

BERENTZEN | THE FRUIT LIQUEUR



How do you get an idea onto everyone's lips? On a merry evening, a young man passes round little bottles called "Berentzen Minis", decorated with a label depicting an apple. He is giving out the most successful spirit product launched in 2003, made by Berentzen.

The creative liqueur idea originally came from brothers Friedrich and Hans Berentzen in 1976, when it was bottled in glass bottles and labelled "Berentzen Appel". To date, the Berentzen brothers' original idea has developed into a spirit that many people like and have enjoyed drinking for decades. This is hardly surprising; after all, Berentzen Appel was the first "convenience spirit" available in Germany and allowed the Haselünne-based company easily to secure a place in the top 10 German spirits companies. So the current success of "Berentzen Minis" following their launch is no surprise. The combination of the sign depicting the much-loved apple and a wide range of drinks, including non-alcoholic ones, earns the Berentzen Group over 400 million euros a year and allows it to employ over 700 people.

Back in 1758, the excellent water quality between East Frisia and the Münsterland must have played a part in laying the foundations for the company's success story in Haselünne, a sleepy town in the Emsland. Originally a blacksmith like his father, Johann Bernhard Berentzen ran a small distillery as well as the forge. In the Emsland, they drank "Kloaren" or "Strohgelben", both clear corn-based schnapps drinks.

For Berentzen, what started out as a bit of fun soon developed into the basis for a viable company. Business was good, Berentzen grew, and there were extensive new additions and changes during the industrial boom around 1870. Employees could leave the company after a standard eight-hour day, women were given the right to vote and Berentzen became a limited company.

Peace was declared first in Versailles and then a second time in Potsdam, after the "golden Twenties".

At the end of the post-War period, Berentzen decided to include soft drinks in their range as well as spirits. Emsland-Getränke GmbH, which was founded for this purpose, acquired the Pepsi Cola concession in 1960.

What was once a local schnapps distillery in Haselünne now has sales all over the world. The merger with spirit distillers Pabst & Richarz in the 1980s saw the birth of what is now the Berentzen Group. The company followed a consistent growth strategy and integrated leading names such as Doornkaat, Puschkin, Bommerlunder and many more. In 1994, the company made the daring step of floating on the stock exchange, where it now commands a leading position in the industry.

The dawn of the twenty-first century saw Berentzen finding new ways to reach its customers. Relaunch – as they say in advertising speak – and renovation were on the cards in Haselünne, where the company's board is still based. The overall brand was facelifted and given a fresh new and more dynamic look. The consumers appreciated it, not least because of the innovations brought about by the group. For example, the "Winter Apple" is now only available from October to December every year, thus making it the world's first seasonal spirit drink.

If you fancy going out and spending a pleasant evening among friends, there is one thing you should know: "Ein Trinkgefäß sobald es leer, macht keine rechte Freude mehr" (Once it's empty, a drinking vessel doesn't really make you happy any more). German comic writer Wilhelm Busch made this simple observation. Maybe he was thinking of "Berentzen Apfel" at the time.



Company name
Berentzen-Gruppe AG

Classic product
Berentzen Apfel

Established
1758 in Haselünne/
Germany

Inventors
Friedrich &
Dr Hans Berentzen

Awareness
83 %

Distribution
worldwide