

Johnnie Walker whisky is named world's leading alcoholic drink

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Scotch whisky Johnnie Walker has been named the world's leading alcoholic drink in an annual league table.

The brand, which originated in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, has overtaken Smirnoff vodka thanks to growing demand in China and Eastern Europe, industry experts said.

The Diageo-owned whisky came out on top in the Power 100 annual survey of world drinks brands.

Nearly 10,000 brands of spirits and wines are researched to draw up a list of the 100 most powerful.

Drinks are rated by criteria including share of the market, potential for future growth and customer awareness.

Stuart Whitwell, of Intangible Business, which produces the Power 100, said: "The growth of Scotch whisky is mostly down to the rising middle classes in China whose thirst for premium brands reflects growing aspirations."

Diageo moved production from the brand's original home in Ayrshire to plants in Leven, Fife, and Shieldhall, Glasgow in 2009.