

Media Release

NZ Olive Oil Makers Notch up Top Awards in International Olive Oil Competition

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Once again six Extra Virgin Olive Oils made by New Zealand growers have taken out top awards at the 2021 [New York International Olive Oil Competition](#). From Wairarapa; Loopline Olives have won two Gold Medals, Olive Black has won one Gold medal and Juno Olives have won one Gold medal. From Kapiti, Waikawa Glen won one Gold and from Bay of Plenty, Sapphire Olives won Silver.

With a record 1100 entries from 28 countries the New York competition is considered to be one of the most prestigious in the world. New Zealand has once again punched well above its weight with all entries scoring medals.

Since 2017 Olives New Zealand has selected the top winning entries from the New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oil Awards to enter in The New York Competition. Each year Gold medals have been awarded. For the first time a New Zealand Organic Extra Virgin Olive Oil was entered from Waikawa Glen, Kapiti. A boutique grove of approximately 500 trees, registered as organic and committed to sustainable growing principles.

2021 was a challenging year with COVID-19 and uncertainties around travel resulted in the New Zealand Awards being judged remotely. Rather than convening the judging panel at a central location, the 128 entries were decanted into 100ml bottles, coded and packed into class batches and couriered to the New Zealand judging panel. The six judges sniffed and slurped their way through the classes and entered their scores onto a spreadsheet which were then collated by an independent facilitator. The judges convened via Zoom meeting to re-judge the top scoring oils for the major accolades of Best in Class, Best and Reserve in Boutique and Best and Reserve in Show.

“The fact that once again the top winning oils from the New Zealand Awards have won Gold medals at the New York Competition is a huge tribute to the calibre of the New Zealand olive oil judging panel. They have been trained to international standard and most have judged internationally. Their outstanding competency is evidenced by their top winners consistently winning in competitions like New York,” said Gayle Sheridan, Executive Officer for Olives New Zealand.

Most of the New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oil produced is boutique by nature, with limited quantities available and typically not sold in supermarkets. Gayle Sheridan wants to encourage people to seek out our locally made, world-beating oils; buying directly from growers online, at speciality retail stores, or at farmers markets, where they can meet the grower and taste their superb oils.

“New Zealand has a maritime climate and a different environment from traditional olive-growing countries. Like the New Zealand wine industry, we produce distinctive and complex tasting oils that are suited to a variety of uses. Our olive oil is fresh, and fresh tastes best. We would encourage Kiwis, if they don’t buy New Zealand olive oil already, to try something new, and support our world-class local growers,” says Gayle Sheridan.

She added “People should look for the red OliveMark to ensure they are buying the authentic New Zealand Extra Virgin Olive Oil product. Imported products are not required to meet the same stringent standards, and some New Zealand brands are imported oil that are packaged in New Zealand.”

About Olives New Zealand

Olives New Zealand provides olive growers with support and information to help them produce premium quality Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) and olive products. You can find out more at www.olivesnz.org.nz

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