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Travel Berkeley Springs - Berkeley Springs, WV

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BIG WINS AT OLYMPICS OF WATER IN BERKELEY SPRINGS

BERKELEY SPRINGS, WV -----

The Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting, the world's most prestigious, gave out awards tonight to waters from four continents. Five continents had waters among the nearly 100 entered.

The municipal water category was a battle of champions with previous gold medal winner Village of Montpelier, OH judged best in the world for 2022. Silver medal went to multiple medal winner, Metropolitan Water District of Southern CA, and another winner of numerous medals won bronze, Mission Springs Water District, Desert Hot Springs, CA. 4th and 5th went to Fort Wayne, IN, and Hamilton, OH, respectively.

“The consistency in winners from year to year with different panels of judges validates the choices,” remarked esteemed watermaster, Arthur von Wiesenberger. “It also speaks to the impressively high caliber of the waters entered.”

The Best Non-Carbonated Water category winner was a new entry, Vortex Energy from Meriden, CT. Silver medal went to Halstead Springs, Speedwell, TN. Asagiri no Shizuku, Shizuka, Japan tied with Smeraldina Still Water, Sardinia, Italy, for bronze. 4th place was also a tie between previous winners Grand Springs, Alton, VA and Theoni Natural Mineral Water, Karditsa, Greece.

The event proves valuable for bottled waters both carbonated and still. Waters use a win in Berkeley Springs for bragging rights and often redesign their labels to include the gold, silver, or bronze medal. Over a dozen entrants in the 2022 contest sported a medal decorated label.

Nine media judges spent hours tasting and selecting from waters sourced in sixteen states, three Canadian provinces and eighteen foreign countries. "There were entries from two new countries this year: St. Kitts and Nevis, and Indonesia. The total of countries over the life of the event is 59, including waters from Tasmania, Turkey, Bosnia, Greece, and Australia," said Jill Klein Rone, event producer.

In the Sparkling water category, the gold medal went to first time entry, Big Wet Sparkling Spring Water, Victoria, Australia. Boston Clear Water, Lynnfield, MA and Vortex Energy, Meriden, CT tied for the silver medal. Bronze went to Aqua To Go Sparkling Natural Spring Water, Victoria, Australia. Antipodes Water, Otakiri, Whakatane, New Zealand came in 4th.

For the second year in a row, the gold medal winner in the Purified Water category is Ophora Hyper-Oxygenated Water, Santa Barbara, CA, who also won gold in 2018. Silver medal went to former medalist, Hamilton on Tap, Hamilton, OH. Bronze is also a former medalist, Lesage Natural Water, Lesage, WV.

"It was another wonderful year for the largest and longest running water tasting in the world," said von Wiesenberger. "Berkeley Springs is the Olympics of water." He also praised the selection of the Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Shayron Barnes-Selby and welcomed participation of the award sponsorship by Tesanjki kiseljak and company Zema d.o.o from Tesanj, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Online voting for the People's Choice package design was initiated in 2021. The packaging category had 10 entrants competing for most alluring. Bright Hawaiian blooms on the aqua bottle earned Hawaiian Springs Natural Artesian Water, Kea'au, HI, the gold medal for best package design. Antipodes, Otakiri, Whakatane, New Zealand won the silver medal, and the bronze went to Babinda Springs, Babinda, Queensland, Australia. Multi medalist Svalbarði Polar Iceberg Water Jade Edition, Longyearbyen, Norway placed 4th and Smeraldina Water, Sardinia, Italy was 5th.

Conclusion of the daylong water tasting is the famed "water rush" where the audience is invited to take home hundreds of bottles of water sent as part of the judging. While it takes hours to arrange the bottles, the crowd spent less

than ten minutes making it all disappear. “We were 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,” said Klein Rone.

The nine media judges selected by Klein Rone included representatives from Wonderland Entertainment, The Washington Post and the WV Department of Tourism, as well as various regional and national media including newspapers, websites, and online and print magazines. They were trained 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).

The judges’ job is crucial and so is their training. All judges are presented with a diploma designating them as a Certified Water Taster.

The event was produced by Travel Berkeley Springs and held at The Country Inn, with support from presenting sponsor, Hawaiian Springs Water. The 33rd annual Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting is scheduled for Saturday, February 25, 2023. The event seminar on Friday and Saturday’s award ceremony were live streamed and are archived for future viewing on the BerkeleySpringsWV Facebook page. For more information on Berkeley Springs or its water tasting, call 304-258-9147 or check the website.

Best Municipal Water – 2022

1st – Village of Montpelier, OH

2nd - Metropolitan Water District of Southern CA

3rd – Mission Springs Water District, Desert Hot Springs, CA

4th -- Fort Wayne, IN

5th – Hamilton, OH

Best Non-carbonated Water – 2022

1st – Vortex Energy, Meriden, CT

2nd – Halstead Springs, Speedwell, TN

Tie 3rd – Asagiri no Shizuku, Shizuka, Japan

Tie 3rd – Smeraldina Still Water, Sardinia, Italy

Tie 4th – Theoni Natural Mineral Water, Karditsa, Greece
Tie 4th – Grand Springs Spring Water, Alton, VA

Best Sparkling Water – 2022

1st – Big Wet Sparkling Spring Water, Victoria, Australia
Tie 2nd – Boston Clear Water, Lynnfield, MA
Tie 2nd – Vortex Energy, Meriden, CT
3rd – Aqua To Go Sparkling Natural Spring Water, Victoria, Australia
4th – Antipodes Water, Otakiri, Whakatane, New Zealand

Best Purified Drinking Water – 2022

1st – Ophora Hyper-Oxygenated Water, Santa Barbara, CA
2nd – Hamilton On Tap, Hamilton, OH
3rd – Lesage Natural, Lesage, WV

People's Choice Package Design – 2022

1st – Hawaiian Springs Natural Artesian Water, Kea'au, HI
2nd – Antipodes Water, Otakiri, Whakatane, New Zealand
3rd – Babinda Springs, Babinda, Queensland, Australia
4th – Svalbarði Polar Iceberg Water Jade Edition, Longyearbyen, Norway
5th – Smeraldina Water, Sardinia, Italy