

One Nation voters were much more likely to drink spirits often than other voters.

Again these differences in the end make little difference to the make-up of those drinking each drink.

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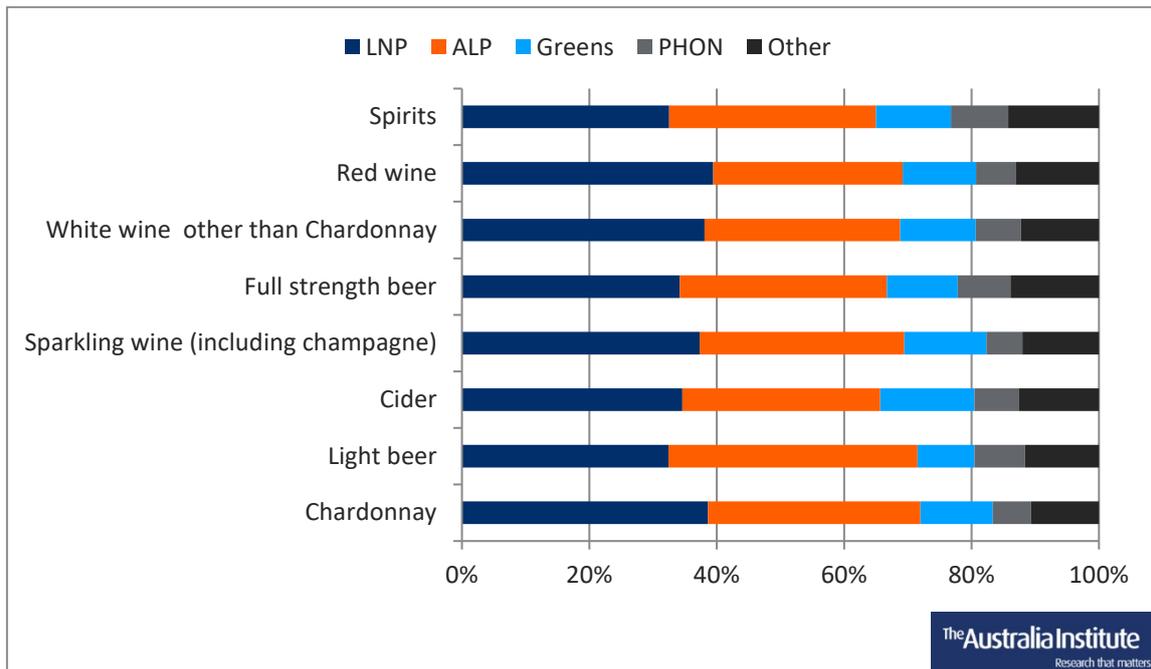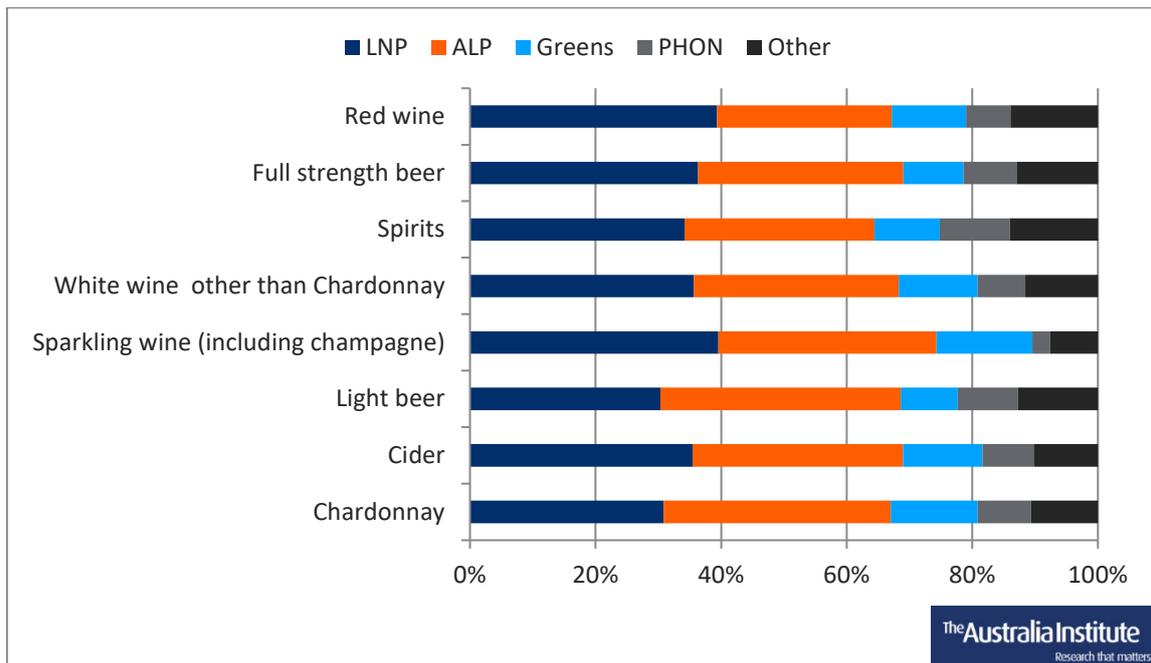**Figure 8: Voting intention of those drinking each alcoholic drink sometimes**

Figure 9: Voting intention of those drinking each alcoholic drink often

Those drinking each drink have similar voting patterns to those drinking any other drink. Most regular chardonnay drinkers are voters for major parties.

Twice as many regular chardonnay drinkers vote for the LNP as vote for the Greens.

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Hot drinks

Respondents were also asked about the hot drinks they consume sometimes, and of those, which they drink often.

Figure 10: How often do you 'sometimes' or 'often' drink the following hot drinks?
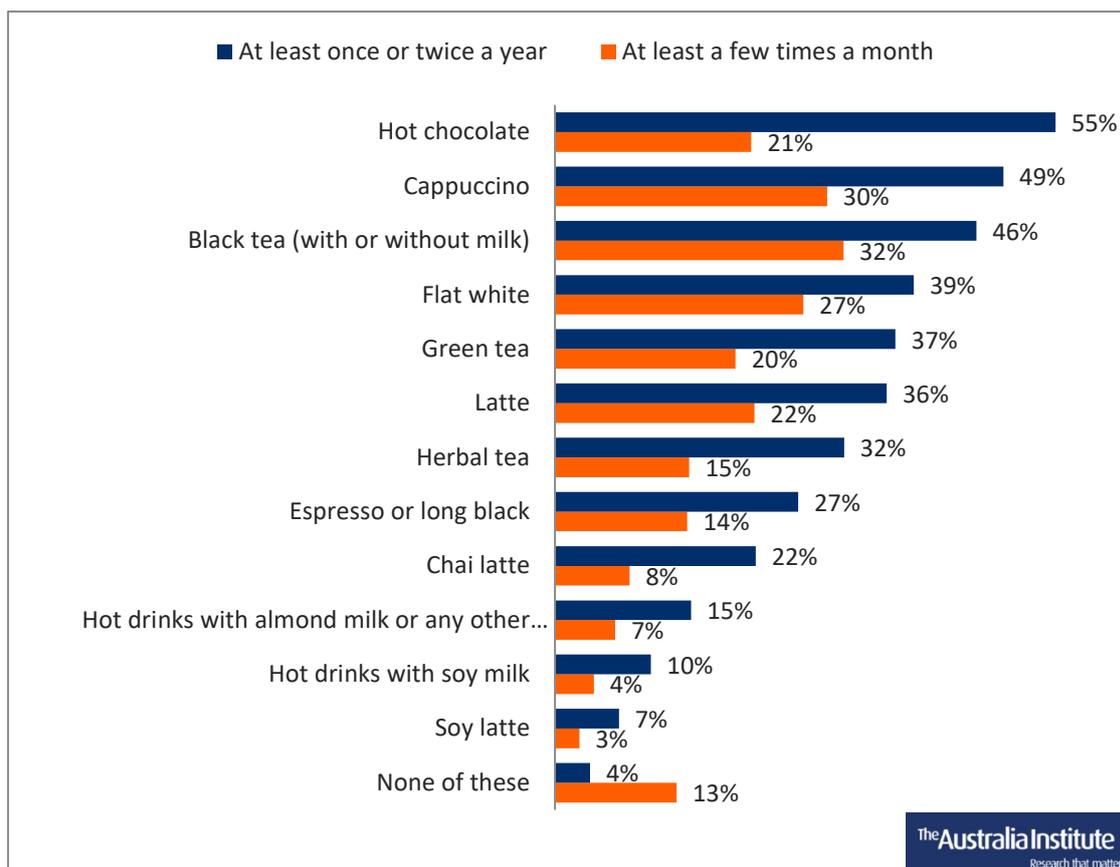
Nearly everyone drinks at least one of these drinks sometimes (96%) and very few (13%) they consumed none of these often.

Lattes were in the middle of the pack. Latte drinkers were about as numerous as drinkers of flate whites and green teas, with over a third drinking them sometimes and one in five drinking them often.

There were as many regular latte drinkers as regular drinkers of hot chocolate or green tea. More people drink lattes more often than herbal tea or espresso.

At the top, most respondents drink hot chocolates sometimes, although only one in five drink them often. The most regularly consumed hot drinks were cappuccinos and black tea.

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Lower numbers drink specific kinds of lattes or drinks without dairy milk.

- 22% sometimes drink chai lattes, including 8% who drink them sometimes.
- 15% sometimes drink almond milk or any other non-dairy milk in their hot drinks, including 7% who drink them often.
- Specifically, 10% drink hot drinks with soy milk at least sometimes, and 4% do so often,
- 7% sometimes drink soy lattes, including 3% who drink them often.

While lower than for other drinks, these numbers nonetheless imply that hundreds of thousands of Australians drink these hot drinks. Based on the adult population of around 19 million, 5% is just under a million people.[3]

From this we can infer

- around 3 million at least sometimes drink hot drinks with non-diary milk and more than 1 million drink non-diary milk hot drinks often;
- more than one million sometimes drink soy lattes and around half a million drink soy lattes often.

But who is drinking these lattes of various kinds?

By location

Contrary to the political trope, there was at only modest geographical variation for lattes and non-dairy milk, as for most of the dirnks.

People in the inner cities were generally a little more likely to drink everything. The clear stand out was black coffee and herbal tea. Inner city groups were also a little more likely to sometimes drink lattes or non-diary milks of various kinds.

Looking to regular drinkers, inner city dwellers are much more likely to be regular black coffee drinkers. They were only a little more likely to drink lattes, just as likely as anyone else to drink non-dairy milk, and only a little more likely to drink soy milk.

People in the outer parts of capital cities were a little more likely to be regular chai latte and hot chocolate drinkers.

Again the variations were so modest the geographical spread of regular drinkers was little different for each drink.

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[3] http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3101.0Jun%202018?OpenDocument

Figure 11: Which hot drinks do you drink sometimes? - by location
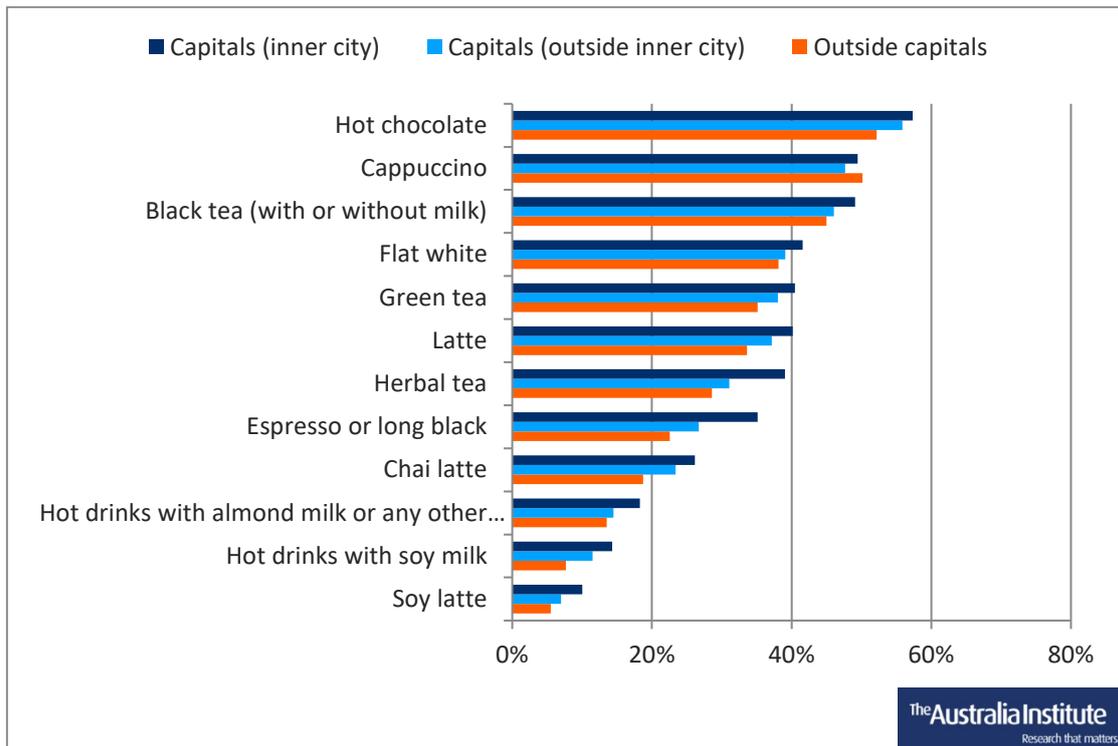
Figure 12: Which hot drinks do you drink often? (by location)

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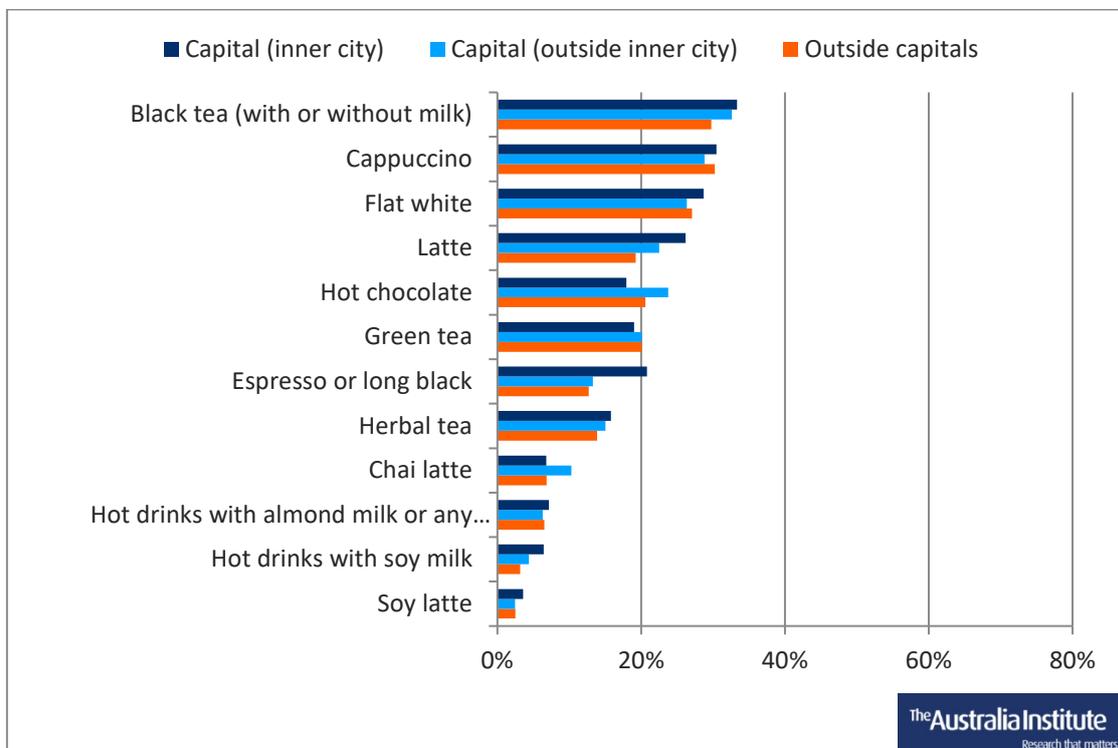
By voting intention

The common political trope implies lattes and non-dairy milk are mostly being consumed by Australians of a particular persuasion. The survey data show that is not correct.

Voters for some parties are more likely to drink certain drinks. Major party voters are most likely to drink cappuccinos. All voting groups were about

Greens voters were a much more likely to sometimes drink herbal tea in particular, or chai lattes. The defining drink for Greens voters was herbal tea, with one in three a regular drinker, double other voting groups.

Greens voters were also more likely to drink non-dairy drinks. However, like all other groups, few did so often. Only one in ten Greens voters drink non-dairy drinks often.

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Figure 13: Which hot drinks do you drink sometimes? - by voting intention
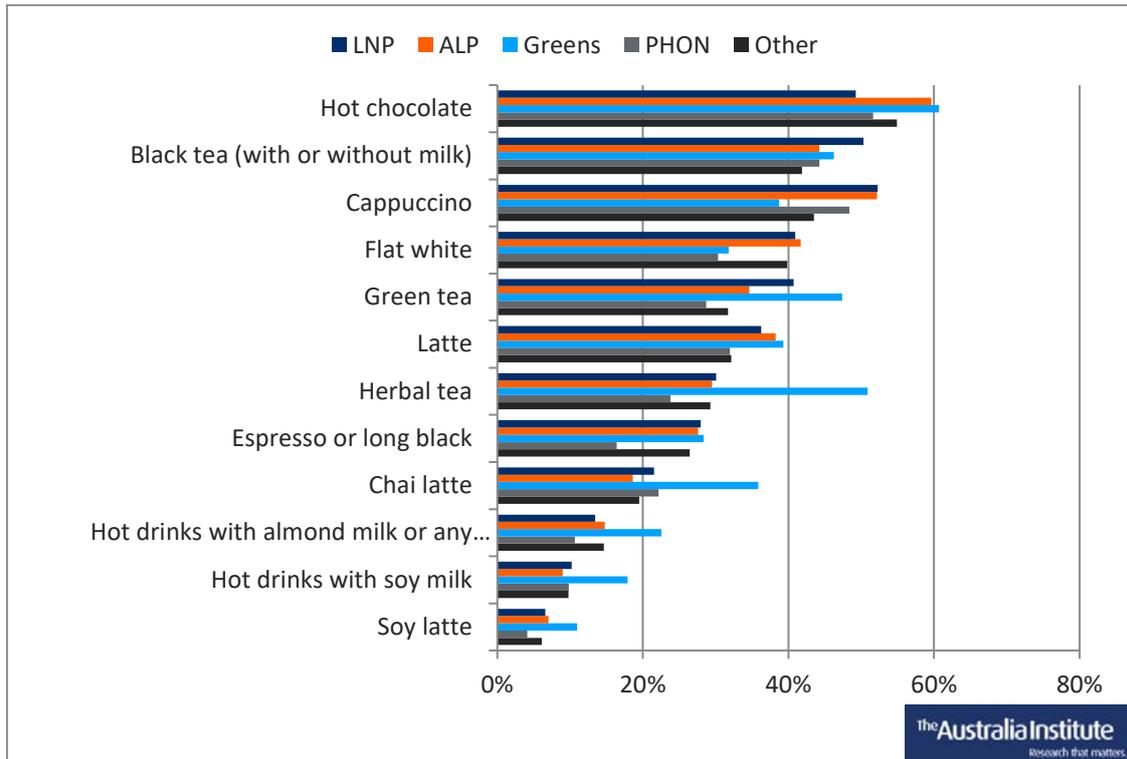
Figure 14: Which hot drinks do you drink often? - by voting intention

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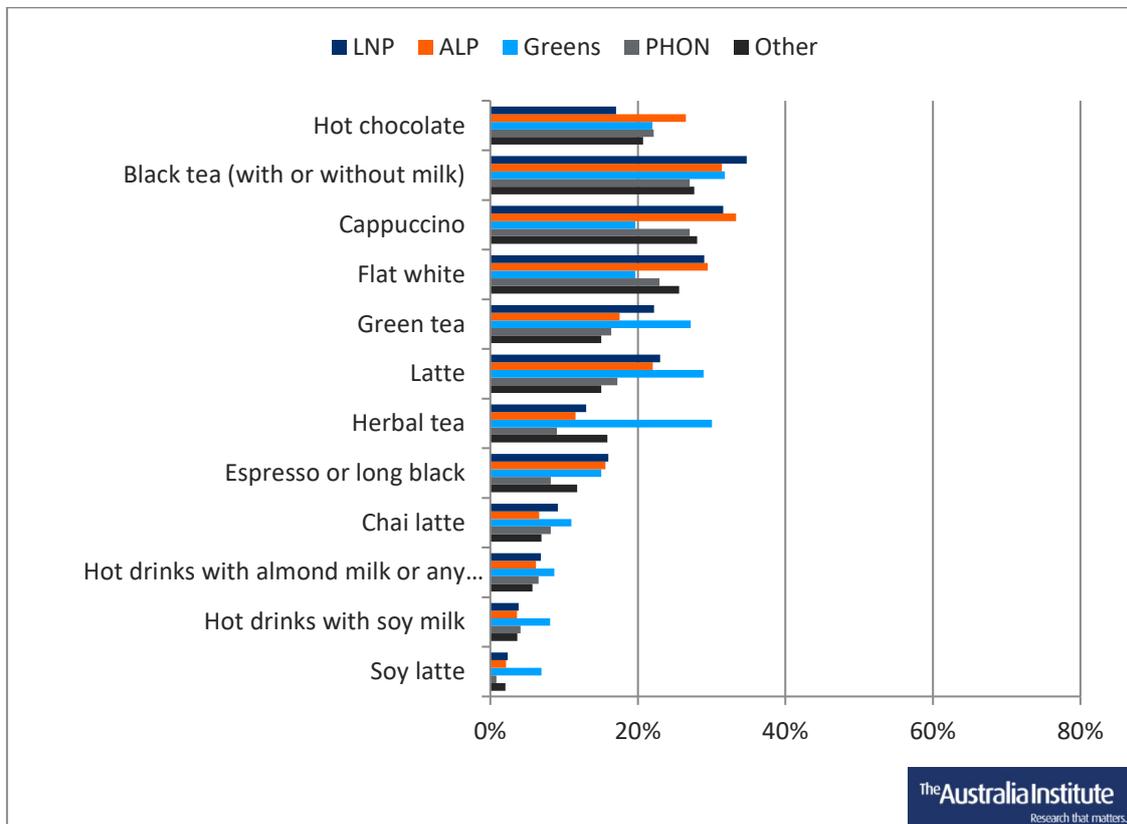
Again we see these differences between voting groups make little difference to the voting make-up of those drinking each hot drink.

Figure 15: Voting intention of people drinking hot drinks sometimes
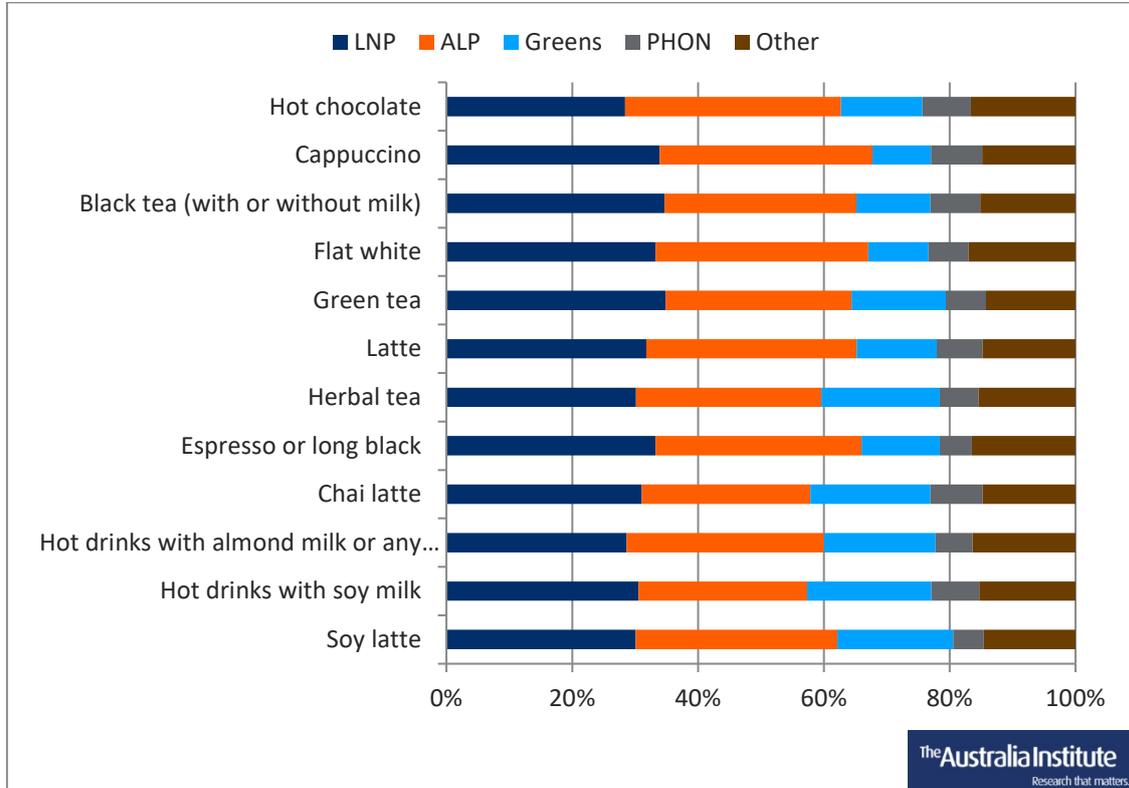
Most people who sometimes drink any hot drink intend to vote for major parties. This includes every kind of latte and every kind of milk.

LNP voters make up around a third for every drink. LNP, One Nation and Other voters together make up the majority of those consuming each hot drink at least once or twice a year.

In each case, Greens voters make up less than one fifth.

Somewhat more variation emerges looking at those drinking hot drinks often.

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Figure 16: Voting intention of people drinking hot drinks
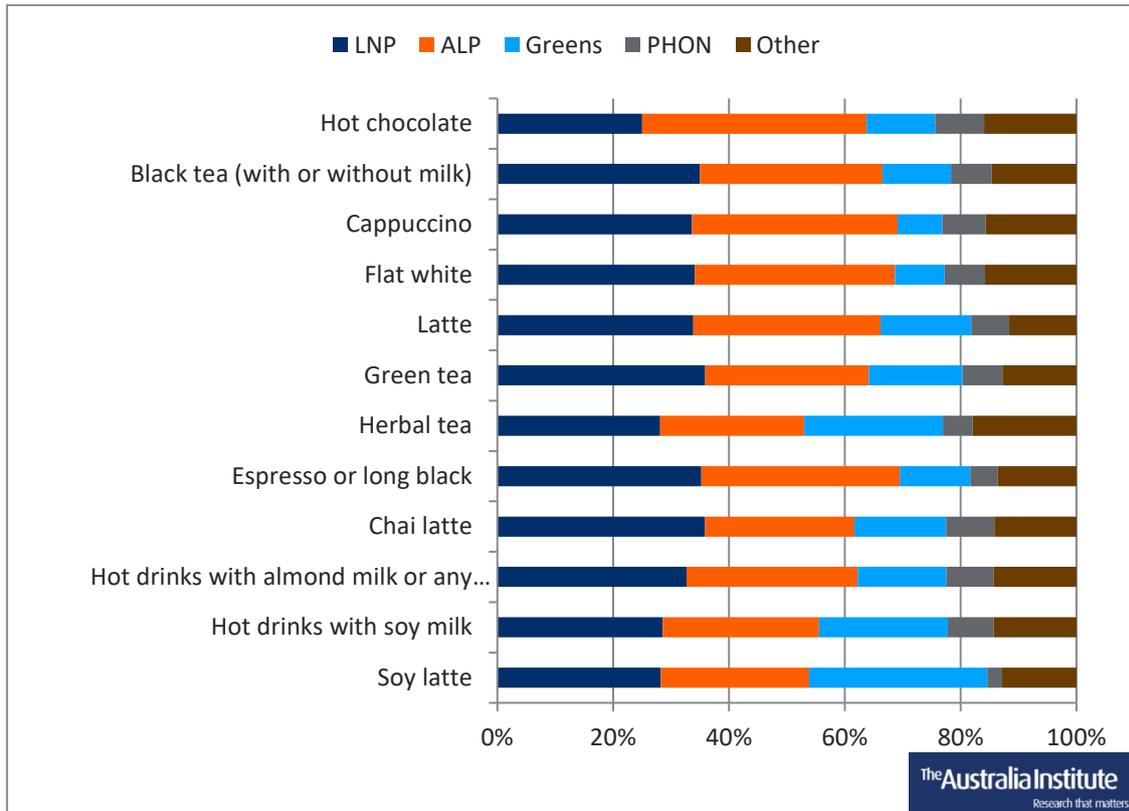
Most regular drinkers of every drink were major party voters.

Regular drinkers of lattes, chai lattes and non-dairy hot drinks were twice as likely to be LNP voters as Greens voters.

From the small share of respondents who regularly drink soy lattes, about as many were Greens voters as were LNP voters.

No kind of voter has a monopoly on any hot drink, including any kind of non-dairy milk or latte. Voters are all persuasions are more likely to be drinking black tea, hot chocolates, flat whites or indeed anything other than soy lattes. At the same time, those drinking soy lattes, or other lattes or non-dairy hot drinks, come from diverse voting and geographical groups.

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Method

The Australia Institute conducted a national survey of 1,459 people 26 October and 6 November 2018, online through Research Now, with nationally representative samples by gender, age and state and territory.

Results are shown only for larger states.

Voting crosstabs show voting intentions for the lower house. Those who were undecided were asked which way they were leaning; these leanings are included in voting intention crosstabs, but results are also shown separately for undecideds. "LNP" includes separate responses for Liberal and National. "Other" includes Centre Alliance, United Australia Party and Independent/Other.

Detailed results

Which of the following hot drinks do you drink sometimes – at least once or twice a year?
(options presented in randomised order)

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	SA
Hot chocolate	55%	49%	60%	55%	53%	55%	53%
Cappuccino	49%	48%	50%	48%	51%	49%	46%
Black tea (with or without milk)	46%	42%	50%	47%	46%	50%	35%
Flat white	39%	40%	38%	36%	38%	38%	41%
Green tea	37%	32%	42%	39%	40%	38%	30%
Latte	36%	33%	39%	32%	35%	44%	33%
Herbal tea	32%	22%	41%	34%	31%	33%	23%
Espresso or long black	27%	33%	21%	25%	28%	24%	32%
Chai latte	22%	16%	28%	21%	22%	22%	20%
Hot drinks with almond milk or any other non-diary milk.	15%	12%	17%	16%	13%	18%	13%
Hot drinks with soy milk	10%	10%	11%	12%	8%	13%	7%
Soy latte	7%	6%	8%	7%	5%	10%	6%
None of these	4%	6%	2%	3%	5%	4%	4%
Average selected	3.79	3.49	4.07	3.76	3.75	3.98	3.41

	LNP	ALP	Greens	PHON	Other	Undec
Hot chocolate	49%	60%	61%	52%	57%	54%
Cappuccino	52%	52%	39%	48%	45%	44%
Black tea (with or without milk)	50%	44%	46%	44%	47%	40%
Flat white	41%	42%	32%	30%	39%	35%
Green tea	41%	35%	47%	29%	34%	34%
Latte	36%	38%	39%	32%	35%	34%
Herbal tea	30%	29%	51%	24%	31%	29%
Espresso or long black	28%	28%	28%	16%	30%	21%
Chai latte	22%	19%	36%	22%	19%	24%
Hot drinks with almond milk or any other non-diary milk.	13%	15%	23%	11%	18%	11%
Hot drinks with soy milk	10%	9%	18%	10%	11%	9%
Soy latte	7%	7%	11%	4%	5%	5%
None of these	4%	3%	3%	0%	3%	8%
Average selected	3.84	3.80	4.34	3.22	3.73	3.49

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	Inner city capitals	Rest of capital	**Outside capitals**
Hot chocolate	57%	56%	52%
Cappuccino	49%	48%	50%
Black tea (with or without milk)	49%	46%	45%
Flat white	42%	39%	38%
Green tea	41%	38%	35%
Latte	40%	37%	34%
Herbal tea	39%	31%	29%
Espresso or long black	35%	27%	23%
Chai latte	26%	23%	19%
Hot drinks with almond milk or any other non-diary milk.	18%	14%	14%
Hot drinks with soy milk	14%	12%	8%
Soy latte	10%	7%	6%

Polling – Lattes and Chardonnays

Which of the following do you drink often – at least a few times a month?

(Respondents given options selected in previous question)

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	SA
Black tea (with or without milk)	32%	29%	34%	30%	35%	35%	19%
Cappuccino	30%	28%	31%	28%	32%	31%	29%
Flat white	27%	29%	25%	25%	28%	24%	29%
Latte	22%	20%	23%	18%	21%	28%	16%
Hot chocolate	21%	20%	23%	20%	18%	25%	22%
Green tea	20%	16%	23%	21%	23%	20%	15%
Herbal tea	15%	9%	20%	16%	15%	15%	15%
Espresso or long black	14%	19%	10%	14%	16%	12%	16%
Chai latte	8%	6%	10%	8%	7%	9%	9%
Hot drinks with almond milk or any other non-diary milk.	7%	6%	8%	7%	6%	7%	9%
Hot drinks with soy milk	4%	3%	5%	5%	2%	5%	4%
Soy latte	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
None of these	13%	15%	12%	14%	13%	15%	8%
Average selected	2.15	2.03	2.27	2.10	2.17	2.30	1.91

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	LNP	ALP	Greens	PHON	Other	Undec
Black tea (with or without milk)	35%	31%	32%	27%	33%	23%
Cappuccino	32%	33%	20%	27%	29%	26%
Flat white	29%	29%	20%	23%	26%	23%
Latte	23%	22%	29%	17%	15%	19%
Hot chocolate	17%	26%	22%	22%	22%	19%
Green tea	22%	18%	27%	16%	15%	21%
Herbal tea	13%	12%	30%	9%	17%	15%
Espresso or long black	16%	16%	15%	8%	13%	11%
Chai latte	9%	7%	11%	8%	7%	7%
Hot drinks with almond milk or any other non-diary milk.	7%	6%	9%	7%	7%	5%
Hot drinks with soy milk	4%	4%	8%	4%	3%	4%
Soy latte	2%	2%	7%	1%	1%	2%
None of these	14%	13%	10%	11%	12%	19%
Average selected	2.23	2.19	2.39	1.80	1.99	1.93

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	Inner city capitals	Rest of capital	Outside capitals
Black tea (with or without milk)	33%	33%	30%
Cappuccino	30%	29%	30%
Flat white	29%	26%	27%
Latte	26%	23%	19%
Espresso or long black	21%	13%	13%
Green tea	19%	20%	20%
Hot chocolate	18%	24%	21%
Herbal tea	16%	15%	14%
Hot drinks with almond milk or any other non-diary milk.	7%	6%	7%
Chai latte	7%	10%	7%
Hot drinks with soy milk	6%	4%	3%
Soy latte	4%	2%	3%

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Which of the following alcoholic drinks do you drink sometimes – at least once or twice a year?
   (I don't and none of the above exclusive, options randomised)

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	SA
I don't drink alcohol	15%	14%	16%	15%	14%	17%	13%
Spirits	47%	49%	45%	42%	53%	43%	54%
Red wine	39%	43%	35%	39%	36%	41%	39%
Full strength beer	37%	53%	22%	36%	38%	35%	44%
White wine other than Chardonnay	37%	33%	40%	35%	36%	38%	40%
Sparkling wine (including champagne)	31%	26%	37%	31%	27%	31%	39%
Cider	27%	27%	28%	22%	27%	31%	37%
Light beer	26%	34%	18%	23%	33%	24%	23%
Chardonnay	19%	19%	19%	20%	14%	22%	20%
None of the above but I do drink alcohol.	6%	4%	7%	6%	5%	7%	4%
Average selected	2.85	3.03	2.67	2.69	2.83	2.89	3.11

	LNP	ALP	Greens	PHON	Other	Undec
I don't drink alcohol	15%	12%	17%	11%	19%	21%
Spirits	48%	48%	47%	51%	47%	48%
Red wine	48%	36%	38%	29%	36%	32%
Full strength beer	39%	38%	35%	37%	33%	29%
White wine other than Chardonnay	44%	35%	37%	31%	31%	30%
Sparkling wine (including champagne)	36%	31%	34%	21%	27%	25%
Cider	29%	26%	34%	23%	23%	26%
Light beer	26%	32%	20%	25%	21%	24%
Chardonnay	23%	20%	18%	14%	15%	15%
None of the above but I do drink alcohol.	3%	8%	5%	7%	8%	7%
Average selected	3.12	2.86	2.84	2.48	2.60	2.57

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	Inner city capitals	Rest of capital	Outside capitals
Spirits	53%	45%	46%
Red wine	47%	41%	33%
White wine other than Chardonnay	44%	38%	32%
Full strength beer	40%	38%	35%
Sparkling wine (including champagne)	40%	33%	26%
Cider	30%	30%	23%
Light beer	30%	25%	24%
Chardonnay	24%	19%	18%

Polling – Lattes and Chardonnays

Which of the following do you drink often – at least a few times a month?

	Total	Male	Female	NSW	Qld	Vic	SA
Spirits	24%	29%	20%	22%	28%	20%	34%
Full strength beer	24%	40%	10%	23%	25%	24%	30%
Red wine	23%	26%	20%	25%	19%	24%	25%
White wine other than Chardonnay	21%	16%	25%	19%	21%	23%	23%
Light beer	13%	20%	6%	11%	16%	12%	10%
Cider	11%	11%	11%	7%	10%	14%	18%
Sparkling wine (including champagne)	10%	8%	12%	11%	4%	10%	13%
Chardonnay	6%	7%	6%	7%	5%	7%	2%
None of these	34%	27%	42%	36%	32%	38%	30%
Average selected	1.67	1.83	1.52	1.60	1.59	1.71	1.83

	LNP	ALP	Greens	PHON	Other	Undec
Spirits	26%	23%	21%	33%	25%	24%
Full strength beer	28%	25%	20%	25%	21%	17%
Red wine	28%	20%	23%	20%	24%	19%
White wine other than Chardonnay	23%	21%	22%	19%	15%	16%
Light beer	12%	15%	10%	15%	10%	11%
Cider	12%	11%	12%	11%	6%	9%
Sparkling wine (including champagne)	12%	11%	13%	3%	4%	6%
Chardonnay	6%	7%	8%	7%	5%	2%
None of these	29%	35%	39%	25%	42%	45%
Average selected	1.76	1.69	1.66	1.56	1.53	1.49

Polling – Lattes and Chardonnays

	Inner city capitals	Rest of capital	Outside capitals
Spirits	26%	26%	22%
Red wine	30%	19%	25%
White wine other than Chardonnay	27%	18%	21%
Full strength beer	25%	23%	26%
Sparkling wine (including champagne)	14%	7%	11%
Cider	13%	8%	12%
Light beer	11%	14%	13%
Chardonnay	7%	5%	7%

Polling – Lattes and Chardonnays