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WAR IN UKRAINE

Paul Smith fashion brand pulls out of Russia after criticism

All Help
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The Times



Sir Paul Smith's stores remained open in Moscow and St Petersburg, an investigation by the Daily Mail found
EMMANUEL DONAND/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

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Paul Smith, the British fashion house, is pulling out of Russia following a backlash after its stores remained open despite President Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

The Nottingham-based fashion giant, founded in 1970 by Paul Smith — who was knighted in 2000 — allowed its stores to open under a franchise agreement while other British brands withdrew from the country following the invasion in February last year. Stores remained open in Moscow and St Petersburg, an investigation by the Daily Mail found.

The brand has now admitted supplying stock to Mikhail Kusnirovich, a Russian retail magnate, since the invasion and pledged to end the commercial relationship immediately and shut its stores.

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“The company does not trade directly with [Russia](#), but, for two decades, we have had a franchise partner who operates stores in Russia,” a spokesman said. “We now realise it was a mistake to allow these stores to continue trading in our name against the background of the war in Ukraine.

“We have requested that these stores are closed and we have now ceased all supplies to the distributor.”

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Smith had previously told the newspaper that he “didn’t really know anything about” the flagship store in Red Square, Moscow.

The decision to close came after sustained criticism, including calls for Smith to be stripped of his honours.



Under sanctions by the British government, brands can still supply goods to Russia if they are sold for less than £250
MOHAMMED BADRA/IEA

[The Moral Rating Agency](#), a lobby group that campaigns against western firms trading in Russia, previously said: “Unless Russia is stripped of Paul Smith shirts, Paul Smith should be stripped of his knighthood. It’s a simple moral equation. No honours for dishonour.”

The agency has said that it was now withdrawing its campaign. A spokesman said: “He moved fast to clean up his act. It’s sad that it takes such threats to make people do the moral thing.”

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Bob Seely, the Tory MP for the Isle of Wight, applauded the move, telling the Daily Mail: “Credit to Paul Smith for finally doing the right thing.” Seely renewed his calls for Rolls-Royce, the car and aircraft engine manufacturer, and Agent Provocateur, the lingerie retailer, to withdraw from Russia.

“This must serve as a warning to other western brands who are continuing to trade in Vladimir Putin’s Russia,” he said of Paul Smith.

Under sanctions by the British government, brands can still supply goods to Russia if they are sold for less than £250. There is no suggestion that Paul Smith broke any rules.

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G Gary Byrne 13 HOURS AGO ...
Last time I buy anything from Paul Smith.
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A Andrew Fyfe 13 HOURS AGO ...
After they've corrected their mistake? Not very forgiving.
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4 replies

J J redgrave 14 HOURS AGO ...
A year later Good effort

A Andrew 7 HOURS AGO ...
A quick look at the Aviapark website (a shopping mall near Moscow) and the only remaining British brand that I recognise is Eleimis London; they still have a store. Perhaps The Times could ask this company what they're still doing using their brand in Russia.
Reply · Recommend (20) · Share

D DACleary-Mabelino 2 HOURS AGO ...
It's the Moral Rating Agency which highlighted this. Here's hoping they're reading these comments.
Reply · Recommended (0) · Share

M MrMarvelous 10 HOURS AGO ...
Jesus Christ Paul Smith read the bloody room
Reply · Recommend (14) · Share

S S Watson 8 HOURS AGO ...
That's it, there's no way I'm buying anymore Rolls Royces!
Reply · Recommend (11) · Share

D David Goldstein 13 HOURS AGO ...
About time Sir Paul.
Reply · Recommend (8) · Share

C ctattom 8 HOURS AGO ...
Cannot believe they stayed open, that is terrible, will not purchase from them again
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M Michael Hooper 8 HOURS AGO ...
Paul Smith's principles are pretty poor, so they don't seem to realize they are getting a buck with no consideration who they are just from. Johnson & Johnson are still operating in Russia on the excuse it is for humanitarian reasons for Russians health only.
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J J Roberts 6 HOURS AGO ...
“Credit to Paul Smith for finally doing the right thing.” ER.....NO!
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P Paul Smith 6 HOURS AGO ...
I would like to confirm that I am not Paul Smith. I am The Other Paul Smith.
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