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French company Pernod Ricard has decided to resume exporting the quintessentially British product to Moscow

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## Outrage as Beefeater gin owner resumes exporting to Russia

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IT is a quintessentially British export – a London dry gin named after the warders that guard the Tower of London.

So it is no wonder MPs last night expressed outrage at the French company that owns Beefeater gin – after the brand's 'shameful' decision to resume supplies to Russia.

Pernod Ricard had initially paused shipments to the rogue state in March 2022, condemning Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

But the Mail can reveal that the French parent company has quietly decided to cancel the embargo, meaning Beefeater Gin, which is made in London, has recently reappeared on the shelves of local supermarkets in Russia.

The decision has been blasted by politicians and campaigners at home, with Alicia Kearns, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, last night saying: 'Pernod Ricard profiting from an aggressor state responsible for war crimes is shameful.'

'What will it take for them [the company] to be shamed into doing the right thing? Pictures of Wagner fighters and Russian war criminals drinking Beefeater Gin in illegally occupied Ukraine?'

Labour MP Dame Margaret Hodge, chairman of the all-party parliamentary group on anti-corruption said: 'Beefeater's decision is appallingly wrong. To put the profits of their company above the interests of the brave people of Ukraine who continue to battle valiantly for their freedom is immoral.'

'And to ignore the security interests of Britain and the West simply to increase the money they make for their shareholders deserves condemnation from us all.'



A spokesman for Pernod Ricard said they decided to resume shipping to Russia on a 'limited basis'

A spokesman for Pernod Ricard said the firm decided to resume shipping to Russia on a 'limited basis' because pre-existing stock held in the country had now run out.

The company, which markets under the slogan 'Spirit of London', advertises Beefeater on its Russian site and says it has five offices across the country and around 300 employees.

Simon Fell – co-chairman of the all-party parliamentary group on fair business banking, said: 'This is an astonishingly poor decision and will rightly cause huge upset.'

'We placed sanctions on Russia because they invaded a sovereign nation with no provocation. They have since gone on to commit war crimes of the most heinous nature.'

'The idea that it is now an appropriate time for Beefeater Gin to appear on Russian supermarket shelves is for the birds. I would hope that Pernod Ricard will stop chasing every penny of profit, do the right thing, and reverse their decision.'

Before the war, Pernod Ricard made about 3 per cent of its annual sales on the Russian market and the company's website still claims it is 'one of the leaders in the Russian premium spirits market'.