

## Virgil's Dr. Better vs Dr. Pepper

in **BEVERAGE** by **FBWorld Team** — July 11, 2011 at 8:00 am | **2 comments**

I mostly review everyday kinds of products. Nothing fancy, it's almost always stuff you can pick up at your local grocer. Most of the time, I'm all about describing how the product came into being, how good it is for you, and then reporting on how it tastes. However, with something like soda, I don't think my formula works.

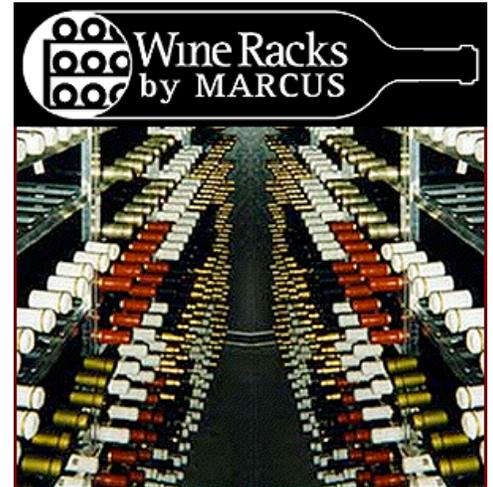
After all, everyone knows soda isn't healthy. It's basically carbonated water and sugar, so there's not much mystery about how it came into being, especially not after all these years. And of course, soda tastes like, well, soda. It's sweet, and unless something has gone really wrong, the flavors follow suit with what it says on the can. Thus, when I found out I'd be reviewing Virgil's new flavor Dr. Better, I was a bit stumped. I mean, Dr. style soda, like Dr. Pepper, tastes like a Dr. style soda. So I thought about things in terms of how I choose between two similar products. In the case of soda, it's a simple issue – which one do I like better. I decided I'd have to do a comparison.



Thus, I invited a few friends over and we set to it. Everyone was given four glasses. They contained Dr. Pepper, Diet Dr. Pepper, Virgil's Dr. Better, and Virgil's Zero (Calorie) Dr. Better. I decided to do a blind tasting (just like our wine panel), so no one knew which soda was in each glass. We simply tasted through them and wrote down how much we liked each.

As it turned out, though, identifying the different sodas wasn't actually that difficult (so after all that effort, maybe the tasting wasn't really blind). There was a pretty clear difference between all of them. The diet versions stood apart since sweeteners never taste as genuine as the real stuff. In particular, the Zero Dr. Better was different because they used a less common sweetener called Stevia. It has a very definitive taste. Maybe, after some time, taste buds adapt, but for this first go round, the four of us were split.

Two of us liked the Diet Dr. Pepper better than Virgil's version. The Diet Dr. Pepper's taste was



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more integrated, a bit smoother and sweeter. The Zero Dr. Better was lighter, and while we could pick up real ingredients, like vanilla and black licorice, the sweetener's after taste just didn't sit right for half of us.

For the real sodas, we were unanimous. The Dr. Better was much tastier than the Dr. Pepper. It had a nice balance, not being too sweet or heavy. It was refreshing, and the real ingredients stood out. We could taste vanilla, licorice, caramel, and prune juice. The Dr. Pepper seemed rather boring in comparison, a bit monotone in terms of its taste.

So in short, if you're a diet soda drinker, we'd suggest comparing the two. If your palate is accepting of Stevia, then Virgil's Zero version will almost certainly win out, but you just might find the familiar taste of a Diet Dr. Pepper preferable. For drinkers of real soda, there's no need to go back to Dr. Pepper. Just try Dr. Better. We're very confident you'll find it superior. Granted, it does cost more, at about \$1.50 a bottle, but for the taste, it's worth it.

By Michael Perkins

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## 2 Comments



Sam

I love their cola, gonna have to try this Dr. better stuff. Hope it really is that good.

2011-07-12  
09:37:14



Chris

Their cola and root beer are both so good, I can't wait to try this new one. Keep up the good work!

2011-07-14  
13:03:22



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