

Cigaronne Conquering the world



WORLD
FOCUS

capital
economia



Cigaronne's core mission is luxury and sophistication at every level.



Armen Pogossian will let nothing stand in the way of the quest for perfection.

Luxury spirits and a creative approach put Armenia on the map

As Armenia continues its transition toward high-value manufacturing and export-led growth, a new generation of companies is redefining how the country competes on the global stage. Among the most prominent of these is Cigaronne, a family-owned enterprise that has grown from a bold idea into one of Armenia's most internationally recognized luxury brands, with a presence spanning Europe, Asia, the Middle East and beyond.

Founded in 1999, Cigaronne emerged at a formative moment for the Armenian economy. Rather than relying on scale or commoditization, the company embraced a long-term strategy rooted in innovation, craftsmanship and premium positioning. As co-owner Armen Pogossian explains, Armenia's economic logic is shaped by necessity: "Armenia has a limited and scarce amount of resources and for that reason, the primary objective of the Armenian market is to take as little of its resources as possible and to make as much value from those resources as we can."

"Back then, with the possibilities that we had, we could have made a regular product," Pogossian recalls. "However, we chose the long road." That road took nearly two decades to fully mature, but it resulted in a globally distinctive product and a brand synonymous with Armenian innovation.

Today, Cigaronne's flagship tobacco products are sold in more than 40 countries, with particularly strong momentum across East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Europe. The company is also preparing to re-enter the U.S. market — a new chapter in its international expansion. Yet global reach has never come at the expense of identity. Cigaronne remains vertically integrated, with production anchored in Armenia, reinforcing its role as a standard-bearer for the "Made in Armenia" label.

That same commitment to innovation has driven Cigaronne's expansion into premium spirits. Drawing on decades of experience in beverage production, the company has developed brands such as Jardins d'Arménie Royal Brandy and Godfather vodka, each defined by proprietary technologies and dis-

tinctive flavor profiles. "The most important thing when it comes to differentiation is the technology we use," Pogossian notes, emphasizing processes that create "a distinct, unrepeatable taste that you cannot find in other brandy products."

Across all its products, Cigaronne's ambition is consistent: to create products that deliver genuine value and elevate consumer experience. "Our goal is to overcome ourselves, to overcome our product and to constantly create something that is more valuable than what we were creating yesterday," Pogossian says.

In doing so, Cigaronne has become more than a brand. It is an ambassador for a modern Armenia — defined not by volume or geography, but by originality, precision and the confidence to compete at the very top of global markets.

As global consumers increasingly seek authenticity and provenance, Cigaronne's Armenian roots have become an asset. By combining local heritage with global standards, the company demonstrates how small nations can create an outsized impact.

				
<p>Jardins d'Arménie Royal Brandy Aged for 35 years, sold with patented sample cups for taste-first buying.</p>	<p>Godfather Vodka Uses advanced filtration to reduce toxins & enhance purity.</p>	<p>LiveChef Platform Livestreamed meal prep with in-home dining & drone delivery in testing.</p>	<p>1,200+ employees Cigaronne focuses on workforce development through training programs.</p>	<p>Armenian Identity A global brand built on originality, precision & national pride.</p>



Cigaronne is pursuing international expansion to all corners of the globe.



Its flagship products include brandy, vodka and tobacco which ship to 40 countries.



Jardins d'Arménie Royal Brandy and Godfather vodka are two signature products.



Live Chef allows patrons to see their food being prepared from start to finish.

The pursuit of perfection no matter the cost, no matter the hurdles

Nothing is allowed to compromise the quality standards of Cigaronne's products, no matter what they may be. Armen Pogossian, the company's co-owner, explains what that means in practice.

Can you describe Armenia's current premium manufacturing landscape and where you see the strongest opportunities?

Armenia has a limited and scarce amount of resources and for that reason the primary objective of the Armenian market is to take as little of its resources as possible and create as much value from those resources as we can. This is why sectors such as high-tech are developing very quickly. Alongside that, luxury industries — including luxury fabrics, luxury beverages and luxury tobacco — are becoming increasingly important.

Luxury beverages, in particular, have been part of Armenia's identity for centuries, while luxury tobacco has become especially prominent over the past 30 years, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the export opportunities that opened up afterward. Armenia's future in manufacturing lies in value creation, innovation and refinement, rather than volume.

Cigaronne has grown into one of Armenia's most recognizable global brands. What are the company's defining milestones?

Cigaronne was established in 1999 fo-

llowing a vision my father had to change the industry entirely. The core innovation was the extra-long filter. Today, this kind of filter is popular, but at the time, it served multiple purposes. It was designed for hygiene and comfort: it stays farther away from the face, keeps smoke away from the eyes, prevents nicotine stains and makes handling easier.

Because of its length, it was also one of the earliest cooling technologies. There is a hollow segment in the filter that allows the smoke to cool as it travels. The objective was not only to introduce something new, but to create a genuine luxury product.

At the time, we could have made a standard product that would likely have been more popular initially. Instead, we chose the long road. That meant starting something people did not immediately believe in, continuing to develop it year after year and refining it until the original vision was fully realized. It took almost 20 years to reach what Cigaronne is today, but the vision came to fruition.

Cigaronne was one of the first major greenfield investments in Armenia in 1999. While much of the economy was focused on privatization, Cigaronne invested from the ground up, which was a significant commitment at the time.

Cigaronne later expanded into beverages. How did that transition take place?

In fact, beverages were one of our first

businesses. We began producing vodka in 1992, which means we now have nearly 34 years of experience in beverage production. Over time, and with decades of technical development, we shifted toward producing luxury beverages.

Our approach is to create an innovative kind of luxury through brand-new technology. For example, our vodka uses a specific technology that has preventative effects when it comes to hangovers. With our brandy, we use a unique aging process that moves the spirit from oak barrels to apricot barrels and then back to oak barrels. This creates a distinct and unrepeatable taste that, as experts have noted, cannot be found in other brandy products. You need to be a master of product development. It is about creating value for the customer — sometimes offering something they did not even realize they needed. Once they experience the difference between your product and what they consumed before, the value becomes clear.

Innovation, for us, is always about improving the experience. It is about creating a more profound interaction with the product and making it easier and more enjoyable for the consumer to engage with.

Innovation, for us, is always about improving the experience. It is about creating a more profound interaction with the product and making it easier and more enjoyable for the consumer to engage with.

You often speak about a "refusal to compromise." How does that manifest, from materials to the final product?

In tobacco, for example, we have the highest material cost of any cigarette brand.

We never compromise on quality and we never optimize by cutting costs. On the contrary, we upgrade continuously.

Our philosophy is not about reaching a certain level and stopping there. It is about perfecting the product as much as possible. We are constantly developing new ideas and concepts. There is no limit to development, no limit to growth or learning when you are creating something that can always be improved. Our goal is to overcome ourselves, to overcome our previous product and to create something that is more valuable than what we were creating yesterday.

How do your brandy and vodka differentiate themselves in the premium spirits market?

Differentiation comes down to technology. We use completely new production technologies, even by global standards. With the brandy, the aging process — from oak to apricot barrels and back to oak — creates aromas and flavors that are unrepeatable.

As a result, the product has its own identity and unique flavor profile, which is why it has become preferred by many experts and connoisseurs and is quickly gaining international presence.

With Godfather vodka, the differentiation lies in filtration. The vodka is filtered multiple times using our proprietary technology, which removes heavy metals and minerals found in traditional vodkas.

According to lab analyses, if a heavy metal is present at 50 mg per standard dose in a traditional vodka, it is reduced to 0.0005 in our product — practically non-existent.

Alcohol is essentially a poison and hangovers are largely caused by these substances. By removing them, we significantly improve the product quality and experience.

Which markets offer the strongest potential for the next phase of global expansion?

We are present in almost all countries in Southeast and East Asia, including Japan, South Korea and China. In many of these markets, we are active in duty-free, which is expanding rapidly across airports, ports and border shops. Asia is developing very quickly and we are investing heavily in machinery to keep up with demand. At the same time, we are expanding more intensively in the Middle East and Europe, where demand has reached levels we had not seen before. We are also preparing to re-enter the United States market very soon, which will be an important milestone for us.

Beyond entering new markets, the development of existing markets is equally important. Having a presence is one thing; building awareness and understanding of the product is another. In many countries, consumers do not yet realize the product is available locally, so we work — within legal limits — to ensure visibility for all the products in our portfolio. We are open

to collaboration with major and reputable partners. In many of the countries where we operate, we already work with leading companies in our industries.

We are a family-owned, private company, however we are willing to cooperate with partners, distributors and importers who share our values and long-term vision.

What long-term role do you see for Cigaronne globally and how should "Made in Armenia" be perceived?

I believe the only way forward for Armenia in terms of tangible goods is to focus on luxury. Our resources are scarce. We do not have vast land or access to the sea, so we must maximize value through innovation and originality.

Armenia also has a highly educated population, with one of the highest literacy rates in the world. We must take that intellectual capital to a global level and offer the world something it has not seen before — something it can genuinely value. Cigaronne can help bring that vision to life by demonstrating that Armenian products can compete at the very top of global markets.

What message would you like to leave with readers who may be learning about Cigaronne and Armenia for the first time?

There is no limit to learning and development. When we started in 1999, we faced a major uphill battle to get our product to market. As a brand new concept, we competed against major, established brands, but we believed in our idea and in the value it could offer consumers.

The most important thing is to give people value. People should focus on creating solutions and giving something meaningful to others. When that happens, positive outcomes follow naturally.

"It is about creating value for the customer, sometimes offering something they did not even realize they needed."

Armen Pogossian, Co-Owner, Cigaronne



The brandy is aged in oak barrels, then apricot barrels, then returned to oak barrels again for a superior flavor and depth of palette.

Bringing a long tradition into the present day

Armenia's spirits industry blends centuries-old viticultural heritage with contemporary innovation, producing a range of distinctive and world-renowned beverages. The story of Armenian spirits begins with the country's fertile landscape and ancient winemaking culture. Armenia's mild climate and indigenous grape varieties laid the foundation for grape-based distillation as far back as the late 19th century.

The first structured production of Armenian brandy emerged in Yerevan in 1887, marking a turning point in the country's transition from household distillation to organized spirits manufacturing. These early distillates quickly achieved international recognition, helping to establish Armenia's standing as a source of refined, high-quality spirits.

Over time, Armenian brandy became defined by the use of indigenous grape varieties cultivated in diverse terroirs and distilled in traditional copper stills. Extended ageing in Caucasian oak barrels imparted hallmark characteristics, including notes of dried fruit, vanilla and warm spice, which came to distinguish Armenian brandy on global markets. In recent years, production volumes have expanded significantly, with national output reaching multi-million-liter levels and exports continuing to rise, highlighting the sector's growing economic importance.

While brandy remains at the heart of the

industry, a new generation of producers has broadened the scope of Armenian spirits. This evolution reflects both continuity and innovation, reinforcing Armenia's longstanding relationship between craftsmanship and premium spirits production.

Armenia's broader spirits culture also includes fruit-based distillates made from apricot, mulberry and cornelian cherry — products deeply rooted in rural tradition. These spirits reflect generational knowledge, small-batch production and reinforce Armenia's reputation for authenticity and artisanal skill.

Among these innovators is Cigaronne, a brand that has steadily carved out international recognition not just in luxury tobacco but also in premium beverages. Led by co-owner Armen Pogossian, Cigaronne

“Jardins d’Arménie is the expression of our history, our art and our savoir-faire. Each sip embodies finesse and centuries of tradition.”

Armen Pogossian, Co-Owner, Cigaronne

has positioned its spirits as embodiments of Armenian craftsmanship, combining tradition with proprietary technologies.

One of Cigaronne's signature expressions is Jardins d'Arménie Royal Brandy, introduced to European audiences in Monaco. This brandy represents a brand new category in luxury spirits, marrying time-honored Armenian brandy-making practices with modern innovation. It is crafted from Voskehat grapes harvested across three regions, then aged through a distinctive process involving oak and apricot wood barrels to produce layered flavor profiles.

As Armen Pogossian stated, “Jardins d'Arménie is the expression of our history, our art and our savoir-faire. Each sip embodies the strength of our land, the finesse of our craftsmanship, and centuries of tradition.” Cigaronne also emphasizes advancements in vodka production — notably with Godfather vodka, where advanced filtration technology significantly reduces heavy metals and minerals, resulting in a cleaner and smoother spirit.

From historic distilleries in Yerevan to modern boutique producers, Armenian spirits are gaining increasing global traction. Traditional brands and artisanal expressions such as Jardins d'Arménie are not only exported widely but are helping shape perceptions of Armenia as a source of luxury and craftsmanship.

Observers note that Armenian producers are successfully shifting from bulk commodity production toward specialized premium offerings that leverage human capital and brand storytelling — a strategy that aligns with broader economic growth.

As the spirits industry continues to evolve, it stands as a vivid example of how deep cultural roots and modern innovation can coalesce into products that resonate far beyond national borders.

When your food is the art of the show

With the worldwide proliferation of food delivery platforms, consumer expectations are shifting beyond speed and convenience toward transparency and quality. Against this backdrop, Cigaronne has launched Live Chef, a platform designed to modernize food delivery while restoring trust in how meals are prepared.

At the heart of Live Chef is a transparency model that addresses one of the most persistent concerns surrounding ghost kitchens. “Live Chef is all about trust,” explains Armen Pogossian, “Through proprietary camera technology, customers can gain access to live kitchen feeds while their meals are being prepared. Even when users are not actively watching, “Live Chef is



Live Chef removes opacity, one of the most common criticisms about the food industry, and empowers consumers.

always watching its own kitchen to ensure quality, hygiene and cleanliness,” offering an unprecedented level of oversight.

This approach positions Live Chef as “the first ghost kitchen that you can actually fully trust and look into,” providing consumers with visibility into what is being prepared, how it is made and the technology involved. In an industry often criticized for opacity, this model responds directly to evolving consumer demands for accountability and food safety.

Beyond transparency, it also integrates

a luxury that distinguishes it from conventional delivery services. Customers can opt for a full fine-dining experience at home, complete with waiter service. “So you bring the fine dining element to your home. That is the whole idea behind Live Chef,” Pogossian notes.

With intellectual property and patents secured, the model is designed for international scalability and is positioning for franchising abroad, underscoring Cigaronne's ambition to export not only products but innovative service ecosystems.

Cigaronne Global Locations



