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## P R E S S R E L E A S E



**GO! Kombucha Red Pu-erh 750ml** among Great Taste 2-star winners of 2017

***“Clean, aromatic and lively. Excellently produced with skill”***

Great Taste, the world’s most coveted industry awards which celebrates the very best in food and drink, has announced the Great Taste stars of 2017. Out of 12,366 entered in total, only 35% were accredited 1, 2 or 3-stars. Gaia Brands Ltd.’s low sugar, gut-nourishing alternative to colas and fizzy drinks - GO! Kombucha Red Pu-erh Fermented Raw Tea - was one of only 1176 products to win a 2-star Great Taste award (only 165 products achieved the highest 3-star rating), placing GO! Kombucha in the top 8 per cent of all fine food and drink products entered from around the Globe (3,171 were awarded a 1-star accolade). One of only 11 soft drinks to achieve at least 2 stars, GO! Kombucha Red Pu-erh 750ml is therefore rated “outstanding” by the Guild of Fine Food, its judges describing it as “*an exceptionally refreshing and lively kombucha, really complex fermented taste, clean, aromatic and lively,*” and, “*excellently produced with skill.*”

Commenting on the award, GO! Kombucha brand owner Gary Leigh said: *“This recognition comes exactly one year after we resumed production following unforeseen problems that forced us to close for three months in 2016. This award would not have been possible but for our great team including GO! Kombucha’s master brewers Andy, Paul and Kim, and the support of the brand by David, Linda and Alex Carr-Taylor, owners of the wonderful vineyard in rural Sussex where we’ve been fortunate to brew our premium fermented tea by hand in small batches for 10 years now.*

*“We also owe a great debt of gratitude to the independent health food sector, and to Whole Foods and Planet Organic in particular,” says Gary, “to whom we remain steadfastly loyal and will continue providing our fullest support as we continue to keep our operation manageable and contained, resisting the urge to scale-up and provide to the high street chains. Fermenting raw tea is a finely-attuned balancing act between billions of live bacteria and yeast,” Gary explains, “requiring skill and finesse to hone and perfect even in small batch brewing. Replicating that process on a large scale would require industrialising the process, which surely defeats what being an artisan producer is all about?”*

Gary concludes: *“This Great Taste award will therefore stand as our pledge and commitment to continue putting our loyal independent health food and specialist fine food grocery base first; particularly in an economic climate where so many independents are struggling simply to survive in the face of extortionately high rents and business rates.”*

Judged by over 500 of the most demanding palates belonging to food critics, chefs, cooks, restaurateurs and producers as well as a whole host of food writers and journalists, Great Taste is widely acknowledged as the most respected food accreditation scheme for artisan and speciality food producers. As well as a badge of honour, the unmistakable black and gold Great Taste label is a signpost to a wonderful tasting product, which has been discovered through hours and hours of blind-tasting by hundreds of judges.

Recognised as a stamp of excellence among consumers and retailers alike, Great Taste values taste above all else. Whether it’s gin, biscuits, sausages, coffee or, indeed, kombucha, all products are removed from their wrapper, jar, box or bottle before being tasted. The judges then savour, confer and re-taste to decide which products are worthy of an award. The panel of judges included: chef, food writer and author, Gill Meller, MasterChef judge and restaurant critic, Charles Campion, author and chef, Zoe Adjonyoh, baker, Tom Herbert, and food writer and baking columnist Martha Collison as well as food buyers from Fortnum & Mason, Selfridges, and Harvey Nichols. In short, The Great Taste symbol is the consumer’s guarantee a product has been through a rigorous and independent judging process. It’s not about smart packaging or clever marketing – it’s all about taste.

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