

**16 00 2008 - The Wonderful World Of Absolut**

Absolut's bottle has become a beverage staple worldwide; its brand has become somewhat of a cultural icon and, yet, how much do you really know about Sweden's Åhus-based world of Absolut? With 500,000 bottles leaving their tiny realm of Åhus each day, the company has gradually developed into one of the largest manufacturers of spirits in the world. Spirits by themselves, however, aren't very interesting; luckily, there's more to Absolut than spirits.



Roughly thirty years ago, Absolut set to work on one of the world's longest-running ad campaigns. If you've picked up a magazine in the last three decades, you're no doubt accustomed to sporadic sightings of its ever-growing list of flavors and colors. With everything from plain vanilla to pear and açai, Absolut's done its best to create something for everyone - assuming that our everyone umbrella likes spirits, of course.





Over the years, Absolut has expanded its reach beyond the bar to incorporate zests of art, music, and culture into its image - commissioning artists to create custom artwork for bottles, billboards, ads, and more. In fact, between its ads and its art, Absolut has spawned an entire movement of Absolut-lovers complete with an endless myriad of blogs, fan-sites, museum exhibits, and web-galleries dedicated to Absolut-everything.

Its newest flavors return to a sleeping idea that profiles a number of cities throughout the United States (Absolut's biggest market). Last month, Absolut unveiled the second lucky recipient of its resurrected "Cities" flavors - Los Angeles - with more to follow in the near future as people submit their suggestions for Absolut's next feature.

Of course, what good would such a diverse array of flavors be if Absolut continued to serve them only within the confines of several million bars worldwide? Luckily, the company was quick to come up with a solution to that 'problem' in the form of a small chain of clubs with the moniker of IceBar. Since its inception, the concept has spread from Stockholm and Jukkasjärvi to London, Copenhagen, and Tokyo with an ever-looming possibility of one in the states sometime in the near future. Patrons of the subzero social scene receive parkas, their own chiseled ice glasses, and a toss-up between a spectacular work of art and a shot at frost bite.

Even if Absolut isn't your thing, between the ads and the IceBar they've got enough to give anyone something to smile about.