

CIGARONNE

Armenia's Vanguard of Luxury & Innovation

From family legacy to global lifestyle brand, Cigaronne is redefining excellence.

From patented design to premium spirits & digital dining, Cigaronne is redefining what it means to build a global lifestyle brand from Armenia. Founded in 1999, the company exemplifies a new wave of Armenian enterprises competing through innovation, originality & quality. As the country shifts toward high-value exports & creative entrepreneurship, Cigaronne stands at the forefront of a national identity shaped by craft & ambition.

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GENERATIONS OF
SPIRIT AND MASTERY
IN EVERY NOTE



Armenia produces \$280M in brandy & \$47M in wine annually.

Made in Armenia: Redefining National Identity Through Craft

Armenia is stepping onto the global stage with a renewed sense of identity. Long known for its ancient churches, mountainous landscapes and enduring diaspora, the country is now capturing attention for its creativity, entrepreneurship and export-ready craftsmanship. As tourism rebounds and new industries take root, a growing number of Armenian companies are redefining what the country can offer beyond its borders. Tourism has played a key role in reshaping Armenia's international image, reinforcing the country's growing reputation for quality and experience-driven offerings. Visitors are drawn to Yerevan's walkable streets, vibrant café culture and thriving arts scene. Outside the capital, experiences range from hiking in Dilijan's forests to exploring centuries-old monasteries in Syunik and wine tasting in Areni. Armenia's food and hospitality sectors have matured in parallel, with traditional gastronomy now complemented by fine dining, boutique wineries and premium brandy houses. These same values of craft, innovation and attention to detail are now being channeled into other sectors of the economy. Nowhere is this shift more visible than in Armenia's emerging private sector. With limited natural resources, many of

the country's most successful businesses are driven not by scale but by design, originality and niche global appeal. In this landscape, Cigaronne has emerged as one of Armenia's most visible lifestyle brands. Known internationally for its precision-made luxury cigarettes, the company has evolved into a broader symbol of high-end Armenian production. Founded in 1999, Cigaronne has grown through a strategy focused on vertical integration, quality control and long-term thinking. Its broader significance lies in what it represents: an Armenian company that competes globally on its own terms.

From patented technologies to refined design and presentation, Cigaronne is part of a new generation of firms positioning Armenia as a source of originality and high standards.

This shift is increasingly reflected in Armenia's economic development model. Rather than pursuing volume-based exports, the country is finding traction in specialized segments, from boutique spirits and fine foods to software and high-tech manufacturing. These sectors rely less on raw materials and more on human capital, design thinking and brand storytelling. In this context, companies like Cigaronne are helping shape international perceptions of what Armenia is and where it is going. Diaspora engagement also plays a role. Many of Armenia's rising entrepreneurs and creative professionals have studied or worked abroad, bringing global perspectives back home. Their experiences often translate into products and services that meet international expectations while staying rooted in local values and culture. Whether in design, hospitality or production, there is growing confidence that Armenian-made can mean world-class. Cigaronne's trajectory reflects the evolution of a country that is quietly but confidently asserting itself. As Armenia's business community continues to expand its global footprint, companies driven by purpose, quality and imagination are setting a new benchmark for what the country can achieve. ●



Tatev Monastery, a 9th-century icon preserving heritage & culture.

Inside Cigaronne: Armenia's Global Brand Builder

Since its founding in 1999, Cigaronne has steadily expanded its presence in Armenia's economy through in-house innovation, international market engagement and diversified product development. While best known for its contributions to the tobacco industry, the company has evolved into a multi-sector enterprise under the leadership of co-owner Armen Pogossian, challenging global norms and redefining luxury along the way. Cigaronne's early success was built on patented filter technology, bold design and a vertically integrated production model. With all operations based on a single industrial campus in Armenia, the company maintains full control over quality, logistics and sustainability. Rather than competing in a declining mass-market segment, Cigaronne created its own category by introducing a new product culture and elevating consumer expectations.

Today, its flagship luxury cigarettes are sold in more than 40 countries across Asia, the Middle East and Europe. In many of these markets, consumers are often surprised to learn the brand is Armenian, a discovery that deepens appreciation for its design and craftsmanship. "Our success shows what Armenia is capable of," says Armen Pogossian. "We want the world to know Armenia not only for its history, but for its creativity and innovation."

This philosophy of aiming for the top rather than the bottom extends across Cigaronne's growing portfolio. From spirits and beverages to digital-first food services, each venture identifies a gap in quality or experience, develops in-house solutions and scales them globally.

The spirits division includes two standout products. Jardins d'Armenie, a 35-year-old Armenian brandy, reflects the country's rich brandy-making heritage while introducing new packaging and patented sample cups that let consumers taste be-

fore they buy. Rather than selling status, the product encourages people to choose based on experience. Godfather Vodka complements this with a proprietary filtration process that reduces toxins and heavy metals. Backed by independent lab validation, it delivers a cleaner,

smoother spirit that has gained traction in international markets. One of the company's most ambitious projects is LiveChef, an online food service based in Yerevan. The platform combines centralized kitchens with livestream technology, allowing customers to watch



A curated selection of Cigaronne products, crafted for discerning tastes.



Elegant, modern design at Cigaronne's corporate headquarters.

Cigaronne

If you care...



Smoking kills



Smoking kills



Smoking kills



Smoking kills



Smoking kills



Smoking kills



Inside the Yerevan factory where Cigaronne ensures precision at every step.



LiveChef's new gourmet delivery, combining fine dining with convenience.

their meals being prepared in real time. The service also offers in-home dining, table setup and cleanup. Drone delivery is currently in testing. By raising hygiene, transparency and presentation standards, LiveChef redefines expectations in a space traditionally dominated by ghost kitchens and delivery apps.

Across all categories, Cigaronne avoids trend-chasing. Instead, it focuses on creating a culture of excellence and originality. Its steady growth in a traditionally declining sector proves that bold ideas and high standards still win. The company employs over 1,200 people and invests heavily in talent development, offering training programs, language instruction and cross-functional collaboration. Workforce development remains central to its long-term strategy.

Cigaronne's success signals a broader shift in Armenia's economic model. With limited natural resources, the country is increasingly relying on high-value, knowledge-based exports. As one of Armenia's most recognized global brands, Cigaronne demonstrates what can be achieved through innovation, craftsmanship and a refusal to compromise. With expansion continuing and new products in development, the company is focused on refining logistics, enhancing sustainability and applying emerging technologies across its operations. Yet its mission remains unchanged: to create, not just compete. As Pogossian notes, "It's always better to race to the top of the market than the bottom. That's how you create something lasting." ●



Founded in 1999

Established with a vision to create premium products.



Single-Site Production

Full control over design, quality & logistics on one campus.



Exported to 40+ Countries

Distributed across Europe, Asia & the Middle East.



Patented Innovation

Proprietary filter tech & bold design set a new industry standard.



Diversified Portfolio

Expanded into brandy, vodka & digital food services.

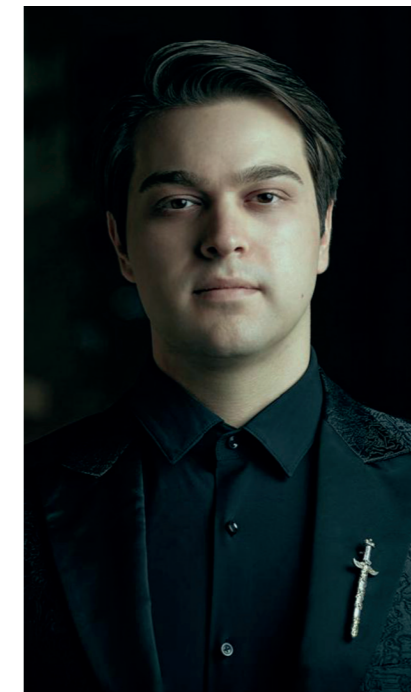
Armen Pogossian on Innovation & Luxury



From onboarding to upskilling, staff development remains a priority.

How has growing up in the company shaped your role as a leader?

From a young age, I was raised with the goal of leading our family company. My family and I worked toward that vision. If I hadn't had the mindset or ability, I wouldn't have accepted the responsibility. I spent years preparing mentally and physically. At 15, I began with manual labor, lifting and moving boxes all summer. That taught me teamwork, discipline and the value of every person on the ground. A leader must understand the motivations and challenges of each team member. Later, I studied international relations, economics and philosophy in Canada, which taught me to value creativity over memorization. Living abroad and being trilingual helped me think globally and shift perspectives. Back in Armenia, I worked in production, sales and marketing, gaining experience at every level before stepping into leadership. My approach is to build on the company's progress while introducing innovation. In a family business, you carry not just your goals, but the duty to leave something strong for the next generation.



"We don't rush. We refine, test & perfect!"

ARMEN POGOSSIAN
Co-Owner, Cigaronne

How has Cigaronne evolved since its founding?

Since 1999, Cigaronne has been driven by innovation. Many industry norms today were pioneered by us. From the start, our mission was to introduce a new product culture and challenge expectations. We set ourselves apart with a new standard in luxury cigarettes, combining patented technology with precision design. That philosophy still defines us. We do not settle for what works; we imagine what has not been done. We didn't just compete in the premium market, but rather we created a new category. At every step, we reimagine how a product should look, feel and function. Cigaronne is about engineering beauty into something familiar and raising the standard. We do not follow trends. We move at our own pace, guided by values and vision.

Tell us about Jardins d'Armenie, Godfather Vodka & your product philosophy.

Our product philosophy is about rethinking luxury. Jardins d'Armenie, our 35-year-old royal brandy, offers a new experience. It comes with patented sample cups so customers can taste before buying. Many spend \$1,555 on a bottle for the name. We invite them to buy for taste, not branding. The brandy blends ten spirits from Voskehat vineyards and matures in oak, then apricot wood, then oak again. Godfather Vodka is one of our oldest brands. It was the first to use technology that reduces heavy metals and toxins, the same compounds often linked to hangovers. Dozens of experiments went into refining it. Both products reflect our identity: challenging the norm and delivering excellence.

What makes your new venture, LiveChef, unique in food service?

LiveChef brings fine dining to people's homes and builds trust in ghost kitchens. Customers can watch their meals being



Jardins d'Arménie Brandy

35-year-aged, sold with patented sample cups for taste-first buying.



Godfather Vodka

Uses advanced filtration to reduce toxins & enhance purity.



LiveChef Platform

Livestreamed meal prep with in-home dining & drone delivery in testing.



1,200+ Employees

Focused on workforce development through training & language programs.



Armenian Identity

A global brand built on originality, precision & national pride.

prepared via kitchen cameras. Even if they don't, our team monitors the process to ensure high standards. We also offer full table service, cleanup and on-site chefs. Many offer catering. We create an experience which is personal, high-end and memorable. It's something everyone should try at least once.

What does Cigaronne's global presence say about Armenia's potential?

It shows that Armenia has real potential, just like any country or company with vision and drive. Cigaronne reflects what Armenia's future can be. Though small and resource-limited, Armenians are known for craftsmanship and creativity. We shine in luxury not by volume, but by originality and quality. We succeed by being different and aiming high. I hope more Armenian brands earn global recognition and help position Armenia as a rising force in luxury.

What is your message to Forbes readers?

Never underestimate the value of originality and long-term thinking. It's easy to copy what works. True leadership means creating what others won't dare. Success comes from discipline, preparation and courage. Whether building a brand from a small country or entering a crowded field, your perspective is your strength. Build products that reflect who you are. Raise your craft. Leave something that lasts. That's true success, not just growing a company but raising the standard for others. ●



Leadership team meets to review growth & innovation strategy.



LiveChef blends culinary artistry with continuous product innovation.



Armen Pogossian presents Jardins d'Arménie to H.S.H. Prince Albert II.

Jardins d'Arménie Debuts in Monaco

Armen Pogossian, the driving force behind several of Armenia's emerging luxury ventures, marked a new milestone with the international debut of Jardins d'Arménie Royal Brandy in Monaco. The launch offered a clear reflection of how Armenian entrepreneurs are presenting their heritage, creativity and craftsmanship to the world. It also demonstrated how Armenia's premium sector is evolving into a space defined by originality and strong identity rather than scale. The event took place at the Hôtel Hermitage Monte Carlo, where an invited audience gathered in the Salle Belle Époque for an evening that blended culture, gastronomy and design. Traditional mu-

sic and dance accompanied a curated exhibition of Armenian art, creating a setting that connected the product to the broader cultural narrative it represents. The presence of H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco gave the launch a distinguished international profile. At the same time, the evening demonstrated the growing confidence of Armenian creators within global luxury circles.

Jardins d'Arménie reflects the philosophy that guides much of Pogossian's work: precision, long term thinking and a belief that Armenian products can compete at the highest level when craftsmanship leads the process. The introduction of Royal Brandy as a distinct category fits within this vision, presenting a spirit that draws from

Armenian heritage while aligning with contemporary expectations of refinement. The brandy is made from Voskehat grapes sourced across multiple regions in Armenia, each contributing to its character. Its aging journey involves oak, then apricot wood, then a return to oak for final structure. During the Monaco launch, sommelier Bruno Scavo guided guests through a detailed tasting and emphasized the layered profile created through this method. His analysis positioned the spirit within a growing movement where Armenian producers are applying technical rigor to traditional practices to meet international standards.

Attention also centered on the product's design elements. The hermetic cap system,

"Our success shows what Armenia is capable of. We want the world to know Armenia not only for its history, but for its creativity and innovation."

ARMEN POGOSSIAN
Co-Owner, Cigaronne



Pogossian presents Jardins d'Arménie Royal Brandy at Monaco.



Jardins d'Arménie global launch gala, Hôtel Hermitage Monte Carlo.



Royal Brandy presented with its signature degustation set.

built to preserve aroma integrity, and the custom degustation cups highlight the importance placed on user experience and presentation. These details illustrate how Armenian luxury is increasingly defined by thoughtful innovation rather than ornamentation. They also show how producers aim to elevate expectations around Armenian spirits by focusing on quality, transparency and meaningful engagement with the product.

The debut in Monaco offered more than a product introduction. It showed how Armenian creators, supported by artists, designers and cultural institutions, are shaping a coherent and modern expression of national identity. The combination of art, music and refined hospitality demonstrated the strength of an ecosystem where tradition and contemporary thinking work in harmony.

As Jardins d'Arménie prepares to enter selective European markets, it does so at a time when global consumers place growing value on authenticity, origin and craftsmanship. The brandy adds to a wave of Armenian premium products that are finding recognition by remaining true to their roots while embracing innovation. The Monaco event signaled that Armenia's luxury sector is gaining visibility and that its leading figures, including Armen Pogossian, are helping define a new chapter for the country on the international stage. ●

The Art and Mastery of Fine Spirits



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