



Bubbles and buzz

Taste-testing a new line of cannabis-infused sodas

Cannabis-infused beverages are not always the most satisfying way to consume the versatile plant. Too often, weed drinks are pungent in taste and putrid in scent, creating an off-putting drink that provides only a moderate high.

by
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Colorado-based Keef Brands has attempted to overcome this dubious reputation with its line of fizzy sodas, sparkling waters and low-calorie fruity mixers.

Keef has been creating cannabis-infused products—edibles, concentrates, beverages and more—for more than a decade, and this summer, its Keef Cola portfolio of sodas finally made its way to dispensaries in Northern California. Naturally, I had to try them.

Currently, there are only five Keef beverage varieties available in the Golden State: Blue Razz, Bubba Kush Root Beer, Keef Cola Original, Orange Kush and Purple Passion. Other flavors, not available in the state yet, include a Keef Cherry Cola and a tropical-flavored FLO Energy Soda. Keef also has a line of zero-calorie sparkling waters in lemon, raspberry, blackberry and blood orange flavors.

I tasted three of the five sodas available—the root beer, the cola and Orange Kush.

The Bubba Kush Root Beer is a smooth and creamy root beer, with sweet vanilla notes and a decadent molasses flavor that make it bold and rich, but not overbearing. It's no wonder the drink won the High Times Cannabis Cup award for Best Edible in 2015.

Keef Cola Original is the company's OG soda, and it presents an in-your-face cola mouthfeel without much persistent tingling from carbonation, giving a

slightly sweet, subtly bubbly experience.

And the Orange Kush is a tart, tangy drink with citrus notes that mirror Sunkist minus any overt sourness.

Each is infused with 10 mg of THC (Keef also offers 100 mg versions of some flavors for medical use), and the sodas also contain added vitamins such as C, B3, B6 and B12 (a bit of nutrition never hurt).

Not only does each flavor taste great, its effects are also immediate and all-encompassing. Though not explicitly stated, each Keef Cola flavor uses extracts from hybrid strains. They hit in the head first. The high is thick and dense like an indica, but not heavy enough to impose a “stuck” feeling. It then travels through the body, massaging and relaxing the muscles while keeping the psychological effects intact.

The amount of THC in each beverage may not sound like much to canna-veterans, but 10 mg could be intimidating for the simply curious. Because of the evenness between its sweetness and the THC, plus the addition of a couple of milligrams of CBD, Keef sodas don't feel like “too much,” a fate often associated with unbalanced cannabis drinks. Best of all, the company has mastered the process of infusing cannabis in a liquid without the residual aromatics. The THC extracts used in Keef sodas are tasteless and orderless and to my delight, there wasn't an overpowering weed punch from any of the sodas. The overall result is a refreshing, thirst-quenching drink that's tasty and provides an impactful but not overwhelming high.

Keef has managed to live up to its hype, delivering excellent taste and satisfying effects. I'll drink to that. □

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