

SUPPLIERS

Pernod Ricard exporting Beefeater and Jameson to Russia again

By Maria Gonçalves | 27 April 2023



Pernod Ricard has restarted exports of some of its biggest brands to Russia, including Beefeater gin and Jameson whiskey.

The French drinks giant said it had resumed some shipments to Russia, including London gin Beefeater and Irish-made Jameson whiskey, to “ensure the economic viability” of its operations there.

This comes only a week after being forced to U-turn its decision to restart exports of Absolut Vodka after major backlash in Sweden, where it is made.

Pernod Ricard first suspended exports to the country last year following Putin’s invasion of Ukraine along with many in the industry.

But now it said it restarted limited exports of some of its most popular brands when stocks began to run low at the end of 2022 to keep its local operations viable and avoid risk of “fraudulent bankruptcy” prosecution from the Kremlin.

“This is not business as usual and our decisions were not taken lightly,” a spokesman said. “We continue to utterly condemn the unjustifiable war and the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.”

Pernod Ricard also said it wanted to avoid counterfeiting and seeing its drinks sold on illegal markets.



However, campaigners and politicians alike have criticised the decision.

“It is as disgusting as it is ironic to return to Russia while others are still getting out,” said Mark Dixon, founder of the Moral Rating Agency, which describes itself as a campaign to shame companies to act morally in geopolitics.

“It is the first large group we’ve tracked swimming against the moral tide,” he added.

Last week the company had to halt exports of Absolut to Russia after many Swedish bars and restaurants pulled the drink from their shelves, with several high-profile politicians condemning the decision.

It is now facing a similar backlash in the UK over the news that some of its most popular booze brands are again entering Russian markets.

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