

PER TUA
INFORMAZIONE
(FOR YOUR INFORMATION)

BY JOE SANO

Fizz or No Fizz?



The San Pelligrino Water Source & Bottling Facilities

One of my memories from my trip to Florence was the constant question from the waiters at dinner, “Vorresti dell’ acqua? (Would you like water?) Fizz or no-fizz? HUH?

I don’t know about you, but I always wonder why buying a bottle of Italian bottled water at a restaurant is even a thing. It’s a bottle of water! Is there something I’m missing? Let’s explore.

First off, the number of Italian mineral water sources is the highest in Europe. The numerous Italian sources are among the most varied in terms of quality and difference. Today there are around 300 brands of Italian mineral water. Now not all of these have made it to the USA and here’s a need to add one more clarification.

Mineral waters are also called:

- **Still waters (sometimes called FLAT)** because they contain carbon dioxide naturally, right from the source.
- **Sparkling waters** are bottled with artificially added CO2/Carbon dioxide (the FIZZ).

The reality is that the degree of effervescence in natural still waters varies greatly. So, the introduction of carbon dioxide/sparkling was seen as a way of stabilizing the

“fizz” in one’s water.

The most popular and available Still Waters of Italy are:

Acqua Panna – A still, flat water, it is one of Italy’s most popular Italian bottled water brands from the Tuscan Apennines. It’s sold as one of the most popular brands for making baby formula and a popular choice among restaurants. The San Pelligrino Water Source & Bottling Facilities and bars in Italy.

Lauretana – one of the lightest waters, coming from the Alpine glaciers of Monte Rosa.

San Benedetto – was born in 1956, in the heart of the river Sile natural park, in the province of Venice. The source has been known since the times of the Venetian Republic as the Ancient source of health. A leading Italian beverage company known for its high-quality mineral water, San Benedetto is popular throughout all of Italy, especially for children. It originally was sourced from natural springs in Venice but today, includes sources from all over northern Italy.

Sant’Anna – flows at 2000 meters in the valleys of the Maritime Alps. It is one of the poorest in sodium in the world.

Plose – The Plose source is located at a very high altitude, 1870 meters. One of its peculiarities is that it has a Ph identical to that of the intracellular water contained in our body.

Levissima – with over 80 years of history. Its source is located in the heart of the Central Alps.

The following are considered **still waters** but are naturally effervescent. Some are also artificially enhanced with carbon dioxide to increase their “fizz/effervescence” to the area in which it is being marketed.

Ferrarelle – born from the slopes of an extinct volcano in the province of Caserta, in the Campania region. This water explodes on the surface via a geyser. A historical Italian company specializing in bottled mineral waters and known for its sustainability efforts in recycling. It is a naturally slightly effervescent water, comes from Campania. It has a very specific taste, similar to flat sparkling water.

Acqua di Nepi – 100% natural effervescent water and is bottled as it flows from the source. This too is of volcanic origin. Today bottled by San Benedetto it is a naturally effervescent water that is beloved by many Italians and worth trying for those of you who like a light sparkling water.

Lete – the source is located in the Campania region and has been known since the nineteenth century.

San Pellegrino – one of the oldest, flows from sources found on the slopes of the Alps. Today it is an iconic international brand for the most part now marketed as sparkling mineral water because the natural effervescence is enhanced by CO2 at bottling. It is owned by Nestlé, with its production plant located in Lombardy, Italy. The natural effervescent product is still available but rarely found outside of Italy

Uliveto – flows inside the Uliveto natural park, near Pisa. Already in the nineteenth century, it was known for its healthy properties and beneficial effects.

Egeria – the Roman water par excellence. The name derives from the Roman cult of the nymph Egeria, from her presumed healing qualities. The source is located in the heart of the Roman countryside.

As for **sparkling waters**, the brands we find in the supermarket are often the same as still mineral waters. In fact, as already mentioned, they add the desired quantity of carbon dioxide just at the time of bottling. That's why most of the famous brands of mineral waters have their sparkling version too. In Italian, it's acqua frizzante, where frizzante stands for sparkling. Or as many waiters in Italy will ask... Fizz or no Fizz?

Among the best sparkling waters, many say are: **San Pellegrino frizzante, Boario frizzante, Brio Blu Rocchetta and San Benedetto frizzante**. A gentle reminder! If you are in a restaurant in Italy and you ask for sparkling water, most of the time they will serve you a natural effervescent one, which we call **leggermente frizzante**, slightly sparkling. However, these might be a bit too calm for those seeking a more effervescent drink.

Many Italian bottled water brands claim that their water has **health benefits**, including:

- **Enhanced digestion**
- **Skin and hair health**
- **Increased hydration**
- **Aids in digestion**
- **Supports cardiovascular health**
- **Aids in detoxing**



If still waters run deep, they also run delicious in an aquifer on the Italian island of Sardinia. A line of bottled water from that region was recently named best water in the world at The Berkeley Springs International Blind Water Tasting, held annually in West Virginia.

This water called Smeraldina is available at select specialty grocers in the United States, including Balducci's in New York City. Sold in case lots (e.g. 12 glass .92L bottles for \$78.), it is not for the frugal but if you “gotta have it your gotta have it....”



Drink up!

