

Absolut Vodka Halts Exports to Russia

By [AFP](#)

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Absolut Vodka is a part of the French group Pernod Ricard, the world's second-largest wine and spirits seller. **Tim Rüßmann / unsplash**

The maker of Sweden's Absolut vodka said Tuesday it was suspending all exports to Russia after calls to boycott the brand flared up in Sweden.

Stephanie Durroux, chief executive of The Absolut Company, said in a statement that the company is exercising its "duty of care toward our employees and partners, we cannot expose them to massive criticism in all forms".

Absolut's owner Pernod Ricard, a French liqueur company, earlier in April said that it had resumed some exports to Russia after previously halting them in March 2022 following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

In November, Russia made changes to its trade regulations that permit the parallel import of alcohol, thus allowing Russian companies to import foreign products without the permission of an official supplier.

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Pernod Ricard stressed that the decision to resume exports was done to protect its staff in Russia from "criminal liability" and accusations of "intentional bankruptcy."

But the decision sparked massive criticism, including from prominent politicians in Sweden.

Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said he was "very surprised" to learn of the decision.

Others called for boycotts, describing the move as a "moral collapse", "spineless" and a "gift" to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Several well-known bars and restaurants in Stockholm stopped selling Pernod Ricard products in protest.

"The reaction over recent days is clearly reflective of the role Absolut plays for its extended community in Sweden," Durroux said.

"We acknowledge the significance of these long-standing and trusting relationships with our Swedish employees, partners, consumers, and the Swedish society at large," she added.

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