



Coca Cola outsells virtually every other soft drink in every country around the world.

Except Scotland.

Back in 1901, a soft drink was created to quench the thirst of Glasgow steelworkers. Because sanitation was poor at that time, this drink was considered a healthy way to boost energy in industrial areas. This was like a tonic, with lots of sugar and caffeine.



*"With the pork I'd recommend an Alsatian white or a Coke."*

At first it was called Iron Brew, but in 1947, the name was changed in response to legislation passed by the Scottish parliament that required that all brand names had to literally true. You might think that the snake had to change because it didn't contain any iron. Actually it did -it just wasn't *brewed*.

So the name was changed to Irn-Bru.

Irn-Bru has a distinctive orange and blue packaging and the logo features an image of a strongman. In the 1970s, Irn-Bru adopted the slogan "made from Scottish girders" meaning steel beams -a tongue-in-cheek reference to its rusty colour and steelworker heritage. It became so beloved it's called Scotland's other national drink -after whisky. Twenty cans of Irn-Bru are sold in Scotland every second.

Some say it's hard to describe the flavour of Irn-Bru, and though it's orange it doesn't taste orangey. Having sampled it myself, I am in agreement with those who say it's more like a fizzy cream soda.

A big part of Irn-Bru's popularity in Scotland is because of its cheeky and sometimes controversial advertising. One billboard showed a cow with the headline: "when I'm a burger, I want to be washed down with Irn-Bru". That one got hundreds of complaints, but consumers were talking about the brand, and sales soared.

Through it all, Irn-Bru still outsells the might Coca Cola to this day and has dominated the Scottish soft drink market for over a century. For more David vs Goliath stories about small brands that outsell the big ones, click <[here](#)> to listen to one of my favourite CBC series called Under the Influence.

Be safe, be well!

Martin

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