



Private Brauereien

PRESS RELEASE

The Votes are in for the World's Best Beers:

With 28 Gold Medals, German Breweries

Came out Top at the European Beer Star Awards

With 2,344 varieties from 51 countries across all continents, more beers than ever before were entered for the European Beer Star, held by the Verband der Privaten Brauereien (Association of Private Breweries). For two days the international jury of 144 experts blind-tasted the entries for this globally renowned beer competition, the accolades of which are as coveted among breweries as Michelin stars are among restaurants. The winners of the 65 categories (with gold, silver and bronze medals awarded in each) will be presented with their awards on 14 November as part of the BrauBeviale exhibition. In this, the fifteenth edition of the competition, the highest number of "Beer Stars" went to brewers from Germany, but Italian breweries also did well, taking nine category titles and thus catching up with the Americans for the first time. Another first was the sheer spread of the medal winners, which encompassed 26 countries, but the biggest surprise was that the most successful brewery of the year is in the Netherlands.

The Bierbrouwerij de Konigshoeven can now boast four gold medals – and these were awarded for precisely the most important beer styles of its neighbour Belgium, namely Quadruple, Triple, Dubbel and Blond Ale.

Munich – “In the days after the jury announces its decision, when the news gradually sinks in that you’re the winner of a European Beer Star, then it really is a wonderful moment for a brewer”, says Georg Rittmayer, speaking from experience. Rittmayer, a brewery owner from Hallerndorf in Upper Franconia, was recently voted Chairman of the Verband der Privaten Brauereien, an association of small and independent breweries, and he readily calls the European Beer Star the “Olympic Games of the international brewing world”. Indeed, every year beers from all continents battle to win gold, silver or bronze in one of the 65 categories. This year a record number of 2,344 beers (a 9% increase on 2017) from 51 countries were sent to the Doemens Academy in Gräfelfing, Munich, where 144 tasters, master brewers, beer sommeliers and specialist journalists chose the medal-winners over two days of blind tasting in mid-October.

Around 40% of the beers submitted came from Germany, while the remaining beers came from Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa and North and South America. Whilst the Americans still topped the medal table in the European Beer Star two years ago, this year it’s the German brewers who have been overwhelmingly successful, with German beers winning gold medals in no less than 28 categories (previous year: 21). With nine gold medals, the North American breweries just about held onto second place ahead of beers from Italy (9), the Netherlands (7) and Austria (5).

European Beer Star is one of the most hard-fought competitions in the world

The biggest celebrations are likely to be in the small Dutch town of Berkel-Enschot (North Brabant), since its Bierbrouwerij de Konigshoeven was named Brewery of the Year at the European Beer Star, winning four gold medals. The Dutch brewers won in precisely the categories for which their neighbour Belgium tends to be most popular: the strong beer varieties Quadruple, Triple, Dubbel and Blonde Ale. The most successful German brewery, meanwhile, is based in Viereth-Trunstadt in Franconia:

Brauereigasthof Kundmüller is a small, owner-managed operation that produces the best Mild Lager and the best Strong Smoked Beer, in addition to which its Red Beer was awarded a silver medal. Also two gold medals and one silver medal are awarded to the International Braumanufacturen (Radeberger Gruppe) in Frankfurt.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that in the fifteenth year of the European Beer Star, the age of “medal-collecting” seems to be over. “This year’s results show that it is becoming ever more difficult to win multiple awards, because there are more and more great beers to choose from across all the categories”, says Oliver Dawid, Managing Director of Private Brauereien Bayern. “The European Beer Star is undoubtedly one of the most hard-fought competitions in the brewing world.” Even more so since this prize provides for only gold, silver and bronze medals to be awarded in each category and for the international team of experts to rate the beers based exclusively on the points that a consumer would also take into consideration, i.e. look, foam, smell, taste and characteristics typical of the variety.

Gold to Germany in All Wheat Beer Categories

A large proportion of the medals for German breweries went to the federal state with the highest concentration of breweries: Bavaria took home 19 gold, 14 silver and 20 bronze medals in total. The state of Baden-Württemberg, meanwhile, won five golds as well as four silver and four bronze. All the winners in the wheat beer categories come from these two federal states: The best Light Wheat Beer comes from the Distelhäuser brewery in Tauber-Bischofsheim, while the winning amber-coloured variety is from Weissbräu Schwendl in Tacherting. With two gold medals (Light Wheat Beer/Crystal Wheat Beer), Hirschbrauerei Honer in Wurmlingen once again advanced to become the front-runner in Baden-Württemberg, closely followed by the small, family-run Bauhöfer brewery from Ulm (gold for Export, silver for Dark Kellerbier, and bronze for Light Bock). The gold medals for Light Wheat Bock (Staatsbrauerei Weißenstephan in Freising) and Dark Wheat Bock (Brauerei Unertl in Mühldorf am Inn) also went to Bavaria. Incidentally, the town of Freising in Upper Bavaria produced the best Dark Wheat Beers, with gold awarded to the Hofbrauhaus Freising and silver to the Staatsbrauerei Weißenstephan, while Schwarzbräu in Zusmarshausen won a full set of medals with gold for Dark Double Bock, silver for New Style Lager and bronze for Festival Beer.

Names that have long featured on the list of European Beer Star winners were also represented among this year’s medals: Weissbierbrauerei Schneider in Kelheim (gold and two bronze), Aktienbrauerei Kaufbeuren (gold, silver), Private Landbrauerei Schönram in Petting (gold), Schlossbrauerei Unterbaar in Baar (gold) and Alpirsbacher

Klosterbräu (two silver). The best Pale Ale this year comes from Schlossbrauerei Hohenthann near Landshut, while the best Festival Beer was from Dachsbräu in Weilheim. Some of the 2018 European Beer Star prizes also went to the beer capital Munich – although only to small breweries! Crew Republic was awarded gold for its Golden Ale and bronze for its Traditional Pale Ale, while Munich-based Giesinger Biermanufaktur (silver) and Brew Mafia (bronze) appeared on the list of winners for the first time. This year, the German medal-winners are spread across eight different federal states: Hesse (two golds and one silver), Berlin (gold, silver, bronze), Hamburg (gold), Saxony (silver), Thuringia (silver) and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (three bronze). The best Top-Fermented Non-Alcoholic Beer is brewed by Hamburg-based Kehrwieder Kreativbrauerei. One sensational result was the victory for the small Brauerei Lemke in Berlin, which won gold for New Style IPA, silver in the Traditional Lambic, Gueuze and Fruit Gueuze category, and bronze for Cask-aged Strong Beer, making it one of the outstanding winners of the European Beer Star 2018.

So it's great to be small?

Of course major breweries would also submit their beers, emphasises Roland Demleitner, Managing Director of the Bundesverband der Privaten Brauereien, "but it's not by chance that the characterful beers produced with true craftsmanship come overwhelmingly from small and medium-sized breweries!"

Italian Brewers Continue to Gain Ground

This is particularly notable among the international breweries whose beers won prizes at the European Beer Star 2018, with many of them from south of the Alps. Beer is gaining ever more attention in Italy, which is evident from the veritable boom in the establishment of breweries there over the last few years. At the same time, Italian brewers are sticking largely to beer varieties away from the mainstream, as can be seen from the list of European Beer Star winners: Gold medals in the categories New Style Lager and Sour and Fruit Sour Beer (both Birrificcio Lambrate), New Style Pale Ale (Birrificcio Porta Bruciata), Belgian Witbier (MC 77 Birrificcio Artigianale), Scotch Ale (Piccolo Birrificcio Clandestino), Traditional Lambic, Gueuze and Fruit Gueuze (Bionoc snc), Baltic Style Porter (Birra Mastino) and Session Beer (Fabrica della Birra Perugia) went to Italy. On top of this, there was another first place for Batzen Bräu in Bolzano,

which brews the best Dark Kellerbier. American brewers claimed second place in the medal table, also with nine gold medals, but more silver and bronze medals (11 of each) than the Italians. While some of the winning breweries from previous years no longer appear in the list of winners, previous multiple prize-winners Samuel Adams (Boston) and Firestone Walker (Paso Robles) were among the best this year too. In the highly competitive supreme discipline among American craft brewers, the “Traditional India Pale Ale”, Samuel Adams came out on top, with an additional gold for Bohemian-style Schwarzbier and silver for Sweet Stout also going to the American East Coast. Firestone Walker was also rewarded with two golds (Sweet Stout/English Bitter) and one silver (Sour and Fruit Beer).

This year’s other “climbers” included the breweries of the Netherlands (seven golds) and Austria (five golds). Alongside the all-conquering Bierbrouwerij de Konigshoeven, other Dutch breweries took three further gold medals in categories as varied as Strong Dark Ale, Smoked Beer and Non-alcoholic Bottom-fermented.

The Best Kellerpils Comes from Austria

The gold medals for Austria were likewise awarded for very different beer styles, from beers with alternative varieties of grain (Stieglbrauerei, Salzburg), to Imperial Stout (Gusswerk, Salzburg), Fruit Beer (Baumgartner, Schärding), and even the Porter produced by Vienna’s Brauerei Ottakringer. Particularly worthy of note is the fact that the tiny beer workshop in Steinbach am Attersee brews the best Kellerpils in the world! Even more astonishingly, in the category for Düsseldorf Altbiere, the medals went to Brazil, Japan and Taiwan ...

Oliver Dawid of the Verband der Privaten Brauereien justifies the inclusion of the now 65 categories (beer styles) in the European Beer Star by citing the increasing diversity in the international brewing scene: “More and more brewers are trying out ever more new styles, so we’re reacting to that. This is precisely what we’re aiming to achieve with the European Beer Star: to present the unbelievable diversity of beer to consumers.”

Conferred worldwide since 2003, the European Beer Star of the Verband der Privaten Brauereien (in cooperation with the Association of Small and Independent Breweries in Europe) is supported by the Barth-Haas Group, BayWa, Rastal and MicroMatic. The partners are the Doemens Brewing Academy, the BrauBeviale exhibition and trade periodical Brauwelt.

Please find attached the detailed list of winners with all the contact details of the breweries, as well as photos and various graphics, which can all be used free of charge.

Further information at: www.european-beer-star.de

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International medals table 2018



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	 GOLD	 SILVER	 BRONZE	Total
 Germany	28	23	28	79
 USA	9	11	11	31
 Italy	9	5	5	19
 Netherlands	7	1	3	11
 Austria	5	3	1	9
 Brazil	2	2	2	6
 Belgium	1	4	3	8
 Czech Republic	1	2	1	4
 France	1	2	–	3
 Danmark	1	–	–	1
 Great Britain	1	–	–	1
 Chile	–	3	–	3
 China	–	2	1	3
 Japan	–	2	1	3

International medals table 2018

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	 GOLD	 SILVER	 BRONZE	Total
 Poland	-	1	3	4
 Canada	-	1	1	2
 Australia	-	1	-	2
 Finland	-	1	-	1
 Greece	-	1	-	1
 Thailand	-	1	-	1
 Myanmar	-	1	-	1
 Israel	-	-	1	1
 Malta	-	-	1	1
 Namibia	-	-	1	1
 Taiwan	-	-	1	1
 Sweden	-	-	1	1