

When It Comes to Fizzy Water, Coke, Pepsi Fall Flat

Smaller brands like LaCroix enjoying huge success as soda alternative



By [Arden Dier](#), Newser Staff

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(Newser) – With a growing number of people quitting soda, Coke and Pepsi have been venturing more into energy drinks, craft sodas, and [milk](#), in an effort to boost sales. That's left room for smaller brands like LaCroix to enjoy huge success with sparkling water. LaCroix sales have jumped 45% since last year to an estimated \$175 million, reports [Bloomberg](#). Sales of other fizzy waters like Perrier and San Pellegrino have also spiked recently, while Sparkling Ice sales jumped from \$27 million in 2010 to \$550 million last year, the *Washington Post* reported. But big brands like Coke and Pepsi aren't having as much success. Whereas the market share for LaCroix maker, National Beverage—the fourth-largest soda maker in North America—rose 67% from 2010 to 2014, Coke and Pepsi's market shares fell 4% and 5.5%, respectively.

Why are people attracted to a neon can that looks like it came straight out of the 1980s? A major advantage is that it avoids corporate associations, notes Bloomberg. Then there are the flavors—12 in total including lemon, lime, apricot, and pamplemousse (grapefruit), per [Grist](#)—which have attracted a kind of indie cult following. National Beverage says the flavors are based on a secret brew of "natural essence." But for one young consumer, who used LaCroix to help kick his energy drink and soda habit, "it's less about the taste" and "more about how it's an interesting fizzy thing and it can replace soda." LaCroix—which got a "letter of recommendation" in the *New York Times Magazine* in March—is certainly marketing itself as a soda alternative. It's latest flavor: cola.



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