

Crowning gold in Paris

Dominique Huret reports on the 2023 edition of **Canette's d'Or**, the **Golden Can Awards**, organised by **GIE Le Boîte Boisson**, part of **Metal Packaging Europe**

It is that time of the year: the famous Champs Elysées reveals its festive Christmas colours, as well as gold and white flags announcing the 2024 Olympic Games. Every other year, it coincides with the Golden Cans awards.

This year, 12 new cans were honoured, along with five initiatives to promote can recycling. The winners were selected from over 200 entries, a record number reflecting the dynamism of the sector. Metal packaging's ecological, practical, economic and aesthetic advantages continue to win over more and more French consumers.

Some of the Canettes d'Or winners and runners up displayed at the event

The numbers speak for themselves

In France, 84 per cent of consumers say they consume cans, compared with 79 per cent in 2020 – a leap of five points in two years. This enthusiasm is confirmed by the abundance of their sales; despite a gloomy

context, cans grew by 2.8 per cent in volume in stores over nine months 2023, versus nine months 2022.

In supermarkets, the can continues to gain market share from other packaging, with growth of 2.8 per cent in volume over the year to September 2023, according to Circana, worldwide consultant in consumers and trends. The can performed against the tide in a generally declining market for liquids. Today, almost one in four beverages sold in stores is in a can. In the out-of-home channel, the can has become the fastest-growing packaging since the Covid-19 pandemic, with 12 per cent growth in volume, in an overall market down 2.6 per cent over the same period.

Both established brands and new market entrants (kombuchas, yerba matés, CBD drinks, wines and speciality beers) are increasingly turning to cans. On average, nearly six billion cans are now produced every year in France, with the vast majority destined for the internal market.

The French beverage can industry has decided to reward the sector with its Canettes d'Or awards, organised every two years to reflect the sector's effervescence and to keep stimulating collection and recycling initiatives. For this fourth edition, a record number of applications were examined, with several new types of products and initiatives, forming 11 categories. They were examined by a jury made up of design and marketing experts, trade journalists, representatives of Metal Packaging Europe (MPE), specialists from La Boîte Boisson, not-for-profit Every Can Counts (ECC) and CITEO. The public also voted via Every Can Counts France social networks (Facebook and Instagram) for its favourite can.

And the winners are...

The winner of the public vote was Orangina (bottled by Suntory Beverage & Food France) for its limited edition cans. "This year, Orangina became the official supplier of the Tour de France. To mark the occasion, the brand has added three 'shaken edition' collector's cans to its classic range. Among them, the 'Tour de France' range shakes up three legendary stages of the Tour de France and the Tour de France Women, illustrating the roughest roads of this race," explained Lucien Debever, director general, GIE La Boîte Boisson and director, ECC France.





The Crown team in attendance at the event, with Veronique Curulla far right and Lucien Debever in the centre

The can recycling ambassador award was given to Heineken Entreprises France, with the Heineken Original 33cl and 50cl cans. To mark its 150th anniversary, Heineken unveiled a limited edition product, where the brand name has been replaced by the word ‘recyclable’ to raise awareness of the canned format.

“Rather than looking back over the last 150 years, Heineken wanted to project itself into the next 150 years, capitalising on two main messages: to promote fully recyclable packaging such as aluminium cans and to encourage reuse. In other words, choosing Heineken means choosing a fully recyclable can, to give it more than one life,” explained Lea Gidelle, brand manager, Desperados Heineken France.

Outstanding designs in new categories

Several runner-up cans were particularly outstanding in the international water and soft drinks category, which is a new category, along with international beer and alcohol, that is sponsored by MPE.

The Candy Can, a 33cl Ardagh can distributed in France by Starwell, plays on the same principle as Chupa Chups. It offers five of the confectionery’s flagship flavours in colourful slim cans: Bubble Gum, Cotton Candy, Marshmallow, Rocket Ice Lolly and Birthday Cake. In addition, Ardagh also promoted its H!ghend series for customisation of

the beverage can end, thanks to innovative versatile printing technology.

Commenting on MPE’s sponsorship of the water and soft drinks, and beer and alcohol categories, Sarah Cuvellier, deputy CEO, said, “It is important to represent the whole industry in Europe and the UK. We are sure the categories will only increase in the future editions [of the show].”

The winner in the water and soft drinks category was Evian’s Sparkling Water sleek can, which features the pure taste of Evian’s still natural mineral water, with light, fine bubbles. The 33cl beverage is available in stores in the UK. Recognised as early as 1898 by the French Academy of Medicine for its beneficial qualities on health, Evian still & sparkling water options stand out for their mineral properties. The jury said they appreciated the simple but elaborate design of the Evian Sparkling Water can, with snowflakes evoking the bubbles.

For the beer and alcohol category, the 44cl can from Track Brewing in the UK took home the award, for its clean design.

Runner up, Franklin & Sons Portobello Gin by AB InBev, is a ready-to-drink gin and tonic. Packaged in an elegant 250ml aluminium can, the design gives it a distinctly modern, upscale feel and high-end look. The design, adorned with fine motifs, uses aluminium’s natural reflective properties to accentuate the drink’s refined qualities.

A notable ‘world first’ can at this year’s event was >

that created via the Coca-Cola Creations platform. The soft drink world leader has created a new, sugar-free flavour, with the help of artificial intelligence. The brief was to imagine a futuristic flavour, from the year 3000. This is the second Coca-Cola Creations limited edition launched in France, following the version co-created with Spanish singer, Rosalia.

Beyond the cans

“It’s important to remember that most brands source at two or three can makers. For example, several of us made the Heineken can. It is often difficult to say whether Crown, Ardagh or Ball were the makers of a can. The objective of these awards is to highlight the can industry, not the manufacturers. But then of course, there are specificities. We’re proud to have been behind Orangina’s promotional campaigns,” commented Veronique Curulla, marketing & business development director, Bevcan EMEA at Crown.

France’s leading out-of-home collection programme at Canettes d’Or awarded five prizes to associations or brands for their recycling initiatives.

Image:
Dominique Huret

The International Recycling Tour in Marseille is just one of them.

“The City of Marseille has deployed 111 sorting facilities in its parks and beaches over 13km in Marseille. These facilities are accompanied by a programme to raise awareness of the importance of sorting, aimed at everyone, and in particular young people, as part of the PixelCan event,” explained Christine Juste, deputy mayor, responsible for the environment, pollution control and cleanliness of public spaces.

“To contribute to the continuity of sorting in the public space, the City of Marseille is offering users a sorting solution adapted to on-the-go consumption (cans, sandwich wrappers, bags, etc). The aim is to support the changing habits of Marseille’s residents and encourage good practice. During the two days, 10,000 cans were collected,” said Juste. Marseille wants to put an end to its reputation as a ‘dirty city.’ To that, we French can only say ‘chapeau bas.’

Congratulations to all the Canettes d’Or winners of 2023. For more information and the full winners list, visit laboiteboisson.com **CT**

