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Consumer Palates Boost Favorite Brands to Victory at Fourth Annual SIP Awards

Irvine, Calif., July 25, 2012—A sixty-judge consumer panel sipped, savored and tasted their way to decision at the fourth annual Spirits International Prestige (SIP) Awards, held poolside at the Irvine Equinox on July 14.

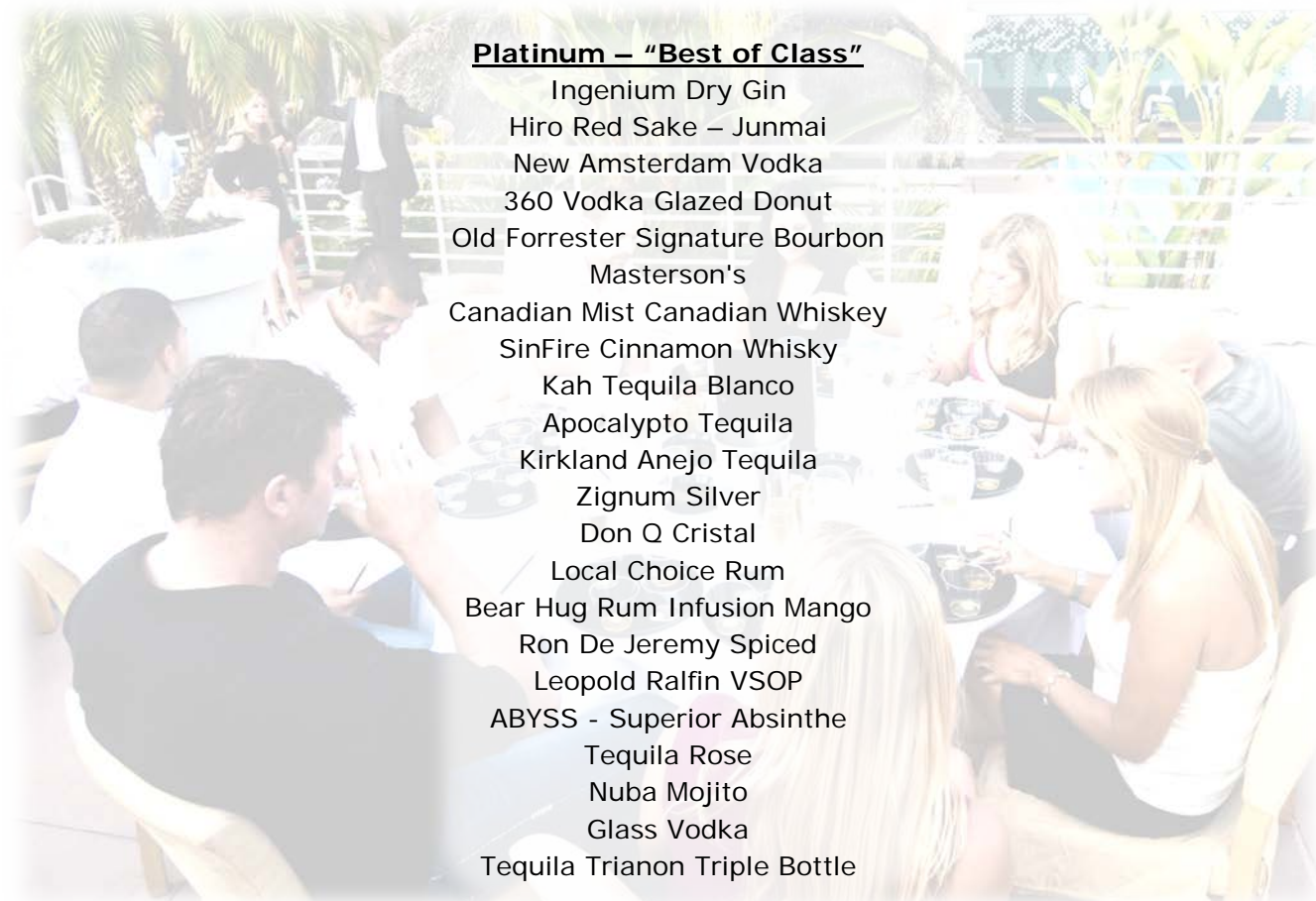
A diverse mix of spirit lovers participated, as the fierce competition hosted more than 300 brand entrants, each vying for international recognition. Among the spirits competing for titles were gins, whiskeys, liqueurs, rums, vodkas and tequilas in 39 categories, from both established labels and up-and-coming brands.

As per previous years, spirits were critiqued in a blind tasting, with a focus on taste, aroma and finish. “Consumer palate is king, and brands are beginning to realize the importance of blind judging with a consumer panel,” explained Paul Hashemi, SIP Awards executive producer.

With palates and penchants ranging from delicate to robust, the sixty-judge consumer panel, which is not affiliated in any way with marketers, wholesalers or spirit label distributors, posted results entirely reflective of consumer preference and demand. As a result, the 2012 Platinum “Best of Class” and Distinguished Platinum winners include:

Platinum – “Best of Class”

- Ingenium Dry Gin
- Hiro Red Sake – Junmai
- New Amsterdam Vodka
- 360 Vodka Glazed Donut
- Old Forrester Signature Bourbon
- Masterson's
- Canadian Mist Canadian Whiskey
- SinFire Cinnamon Whisky
- Kah Tequila Blanco
- Apocalypto Tequila
- Kirkland Anejo Tequila
- Zignum Silver
- Don Q Cristal
- Local Choice Rum
- Bear Hug Rum Infusion Mango
- Ron De Jeremy Spiced
- Leopold Ralfin VSOP
- ABYSS - Superior Absinthe
- Tequila Rose
- Nuba Mojito
- Glass Vodka
- Tequila Trianon Triple Bottle



Distinguished Platinum Winners

Anselmo Gin
Persian Empire Canada's NO.1 Gin
Vesica Vodka
Marquis Vodka
Breckenridge Vodka
Twenty 2 Micro Distilled Vodka
Distiller's Blend Napa Vodka
360 Vodka Buttered Popcorn
Graham's Texas Tea
Little Black Dress Black Cherry Vanilla Flavored Vodka
Local Choice Espresso Vodka
Persian Empire Canada's NO.1 Sour Cherry
UV Whipped
Town Branch Bourbon
Hooker's House Bourbon
Pendleton 1910
Revel Stoke Spiced Whisky
Benmore Four Casks
Label 5 Extra Premium 12YO
Pearse Lyons Reserve
Mickey Finn Irish Apple Flavored Whiskey
Bowen's Whiskey
Ambhar Tequila Platinum
Arsenal Blanco
Don Benito Silver Tequila
El Trigueno Blanco
Blue Iguana Catrina Edition Reposado Tequila
Dulce Vida 100% Organic Tequila Reposado
El Jimador Reposado Tequila
Herradura Anejo Tequila
Tequila Trianon Anejo
Herradura Seleccion Suprema Extra Anejo
Bear Hug Tequila Infusion Chili Pepper
Zignum Reposado
Shellback Silver Rum
Alma De Bohemio Honey Rum
Club Caribe Mango Rum
15 Year Gran Reserve
Bacardi Oakheart
Cello Cremma Lemma
Orphan Girl Bourbon Cream Liqueur
Chambord Black Raspberry Liqueur
Koval Rose Hip Liqueur
Nuba Cosmo
Bong Spirit Vodka
Cold Steel Vodka
Polugar Vodka
U'Luvka Vodka
Kah Tequila Series

The SIP Awards, which were originally developed to recognize consumer preference, aims to further product development and branding. "We are indeed meeting this objective," said Hashemi. Since 2009, "The growth of new brands participation, in conjunction with repeat brand involvement, is evidence that there is effective sales growth based on a SIP Award's recognition," he continued.

The event attracted distillers from as far away as Australia, Holland, Japan, Latvia, Scotland and Sri Lanka. "Not only do the awards reiterate the importance of consumer opinion, but they are improving consumer awareness of quality spirits around the world."

About the SIP Awards: Catering to the palates and opinions of the consuming public, the Spirits International Prestige (SIP) Awards present a unique, spirit-judging competition, unaffected by industry bias. To participate in the 2013 competition or to learn more about the International SIP Awards, please visit: www.SIPAwards.com.

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