

Media Release - *Embargoed to 11pm Sat 8 October*

Kapiti and Wairarapa Dominate NZ Extra Virgin Olive Oil Awards

New Zealand, 8 October 2022 – Kapiti and Wairarapa Olive Oil makers have dominated the annual New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oil Awards, winning four of the five major awards for Olive Oil Excellence.

The New Zealand Olive Oil Awards began in 2000 and recognise excellence in New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oils (NZ EVOO). The winners were announced tonight at the Olives NZ 2022 Award Ceremony.

The top awards were as follows:

- Best in Show – Waikawa Glen Blend, Kapiti
- Best Boutique – Pressed Gold Koroneiki, Wairarapa
- Reserve Best in Show – Lot Eight Reserve, Wairarapa
- Reserve Best Boutique – Southlea Olives, Canterbury
- Best Flavoured Oil – Noble Estate Kaffir Lime, Kapiti.

Emma Glover, spokesperson for Olives NZ, says the Kāpiti and Wairarapa climate and soil contributes to its success, both in New Zealand and on the world stage.

“New Zealand has had a reputation for producing outstanding Extra Virgin Olive Oil that can compete at the highest standard internationally. Despite challenging growing conditions with our maritime climate, our growers have adopted proactive grove management strategies that have enabled our olive oils to punch above their weight on the global platform.” says Emma Glover.

The 2022 Awards had 152 entries.

“The achievement of 47 gold medals, 88 silver medals and 12 bronze medals awarded out an entry of 152 olive oils across all of the growing regions in New Zealand, was an excellent achievement for the industry” said Glover.

In total Wairarapa received 66, Kāpiti 24, Canterbury 13, Hawke’s Bay 10, Auckland 9, Central Otago, Nelson, Northland and Waiheke Island 5 each, Marlborough 4. and Bay of Plenty 1. The Awards were judged by two panels, each comprising of four experienced judges to International Olive Oil Council Panel (IOC) standards. The eight judges then re-judged all of the Best in Class winners to confirm the major winners.

Roberto Zecca ex Italy and California was one of the Judges.

“I have been tasting and judging Extra Virgin Olive Oils in New Zealand since the year 2000. I recall being interviewed on TV One and saying that “the olive oil in this country was the best in the world” and further encouraging producers to send their products to the Los Angeles Oils of the World competition (the biggest in the world at that time) and one of the oils from New Zealand got the “Best in Show” award amongst over 500 entries from all over the globe” said Zecca.

“I now live in Russell and I have judged at the New Zealand competition last year and again this year. Once again, I see that the quality is excellent on all fronts, but we know that the climate conditions are the single most determining factor in the quality of the oils. Last year the overall level of entries was excellent and the number of gold medals awarded was the highest on record. This year the overall quality of the oils resulted in the majority of entries receiving silver medals. This was due to very moderate olfactory qualities; this is a direct result of wet conditions preceding and during harvesting time. So the growers that were lucky enough to have not been affected by the unusually wet season were able to obtain oils of Gold medal quality.”

The 2022 Winners

Best Boutique – Pressed Gold Koroneiki, Wairarapa

Pressed Gold is the brand of The Olive Press located in Greytown, Wairarapa. The Olive Press manage a number of groves across the Wairarapa and Kāpiti and specialise in the production of Extra Virgin as well as flavoured olive oils.

Quite a stunning and beautifully balanced oil. Aromas of Daphne, vanilla, red clover on the nose. Good transfer to the palate - floral notes, green banana, almonds. White pepper pungency that builds. Harmonious, complex & persistent. Delicious!!!

Reserve Best Boutique – Southlea Olives, Canterbury

Southlea Olives is a boutique grove of approximately 600 olive trees, located at Leeston, Canterbury and owned by Peter and Frances Baylis. Their winning entry was a blend produced from Frantoio and Leccino olives.

A great oil with green grass, tropical notes on the nose. In the mouth pine, lychee, green banana. Good Bitterness & Pungency - persistent and well balanced.

Best in Show – Waikawa Glen Blend, Kāpiti

Waikawa Glen is a boutique grove of 520 trees located on the Kāpiti Coast and owned by Lisa Buchan and Glen Wigley. It is one of only a handful of organic olive groves in New Zealand. Their winning entry was a blend produced from Frantoio and Leccino olives. Waikawa Glen has been consistent winners at the New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oil Awards and they have also been awarded Gold at the prestigious New York International Olive Oil Competition.

An outstanding and harmonious oil. Aromas of artichoke and salad leaves, herbaceous aroma and taste all the way through. Balanced bitterness and pungency with a hint of clove, smooth and creamy mouthfeel with a warm peppery finish.

Reserve Best in Show – Lot Eight Reserve, Wairarapa

Lot Eight is a boutique grove of less than 400 trees located at Martinborough, owned by Nalini and Colin Baruch. They have a number of contract growers to supplement their production and provide a range of carefully blended Extra Virgin and flavoured oils. Their winning entry was a blend produced from Koroneiki and Picholene olives. Lot Eight has previously received international awards, including at Olivo Nuovo and the New York International Olive Oil Competition.

A well balanced oil with green grass and rocket on the nose and a lovely lingering balanced finish in the mouth.

Best Flavoured Oil – Noble Estate Kaffir Lime, Kāpiti

Noble Estate is a boutique grove of less than 600 producing olive trees, located at Peka Peka on the Kāpiti Coast. Their Kaffir Lime is agrumato style where the Kaffir Lime has been processed with Frantoio olives to produce this delightful flavoured olive oil. Noble Estate also won one Gold and two Silvers for their Extra Virgin Olive Oils.

Good intensity & purity of Kaffir Lime aroma & flavour. Base oil fresh and harmonious. Olive fruit & flavours evident - complex oil with good persistence.

A complete list of the award entries and results can be found [here](#).

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About Olives New Zealand

Olives New Zealand is the industry body for olive growers and supports its members to produce premium quality Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) and other olive products. Olive NZ also certifies the oils as Extra Virgin Olive Oils by using an International Olive Council accredited laboratory in Australia. Only certified New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oil then carries the red OliveMark. People should look for the red OliveMark to ensure they are buying the authentic New Zealand EVOO product. Imported products are typically not required to meet the same stringent standards.

For More Information Contact:

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