

World Watches Academy Awards of Water in Berkeley Springs



BERKELEY SPRINGS, WV – The Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting, the world’s most prestigious, gave out awards to waters from three continents. Municipal water winners included a best in the world and a best in the US. Clearbrook, British Columbia, Canada, added a new gold to its multiple medals as Best Water in the World. The gold medal for Best in the US went to Eldorado Springs, CO, their first gold. The first-ever municipal water entered from Australia won the silver for Marysville in Victoria province. Independence, MO, won the bronze. California waters finished off the top five with Santa Ana winning fourth and Mission Springs Water District, Desert Hot Springs placing fifth. All three had ranked or won medals in past contests. “The consistency in winners from year to year with different panels of judges validates the choices,” remarked perennial watermaster, Arthur von Wiesenberger. “It also speaks to the impressively high caliber of the waters entered.”

The room went wild when the Best Bottled Water was announced because Theoni Natural Mineral Water of Greece was present, winning over 27 other entries. This event marked Theoni’s launch in the US market. Canadian waters won silver, bronze and fourth place honors: Prairie Crystal Pure Spring Water, Marchand MB; Eau De Source 83 ppm, Village Blanchard, NB and Davia Organic Maple Sap Water, Saint-Quentin, NB respectively. Antipodes, Whakatane, New Zealand placed fifth. The audience was filled with water enthusiasts coming from as far as Canada and California. Ten media judges spent hours tasting and selecting from waters sourced in 18 states, seven Canadian provinces and five foreign countries. “There were waters from Macedonia, Greece, France and four from New Zealand” said Jeanne Mozier, an event founder.

Sparkling waters were sourced from five countries. The best sparkling water in the world was Tesanjki Kiseljak, Tesanj, Bosnia. The silver medal went to Touch Sparkling Mineral Water, Marchand, MB. The bronze winner was another Bosnian water, Celvick Dobri Kiseljak, Tesanj. There was a three-way tie for fourth: Oro Luxury Water, Vizianius, Macedonia; Nakd Luxury Sparkling Water, Putaruru, New Zealand and Deluge Sparkling Natural Spring Water, Oro-Medonte, ON, Canada.

Purified waters are a relatively new addition to the water world; often, municipal systems bottle their water. The gold medal went to Bar H2O, Richmond, MI, which was a silver medalist in 2015. New this year was silver medalist, Divinia, Idaho Falls, ID. Bronze honors went to Hamilton On Tap, Hamilton, OH, which holds three previous golds in the municipal division. Fourth and fifth place winners bottle famous Berkeley Springs water with Mountain Drop, Linthicum, MD placing fourth and Berkeley Springs Purified Water, Berkeley Springs, WV.

"It was another wonderful year for the longest running and largest water tasting in the world," said von Wiesenberger. "Berkeley Springs is the Academy Awards of water."

The crowd was interested in the peoples' choice packaging competition where it was their votes that chose which of the seven entrants was the most alluring. They voted the gold by an overwhelming margin to Nakd Luxury Artesian Water, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand. Also a New Zealand contender, Antipodes of Whakatane won the silver. Third place was Jackson Springs Natural Premium Spring Water, Middlebro, MB, Canada, sporting on the label their past gold medal for best bottled water.

Conclusion of the daylong water tasting was the famed water rush, where the audience is invited to take home hundreds of bottles of water sent as part of the judging. "I spent about six hours arranging all the waters in a display," said Mozier. "The crowd spent less than ten minutes making it all disappear. It's like a Tibetan sand mandala," she laughed. "I was pleased to see our favorite couple from Brooklyn in the rush. Peter and Cynthia Lloyd come every year, especially for the water tasting – and the rush."

The 10 media judges selected by Klein Rone included representatives from various regional and national media, including television and online magazines. They were instructed by von Wiesenberger to look, sniff and taste each water under guidelines similar to those in a wine tasting. The waters were rated for each attribute including appearance (it should be clear - or slightly opaque for glacial waters), aroma (there should be none), taste (it should taste clean), mouth feel (it should feel light), aftertaste (it should leave you thirsty for more). Waters were tasted in four separate rounds over two days. "The judges' job is crucial and so is their training," said Mozier. "We wanted to acknowledge this and developed the Certified Water Taster designation, presented to all of our judges with diplomas."

The event was live-streamed for the first time, using new technology from Comcast, operated by the Morgan Arts Council's Digital Media Center. It can be seen on www.berkeleysprings.com. For more information on Berkeley Springs or its water tasting, call (800) 447-8797 or check the website. The 27th annual Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting is scheduled for Saturday, February 25, 2017.

Best Municipal Water 2016

- 1st – Clearbrook, Abbotsford, BC, Canada (Best in the World)
- 1st in US – Eldorado Springs, CO (Best in US)
- 2nd – Marysville, Victoria, Australia
- 3rd – Independence, MO
- 4th – Santa Ana, CA
- 5th – Mission Springs Water District, Desert Hot Springs, CA

Best Bottled Water 2016

- 1st – Theoni Natural Mineral Water, Karditsa, Greece
- 2nd – Prairie Crystal Pure Spring Water, Marchand MB, Canada
- 3rd – Eau De Source 83 ppm, Village Blanchard, NB, Canada
- 4th - Davia Organic Maple Sap Water, Saint-Quentin, NB, Canada
- 5th – Antipodes, Whakatane, New Zealand

Best Sparkling – 2016

- 1st – Tesanjski Kiseljak, Tesanj, Bosnia
- 2nd – Touch Sparkling Mineral Water, Marchand, MB, Canada
- 3rd – Celvick Dobri Kiseljak, Tesanj, Bosnia
- 4th (three-way tie) – Oro Luxury Water, Vizianius, Macedonia; Nakd Luxury Sparkling Water, Putaruru, New Zealand and Deluge Sparkling Natural Spring Water, Oro-Medonte, ON, Canada

Best Purified Drinking Water – 2016

- 1st – Bar H2O, Richmond, MI
- 2nd – Divinia, Idaho Falls, ID
- 3rd – Hamilton On Tap, Hamilton, OH
- 4th – Mountain Drop, Linthicum, MD bottling famous Berkeley Springs water
- 5th – Berkeley Springs Purified Water, Berkeley Springs, WV

Best Packaging -- 2016

- 1st – Nakd Luxury Artesian Water, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand
- 2nd -- Antipodes, Whakatane, New Zealand
- 3rd – Jackson Springs Natural Premium Spring Water, Middlebro, MB, Canada