

How a Supermodel’s Viral Video Sparked Heinz x Absolut Vodka Sauce



HEINZ

X

ABSOLUT VODKA

When a simple recipe became a go-to for home chefs and celebrities alike, two global powerhouses saw their opportunity to capitalize on the trend with a fun, campy twist.

Sure, pasta with vodka sauce has long been a menu item at upscale, American-Italian spots like Carbone, Rao’s, and Il Mulino, where chefs have perfected their own versions of the dish. These white-tablecloth renditions often come with luxurious riffs like truffle oil or seafood, with plenty of influencers flocking to restaurants just to take photos with their pink pasta. But with coveted reservations harder to score than ever, and the desire for a little decadence still alive, why not make something as chichi as vodka sauce accessible and affordable?

Enter a global pandemic, a pause in dining out, and a shift in how people approach food. In 2020, a video that Gigi Hadid made of her *penne alla vodka* went viral, sparking a full-blown vodka sauce craze. What started as a simple, indulgent recipe quickly turned into a social media sensation, with millions of home cooks jumping on the trend. In 2022, inspired by Hadid’s viral video and the growing love for the creamy pasta, Heinz—which had already started expanding their line of condiments to include pasta sauce—saw an opportunity. Heinz, masters of the tomato, recognized the need for vodka expertise to complete their vision. After collaborating with their creative team at VML, Absolut became the clear and obvious

choice. This win-win partnership leverages the iconic status of both brands, with the campaign paying homage to Absolut’s groundbreaking 80s advertising.

The timing couldn’t have been better. With pandemic-driven changes in home cooking and an explosion of food trends on social media, the collaboration wasn’t just timely—it was a direct response to a cultural moment. Home chefs, increasingly inspired by Instagram and TikTok, were searching for quick, elevated meals that didn’t require much effort. And with its limited-edition run, the Heinz x Absolut sauce had the foresight to see how abruptly taste, and trends, might evolve. It was a quick convenience with a fine-dining twist.

The ad campaign played into this pop culture moment with tongue-in-cheek references to the Absolut bottle and punny taglines like “ABSOLUTELY PASTA, RIDICULOUSLY GOOD.” The packaging even took the classic Heinz label design and added the delicate, calligraphic font you’d recognize from classic Absolut bottles. The visuals were a playful nod to the intersection of social media, pantry staples, and those viral food trends that are as fun to try as they are to share *for the ‘Gram*.



New Heinz
Tomato Vodka Pasta Sauce
**ABSOLUTELY PASTA
RIDICULOUSLY GOOD**