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Sazerac Acquires Au Vodka to Strengthen Its Position in Britain

The purchase adds a fast-growing Welsh brand with global ambitions in vodka and ready-to-drink alcohol.

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Sazerac has acquired Au Vodka, the fast-growing vodka and ready-to-drink brand founded in Swansea, Wales, in 2015, in a deal aimed at strengthening the American spirits company’s position in the United Kingdom and expanding Au’s reach in overseas markets. Financial terms were not disclosed.

The transaction brings one of the UK’s best-known newer spirits brands into Sazerac’s global portfolio at a time when large drinks groups continue to look for growth through acquisitions as well as organic brand building. Sazerac said the UK is an important market for the company and described the purchase as part of its ongoing strategy to invest in brands and broaden its international presence.

Au Vodka was started by Charlie Morgan and Jackson Quinn, with broadcaster and DJ Charlie Sloth later joining as an investor. The brand has built its identity around a distinctive gold bottle and a marketing style that helped it stand out in a crowded vodka market. It now employs more than 80 people, according to the company, and sells across the UK as well as in a growing number of international markets.

Morgan said the sale marks the next stage for a business that began with a simple idea in South Wales and grew quickly into a major name in premium vodka and ready-to-drink products. He said Sazerac's ownership should allow the brand to move into more markets at a faster pace than it could on its own while preserving the qualities that made it successful.

Sazerac President and Chief Executive Jake Wenz said the company had long admired Au Vodka and viewed its rise since 2015 as unusual in both speed and scale. He said the acquisition gives Sazerac a stronger position in the UK while also creating a path for wider global growth for Au under the company's ownership.

The deal is significant for the wider beverage business because it adds another recognizable brand to the hands of a large international owner at a moment when competition is already intense in vodka and ready-to-drink alcohol. In the UK, the combination could increase pressure on rival spirits suppliers for shelf space, bar listings and distribution attention. It could also affect wholesalers, retailers and hospitality operators as Sazerac gains another brand to place alongside its existing products in negotiations across the market.

Au joins a broad Sazerac portfolio that includes Buffalo Trace Bourbon, BuzzBallz, Paul John Single Malt, Fireball Cinnamon Whisky, Southern Comfort, SVEDKA Vodka, Myers's Rum and Paddy's Irish Whiskey, among others. Adding Au gives Sazerac another entry in vodka while also extending its exposure to the ready-to-drink segment, which has become an important area of growth for many beverage companies seeking younger consumers and more convenience-driven occasions.

The acquisition also underlines Sazerac's long-running approach to growth. The company has expanded through a mix of sustained investment, long-term brand development and selective purchases. Its latest move in the UK suggests it sees further

room to build scale in a market that remains one of the most competitive and strategically important for international drinks groups, especially in premium spirits and flavored, packaged alcohol products.

The agreement comes after another recent corporate move involving Sazerac. The company had made what was described as an unsolicited approach to Brown-Forman, but that effort was rejected. Against that backdrop, the Au purchase represents a more conventional expansion step, giving Sazerac a brand that is already established in Britain and still has room to grow abroad.

For Au Vodka, the change in ownership could bring wider distribution, stronger operational support and easier access to export markets. For Sazerac, it provides a brand with a clear identity, a built-in consumer following and a foothold in a part of the alcohol market where image, marketing reach and route-to-market execution can make a large difference. The acquisition also adds a UK-founded label with existing local recognition at a time when major spirits groups continue to compete for brands that can travel beyond their home markets.