

# How Fanta was invented in Nazi Germany to quench people's thirst for Coke

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Fanta is for many the definitive orange soda. Popular worldwide, the brand has always been owned by Coca-Cola. But the drink was actually created in Germany, and owes its existence to ingredient shortages during the Second World War. The Nazi past of Fanta wasn't particularly well known until very recently.

Before Pepsi cancelled a badly thought out advert in April featuring Kendall Jenner breaking up tensions at a protest armed with a can of Pepsi, Fanta had its foot-in-mouth moment when it publicized its Nazi origins with a 2015 ad to mark its 75th birthday.

In the advert, a narrator explains how the "smart heads" at Coca Cola invented Fanta in Germany because there was a shortage of the ingredients needed to make Coke, making no mention of the fact that ingredients were scarce because the Allies had embargoed the Nazis during the war.

The narrator then goes on to say that to celebrate the drink's 75th birthday "we're bringing back the feeling of the good old days."

A spokeswoman from Fanta told The Local, that the advert wasn't necessarily referring back to the 1940s.

"We wanted to remind our consumers of their childhoods. For example the design we used of the classic annulated bottle comes from the 1960s."

The advert was quickly discontinued, but the embarrassment had already caused offence to many who had seen it.

The actual history behind the creation of the drink is sometimes misunderstood. Legend has it that Hitler wanted his troops to drink the finest oranges from his fascist ally Italy, but the truth is more mundane.

Coca-Cola was growing rapidly in Germany and the rest of Europe in the pre-war years. Between 1933-39 the numbers of crates of Coke sold in Nazi Germany rose from about 100,000 to 4.5 million per year, and 50 factories were built to meet demand, according to Zeit.

The brand was so popular that it became one of the official sponsors of the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, widely seen as a propaganda event for Hitler.

But after war broke out in 1939 it became increasingly difficult to transport the syrups needed to make Coke to the German factories due to various embargoes on imports into the Nazi Reich. Because of this, production of Coke ceased in Germany during the war.

Max Keith, the head of the company in Germany, didn't want to give up altogether though, so he got together a few readily available ingredients.

The recipe included scraps and leftovers from various industrial processes. Whey was used from milk factories and scraps of various fruits, mainly apples, from the fruit pressing factories were added with various other ingredients to make the drink they called Fanta.

The orange Fanta we know today only became flavoured with citrus fruits in the 1950s. A bottling plant in Naples, Italy, started producing and selling Fanta orange in 1955, using locally sourced citrus fruits, a spokeswoman told *The Local*.

The story behind the name is also very interesting. *Die Presse* reports that Fanta originated from the German word *Fantastisch*, meaning fantastic. The name was chosen in collaboration with Coca Cola HQ in the US, who weren't impressed by the product and thought it needed an exciting word to sell it.

But the drink proved vastly popular with the German public, although it was only introduced to the rest of the world several years after the war, reaching global popularity by the 1970s.