



About Systembolaget

A presentation of Systembolaget, our history and our aims.

The government monopoly in alcohol retailing is a Swedish innovation dating back to the mid-1800s. Similar monopolies also exist today in Norway, Finland, Iceland, Canada and several states in the USA.

The monopoly is based on the principle that there should be no private profit motive in the sale of alcohol. (Without any private profit

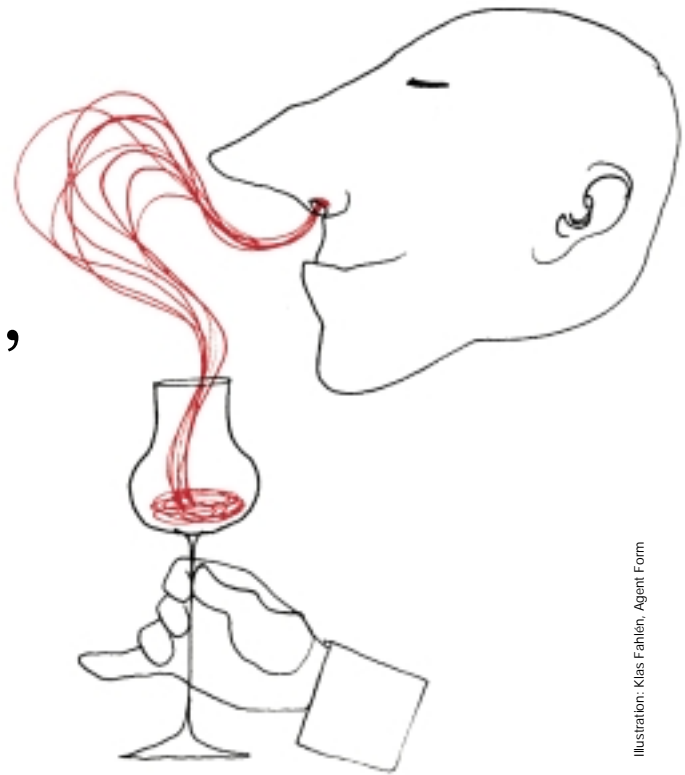


Illustration: Kias Fahlén, Agent Form

Our vision: We promote a health drinking culture, in which everyone can enjoy the beverages we sell, without doing harm to themselves or others.



Our mission.

motive, there is no reason to try to persuade customers to buy as much as possible, and no reason to sell to people less than 20 years old).

This idea has proved highly effective in practice. Alcohol consumption in Sweden, which in the early 1800s was

1850

A number of Falun mine-owners form the first "Systembolaget".
The profit goes to public causes.

1860

Home-distilling is prohibited.



1905

Riksdagen (the Swedish Parliament) orders all
vodka sales to be handled via special companies.



1914

Compulsory ration books and individual rationing comes
in with the establishment of AB Stockholmssystemet.

1917

AB Vin & Spritcentralen is formed, taking over all wholesaling activities.

1919

Compulsory rationing is introduced throughout Sweden and the local
Systembolaget companies also acquire a monopoly in wine sales.



1922

Referendum on total prohibition
– 889,000 vote for and 925,000 against.

1955

The ration book is abolished and the regional Systembolaget
companies are merged into one nationwide retailing company.

1957

Riksdagen votes to introduce blacklists and
the compulsory showing of identification.



1969

The minimum age is lowered from 21 to 20 years.

among the highest in Europe, is today among the lowest. The scale of alcohol-related problems is much less than in comparable countries without an alcohol retailing monopoly. But since Sweden joined the EU, the monopoly can no longer be taken for granted. It will only survive if it is supported by a majority of the Swedish population. So we have to do everything we can to ensure the continuing and growing satisfaction of customers.

Having a monopoly is a good start. It means we can maintain a more comprehensive product range, more rigorous

1977

Blacklists are abolished.



1991

Systembolaget's first self-service store opens in Filipstad.

1994

The European Commission accepts Systembolaget's monopoly in alcohol retailing.

1995

Vin & Sprit AB's monopoly is dismantled and Systembolaget acquires 159 suppliers, instead of one.

1996

The number of suppliers increases – to more than 200 – and the number of products to more than 4,500, compared to 1,600 in 1990.

1997

Verdict from European Court: Systembolaget can retain the alcohol retailing monopoly.



1999

Systembolaget launches the "Store of the Year" competition. The idea is to highlight a well-run store as an example to others and to draw attention to and reward the efforts of the store's personnel.

2000

Saturday opening is trialled in six Swedish counties. Researchers confirm afterwards that neither the number of cases of physical abuse nor the number of cases of driving under the influence of alcohol have increased in the counties involved.

2001

All Systembolaget stores open on Saturday. The basic product range is launched around 400 products that will always be stocked in all stores.



We have turned our former price list into a real Product Catalogue. Product descriptions have become fuller, with flavour charts and food symbols to help you choose the right drink for the right food. Red and white wines have also been divided into new, more clearly defined flavour categories. Right at the back, a fact-packed glossary of beverage terms is helpfully added.

quality control and better trained employees than anyone would be capable of in a market open to competition.

In fact, our product range is among the most extensive in the world, with a regular range of around 3,000 brands of beer, wine and spirits from around 40 countries, and just as many products available to order.

And it is there for the whole popu-

lation, not just city-dwellers. What is in stock will, of course, vary from store to store; a small store normally has around 700 brands, while a large one will have more than 1,500.



Illustration: Klaus Fahlten, Agent Form

Don't hesitate: if there is something you are wondering about, ask.



Photo Nils Borge

During the rationing book era, bottles were wrapped in paper so there was less temptation to buy.

But anything that is not in stock can be ordered so it will arrive in the store next day (a day after that for people living on the island

of Gotland, or north of Sundsvall).

The most popular brands of all – about 400 products of various kinds – are always in stock in all our stores.

Because we buy on such a huge scale, we can also afford to cater to

somewhat more specialist tastes.

Our product range is constantly changing. Every year, we introduce around 900 new products. (Which ones are kept on depends on which ones our customers buy).

For every new product introduced, our buyers have selected 30–40 candidates of possible interest. Each one is then blind-tested by our experienced tasters, who choose the best one (the grading scale extends from 1 to 9, where 1 is defective, 2 is very poor and 9 is outstanding, taking price and origin into account).

We also have our own laboratory, where not only new products but also faithful old retainers are tested. Every year, we work our way through the entire regular range, and take random samples from the range available to order, to make sure there is no let-up in quality.



Illustration Klas Fahlén, Agent Form

This work is beyond the gaze of the outside world, but it means that you can be confident that if you like a wine it will taste as good every time, and that the list of ingredients will be accurate.

If a below-quality product nonetheless slips through and we receive a complaint about it, we send it to the laboratory. There we can quickly establish whether this is a one-off event or a whole batch is affected. If it is the latter, we immediately withdraw the product from all our stores.

In 1991, we started converting our stores to self-service, to make visiting



In most communities where there is no Systembolaget store, we have a local agent, often a country store or other shop. Here, you can order goods from our entire range, with many being available for next-day delivery. The service is free of charge.

Photo: Patrik Johansson

Systembolaget a more pleasant experience and to make it easier for you to find what you want.



Photo Henrik Lindvall

In the new stores, it is easier to navigate your way around and find what you are looking for.

In the new stores, it is quicker for customers who do not need help from the staff.

And those who want help can consult our staff in peace and quiet, without a queue building up behind them at the till.

Every year, we are converting a number of our approximately 420

not how they are built, but the people who work in them. And how much they know. Partly because they are extremely well-trained and partly because most of them are passionately interested in food and drink.

In our customer satisfaction surveys – based on interviews with around 60,000 customers throughout Sweden – our personnel get top marks for product knowledge and quality of advice, year after year. An achievement we are more than proud of.

But we will continue to aim even higher in the knowledge we share. We

must be more informative, and better at inspiring choices. We must become better at taking time to listen.

Against that background, we have established a competition – “Store of the Year” –highlighting a well-run store to serve as an example to others. So we can share experiences, hatch new ideas and energize development – always so that ultimately we can offer customers the best possible service.

The very best praise we can receive is when customers come back and tell us that the drink we recommended was spot on.

We apologize for the service today in our Valbo store. (The store's managers are on work experience training).



You don't become a wine expert overnight.

Our regular personnel are away on a training trip to southern Europe.

The trip is a prize to the personnel of the store at Valbo, winner of Systembolaget's "Store of the Year" competition.

A competition that has rather different aims from

similar events at other retail chains. Those, after all, are usually about the people who sold most.

At Systembolaget, if anything, the reverse applies.

One of the most important criteria is age verification – how well a store succeeds in avoiding sales to under-age buyers. Another is how satisfied customers are. A third is personnel satisfaction.

While the members of personnel of the winning store are away on their trip, our managers have taken over the day-to-day activities of the store.

While this may be useful experience for the management, customers may feel that service is suffering. So, if you are thinking of calling in at our Valbo store, near Gävle, please bear with us.

Everything may take a little longer than usual. And if you have any questions such as "What goes with Bibim Bap", it's safest to call Customer Services (020-85 85 00) before going in.

Or you could wait until next week



Advertisement,
spring 2003.



Photo: Henrik Lindvall

So, if there is something you are wondering about, never hesitate to ask!

Consult our in-store per-

sonnel, or call Customer Services on 020-85 85 00. They have advice on everything from which drink goes best with sushi, to how to organize a wine-tasting session.

Otherwise, you can visit our homepage at www.systembolaget.se

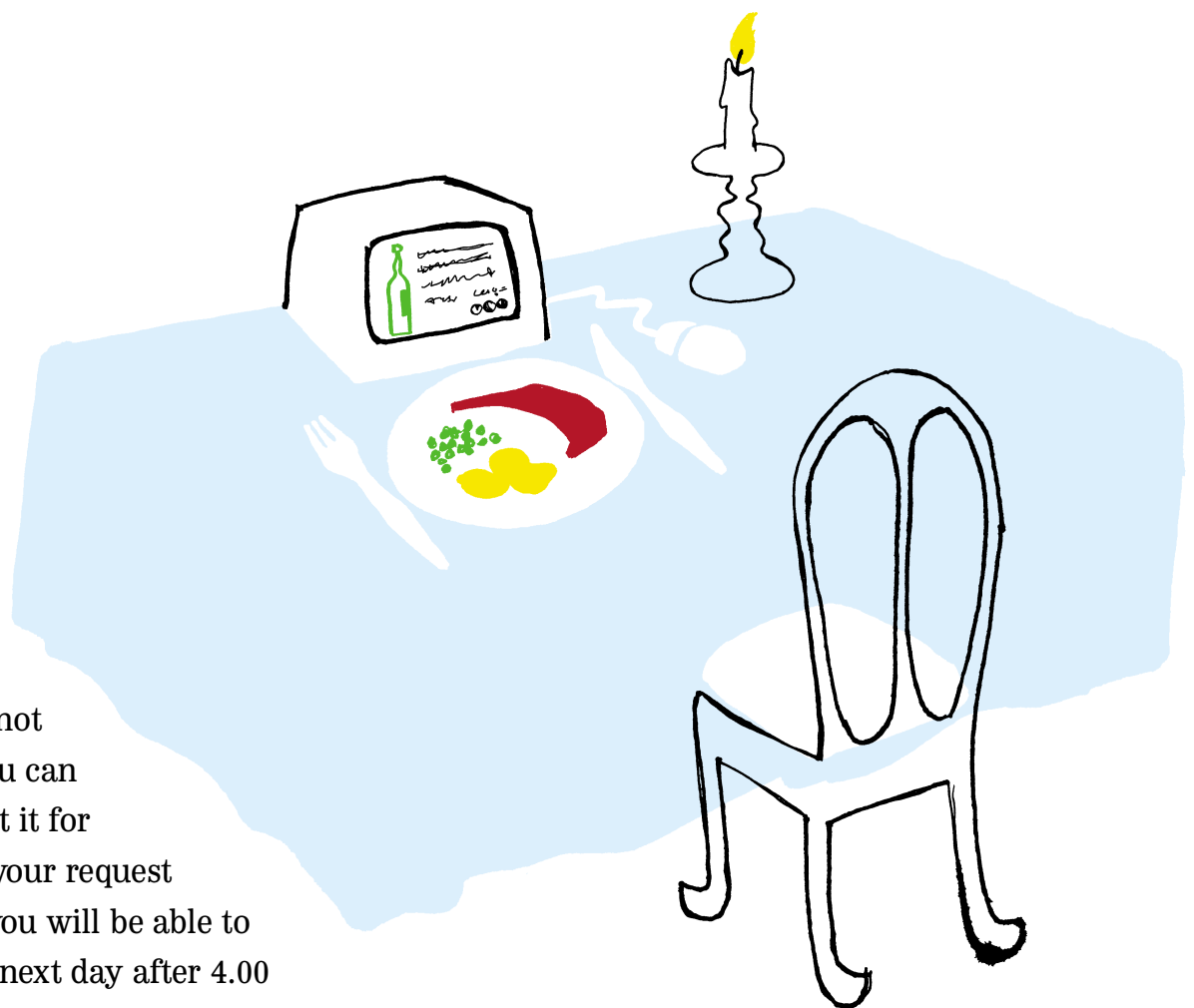
Along with a host of useful in-

formation on opening hours, which products are in stock at your local store, products new in this month and much else, the site has a big “inspirations” section, with stacks of mouthwatering recipes and suggestions for drinks to go with them. The section also has suggestions about things to remember when selecting food and drink combinations. And a great deal more.

Systembolaget’s vision states that we should promote a “healthy drinking culture”. This does not imply that we should dictate what is right and

wrong to drink, or that we should only advocate expensive wines.

Rather that we should try to inspire people to be more interested in what they drink – to focus on quality not quantity.



Visit our homepage if you want to check what your store has in stock. If a product in the standard range is not available there, you can ask the store to get it for you. If you make your request before 3.45 p.m., you will be able to collect your order next day after 4.00 p.m. (If you live on the island of Gotland or north of Sundsvall, you will have to wait another day).

And help via information, both on the flavour characteristics of drinks and their effect on health. Our conviction is this: the more people know, the better they will handle alcohol.

That is why we have turned our former price list into a real Product Catalogue, with plentiful information and tips on the right food and drink combinations.

But the most important aspect of our work is actually not what we do, but what we do not do. We do not sell to people less than 20 years of age, nor to people who we suspect intend to sup-



Illustration Kias Fahlen, Agent Form

We do not sell to just anyone. Not to anyone aged less than 20 years, not to anyone obviously under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicant, and not to anyone we suspect of intending to sell the goods on.

ply it unlawfully to a third party, nor to anyone obviously under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicant.

Checks to prevent under-age drinking are a particularly important part of what we do. We are constantly working to make these checks more effective, for example via regular internal verification, so that everyone who looks as if they may be less than 20 years old is asked to show identification.

One important incentive in this work is the knowledge that the later people take their first drink, the less risk they run of alcohol dependency.



The “Spola kröken” abstinence campaign conducted through various associations and sports clubs in the 1970s and 1980s lives on in the Swedish consciousness.

(American research indicates that the risk is reduced by 14 percent for every year that the first drink is postponed).

We will also continue to educate people about the downsides of alcohol. For example, why alcohol is hazardous to pregnant women, and why it should not be consumed in connection with driving, or at sea.

And we will never try and persuade you to buy more than you had planned.



Nya tider – nya seder ...

"... till att vill jag ge en komplimang åt vårt stadsfolk för att de följer med mig tid. Jag menar det här med en middag där spriten (den svenska plats för vin. För jagas vill väl påstå att fest-
skänkeligen blivit större för det. Tvärtom! Och för min egen del tycker jag att det är vilja mellan
vin och alkoholfritt. Den socialkonstruktiva uppöppningen verkligare vi som inte bli och de som vill tacka
och vill alkoholfritt av andra skäl. Nya tider, nya seder, heter det står. Själv för dem... och
Greta... Sen... för en utökat middag."

Några exempel på gods och billiga viner

Allmänna vin	Vitt vin
Grappin (grappin) 1/2 l. 100 och 102 10	Castello (kastell) 1/2 l. 100
Malin 1/2 l. 102 och 103 10	Vittlind (vitlind) 1/2 l. 100
Miscellaneous allmänna viner	Redvin 1/2 l. 100
Chateau de Groussin 1/2 l. 100	Malin 1/2 l. 100
Äldre	Storr Amoralde 1/2 l. 100
Entenstora (entenstora) 1/2 l. 100	(Amoralde) 1/2 l. 100
Vino Tinto (vino) 1/2 l. 100	Storr Red (storr) 1/2 l. 100
Vino Chianti (vino) 1/2 l. 100	Storr (storr) 1/2 l. 100
Redvin 1/2 l. 100	
Storr (storr) 1/2 l. 100	



För 3-4 kr får Ni
en Årbarhet vin eller en
flaska alkoholfritt
SYSTEMBOLAGET

New times, new customs – and Systembolaget's profile is no exception. In 1958, consumer information was a new concept that was intended to encourage a shift to lower-alcohol drinks.

Which is one of the main reasons why Sweden, where there is no private profit motive in the sale of alcohol, has fewer reported instances of alcohol-related damage than countries where the sale of alcohol is totally unrestricted.

And, as we said, we are ready to

fight for Sweden's right to keep its monopoly in alcohol retailing. We will do everything in our power to ensure that you are satisfied with us. But we need your help.

If there is anything you are not happy with, tell us! If you have anything you are wondering about, ask us! We promise to listen and to try and answer.

Write to Systembolaget, Customer Services, 103 84 Stockholm or e-mail us at kundtjanst@systembolaget.se

Systembolaget is yours as much as ours.

Major events during 2002

We converted another 17 stores to self-service £ and opened three brand-new stores.

A new in-store IT system was installed, providing £ a better service to customers.

942 new products were introduced into the range, which £ today comprises approximately 6,000 different articles.

We started using a new product range management £ system (partly to further guarantee quality and availability £ of goods and partly to make the range easier to navigate).

A range of new alcohol-free products was introduced.

We established a product depot to ensure fast £ delivery of ordered goods.

We quality assured our own checks for under-age purchases.

The store at Valbo, near Gävle, was chosen as Store of the Year.

We started advertising the monopoly.

In an international competition, our food and drink £ book “För alla sinnen” (“For all the senses”) was £ named as the best book in the world on wine.

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