

Minimum Vodka Prices to Rise

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia plans to raise minimum vodka prices next year as it seeks to reduce consumption of alcohol, despite risks that drinkers will resort instead to cheaper illegal liquor.

Alcoholism is estimated to contribute to 30 percent of deaths in the nation of 143 million, according to medical surveys.

The government imposed minimum prices for strong spirits such as vodka and brandy in 2010 and has been raising the bar annually to factor in increases in excise taxes and inflation.

According to a draft decree published on a government website the cheapest half-liter bottle of vodka will cost 199 rubles (\$6.00) from Jan. 1, up 17 percent from the current 170 rubles. From Aug. 1, the price will rise further to 220 rubles, almost 30 percent more than the 2013 price.

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