

Ovechkin to Launch His Own Beer Brand in Russia

October 05, 2026



pivovarnibochkarev.ru

Washington Capitals star Alexander Ovechkin plans to launch his own beer brand in Russia with a producer owned by Arnest, a group that has rapidly expanded by buying the Russian businesses of departing Western companies.

The OVI range will be produced by Bochkarev Breweries and is expected to go on sale before the end of 2026, the Kommersant newspaper [reported](#) Monday. It will include a classic lager, a lower-alcohol lager and an alcohol-free beer, priced at about 100 rubles (\$1.18) per can.

The venture brings together one of Russia's best-known athletes, whose support for President Vladimir Putin has drawn renewed criticism abroad, and a company that has become a major beneficiary of the Western corporate exodus since Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

"I have long wanted to create my own beer, one that I would enjoy drinking myself," Ovechkin said in comments supplied to Kommersant by the brewer's press office. He said he

preferred pale beers with a clean, balanced taste.

Bochkarev Breweries belongs to businessman Alexei Sagal's Arnest group. Its brewing business was built around Heineken's Russian assets, which Arnest [acquired](#) in 2023 for a symbolic 1 euro.

The company produces brands including Bochkarev, Okhota and Krusovice and ranks third in Russia by beer production volume.

Related article: [Champagne, Tea Sets and Social Movements: The Ovechkin - Putin Relationship](#)

Arnest's expansion has extended well beyond brewing. In 2022, it bought aluminum packaging plants from Ball Corporation. It subsequently acquired Oriflame's Russian assets, Heineken's Russian business and Unilever's operations in the country. In 2026, it bought Avon's Russian business and agreed to acquire Reckitt's assets.

Alexei Dyumin, a former Putin bodyguard who now serves as secretary of Russia's State Council, reportedly [helped](#) Sagal lobby for the Heineken and Unilever deals. The Bell has also [reported](#) ties between Sagal and Denis Manturov, who headed Russia's Industry and Trade Ministry for many years.

Sagal has attributed his success to approaching Western companies directly.

For Ovechkin, the beer venture follows a fresh controversy over his political activities in Russia while playing for a U.S. team.

In September, he [appeared](#) in a campaign video for the ruling United Russia party ahead of Russia's State Duma elections. Asked about his decision afterward, he said: "I'm Russian and I support my country."

The video drew criticism in the the West. Latvia barred Ovechkin from entering the country, while the Ukrainian Canadian Congress called on Canada's government to impose sanctions on him. U.S. Republican Representative Joe Wilson urged the NHL's leadership to review Ovechkin's participation in the political advertisement.

Ovechkin has publicly supported Putin since at least 2017, when he founded the Putin Team movement. After Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, he said he supported peace and wanted the fighting to end as soon as possible.

He has played for the Capitals since 2005. In April 2025, he [broke](#) Wayne Gretzky's record for NHL regular-season goals, finishing the 2025-26 season with 929.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/10/05/ovechkin-to-launch-his-own-beer-brand-in-russia-a9387>