

# The Wild Mountain Water Cup 2025 – Judging Kit

## Welcome

Welcome to the 2025 edition of *The Wild Mountain Water Cup*.

Our mission is to celebrate the finest local waters up of the Santa Barbra mountains and honor the craft of sourcing, bottling, and presenting them. This judging kit will guide you through the evaluation process. Please follow the methodology carefully to ensure fairness and consistency.

## How to Judge

### 1. Preparation

- Wash hands, avoid strong perfumes, food, or drinks (coffee, wine, etc.) immediately before judging.
- Use neutral palate cleansers (plain crackers, neutral water) between samples.

### 2. Blind Evaluation

- All entries are coded by number (e.g., Sample 1, 2, 3).
- Judges should never know brand names until after scoring.

### 3. Scoring Protocol

- Use one grading sheet per sample.
- Write the sample number clearly at the top of each sheet.
- Complete each criterion immediately after tasting.
- Total your scores at the end.

## Grading Criteria (per sample)

Category	Guiding Questions	Score (0–10)
Appearance	Is the water clear, brilliant, and free of haze or particles?	_____
Aroma	Does it smell fresh and clean? Any off-notes (chlorine, metallic, sulfur)?	_____

<b>Mouthfeel/ Texture</b>	Is it crisp, smooth, silky, or heavy? How does it coat the palate?	_____
<b>Taste</b>	Is the flavor clean and balanced? Does minerality add character without flaw?	_____
<b>Aftertaste</b>	Is the finish pleasant, refreshing, lingering, or off-putting?	_____
<b>Overall Impression</b>	Would you drink this water again? Is it memorable, harmonious, distinctive?	_____

**Total Score (out of 60):** \_\_\_\_\_

## Scoring Scale

- **9–10 = Exceptional:** World-class, no detectable flaws.
- **7–8 = Very Good:** Strong water, enjoyable, minor room for improvement.
- **5–6 = Acceptable:** Drinkable, but lacks character or balance.
- **3–4 = Flawed:** Noticeable issues (flat, harsh, off-taste).
- **0–2 = Defective:** Unpleasant, not suitable for competition.

## Judge's Notes Section

- **Minerality Profile:** Low / Medium / High | Soft / Hard
- **Unique Characteristics:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Award Recommendation:** Gold / Silver / Bronze / None

## Final Selection

After all waters are judged individually, judges will meet to deliberate:

- Compare total scores.

- Consider consistency across judges.
- Select category winners and overall *Wild Mountain Water Cup Champion*.

## Grading Sheets

### Grading Sheet – Sample \_\_\_\_

Category	Guiding Questions	Score (0–10)
<b>Appearance</b>	Is the water clear, brilliant, and free of haze or particles?	_____
<b>Aroma</b>	Does it smell fresh and clean? Any off-notes (chlorine, metallic, sulfur)?	_____
<b>Mouthfeel/ Texture</b>	Is it crisp, smooth, silky, or heavy? How does it coat the palate?	_____
<b>Taste</b>	Is the flavor clean and balanced? Does minerality add character without flaw?	_____
<b>Aftertaste</b>	Is the finish pleasant, refreshing, lingering, or off-putting?	_____
<b>Overall Impression</b>	Would you drink this water again? Is it memorable, harmonious, distinctive?	_____

**Total Score (out of 60):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Judge Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_