

ProWein 2023: Trend feature “no & low alcohol” / February 2023

“no and low alcohol”:

Enjoyment even with little or no alcohol

by Peter Eichhorn, Berlin

Almost unthinkable just a few years ago: no alcohol as a lifestyle segment. Non-alcoholic beers were only remotely reminiscent of the original, a beverage category of alcohol-free distillates did not exist yet, and no-alcohol choices on cocktail menus were often entitled “mocktails” – i.e. fake cocktails. But those days are gone for good. “Dry January” or “Sober October“ have now become an integral part of our beverage culture and the enjoyment factor does not fall by the wayside with “no-and-low” drinks either. There is enormous diversity with no-alcohol products, and technology and aromatics are pushed further and further. At ProWein 2023, the world’s largest and most relevant trade fair for wines and spirits from 19 to 21 March, a multitude of varieties can be discovered as both pure and mixer drinks.

From London into the world

The revolution in no-alcohol distillates started in 2015 as a pilot project at London’s department store Selfridges. A young and unknown brand by the name of Seedlip was presented and after just three weeks the first batch of 1,000 bottles was sold. Three varieties result from a maceration, distillation, filtration and mixing process in which each herbal ingredient is distilled separately before mixing. The result of this process is a liquid without any alcohol and sugar. No-alcohol gin does not feature on the bottles for legal reasons, but the products can be used in cocktails just like the original juniper distillate. Seedlip is distributed by Bremer Spirituosen Contor (Hall 7, Stand B 13),



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which offers a great number of alcohol-free distillates inspired by gin, rum and even whiskey in its range.

A household name in this business is Rheinland Distillers GmbH (Hall 7, Stand B 25), known for Siegfried Gin from Bonn and the no-alcohol products Wonderleaf and Wonderoak. The first can be used as a gin substitute while the second includes tonka bean, nutmeg, fenugreek, lime and curaçao orange and can be used for creating rum-inspired drinks. A brand-new addition to the market is the Wonderleaf Rosé. Again a product that is great for marrying with tonic water even though it has a somewhat more floral aroma. In addition, Rheinland Distillers created the Easy series with 20 % Vol. alcohol content. The alcohol content in the drink is reduced but the remaining alcohol acts as a flavour enhancer making this product a suitable representative of the low-alcohol category.

The market offers aromatically diverse products that convincingly toy with alcohol-free inspirations and tastes from vermouth and Amaro to whisky. Dr. Jaglas (Hall 7, Stand C 02), for example, a brand that looks back on a long pharmacist's tradition, presents the first no-alcohol Limoncello and proves how elegantly this product goes with Prosecco. The Hamburg Distilling Company (Hall 13, Stand C 35) will travel all the way from Hamburg to ProWein – bringing along its Knut Hansen Gin, which is made predominantly with regional products such as cucumber, apple or rose and is now also available in a 0.0 – i.e. completely alcohol-free – version. Alfred Schladerer GmbH (Hall 7, Stand B 52) in turn, banks on herbs. Known for its proven distillates and spirits, the tradition-rich distillery has now also picked up on the current no-alcohol trend presenting Vincent, a herb-based aperitif finely flavoured with raspberries. Reminiscent of a US bourbon is the SoBour at 0.0 by UK exported Chastity (Hall 13, Stand D 06). Dark, earthy notes rounded off by apricot, vanilla and herbal aromas cater to just about every wish.



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Hops and malt

Technology has matured a great deal of late, especially for the beer category meaning the new generation of no-alcohol brewed products has caused quite a stir with new manufacturing methods, re-discovered yeast cultures and topical aroma hops. Sales figures in Germany are well underway to breaking the 7 million hectolitre threshold. 0.5 % Vol. alcohol may still be contained under the label “alcohol free” but the internationally important 0.0 %-category also sets new quality standards. With the intense fruit and herbal notes produced by using versatile aromatic hop varieties in cold hopping, a ‘sensory fireworks display’ lets you forget about alcohol. Mainly top-fermented beer styles, such as Pale Ale, set new benchmarks here. The exhibitor Neue Bierkultur GmbH (Hall 7, Stand D 53) features not one but several beer brands so that two no-alcohol Pale Ales can be tasted and compared: Brlo Naked from Berlin and Maisel & Friends’ no-alcohol Pale Ale from Bayreuth. Hailing from Belgium is the alcohol-free beer from Neobulles (Hall 1, Stand A 05). Other no and low-alcohol products can be found at the following link:

<https://www.prowein.de/vis/v1/en/search?oid=29556&lang=2&ticket=35817543752876&query=alcohol+free>

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