

[https://www.nola.com/300/article\\_14044824-e796-5cd0-a3a8-5b4b4feb7e4e.html](https://www.nola.com/300/article_14044824-e796-5cd0-a3a8-5b4b4feb7e4e.html)

# What do Big Shot soda and LaCroix water have in common? (More than you probably think.)

Sue Strachan OCT 27, 2017 - 3:00 PM

1 of 26



A circa 1920s Ridge Beverage bottle made where Big Shot was bottled. (Photo by Chris Granger, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune)

*The Times-Picayune is marking the tricentennial of New Orleans with its ongoing 300 for 300 project, running through 2018 and*

*highlighting the moments and people that connect and inspire us. Today, the series continues with the introduction of Big Shot soda amid the Great Depression.*

**THEN:** The year was 1935, in the middle of the Great Depression, when Jefferson Bottling Co. - - which also at the time produced Chocolate Soldier and a lemon-lime soda known as Bi-Up -- created a new root beer it dubbed Big Shot. New Big Shot flavors were soon to follow, such as fruit punch, produced from the company's plant off Metairie Road that had originally been the Virginia Dairy farm, also owned by the Paillet family. But what made Big Shot stand out to many was the face on its logo: a cartoon drawing of a ruffled, cigar-smoking former "Big Shot" -- a logo, that still appears on bottles of Big Shot produced today.

**NOW:** According to Jonathan Wallick, the grandson and great-nephew of the founders of Big Shot soda, the brand was sold a couple of times before being bought in 1992 by the Florida-based National Beverage Corp., which also makes a number of other soda brands, including Shasta and Faygo, but which may best be known for its LaCroix Sparkling Water. Big

Shot soda can now be found in a variety of flavors such as pineapple, strawberry, pineapple watermelon, peach, root bear, orange, grape, creme soda, black cherry, peach and fruit punch, among others.

- In 1997, Mike Ditka filmed a commercial for Big Shot while he was coach of the New Orleans Saints. Joining Ditka in the commercial were former Gov. Edwin Edwards, singer Charmaine Neville, attorney Morris Bart, former City Councilwoman Dorothy Mae Taylor, and then-City Councilwoman Peggy Wilson.

Big Shot is a local soda survivor, outlasting other Jefferson Bottling Co. products, as well as Zatarain's Pa-Poose and Zat-So root beers, Grapico, Orange Squeeze, Rex Root Beer, Cafe Nola Brulo, Judy Punch, Grape Fruit, Lou Breeze, Sweet Mandy and Dr. Nut. How did Big Shot survive, while others didn't? Hard to say, but its allure may lay in its bright, fruity, in-your-face colors embodying sometimes unusual -- and sweet -- flavors as well as its inexpensive cost and that memorable Big Shot on its label.

*By Sue Strachan, staff writer*

*Sources: NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune archives, Jonathan Wallick archives, National Beverage Corp., "Making New Orleans," by Phillip Collier, staff research*

**More on 300 for 300:**

- *Learn about the 300 for 300 series*

---

**MORE FROM THE ADVOCATE**

- LSU leaned on an emotional Clyde Edwards-Helaire in Alabama win: 'Nothing's too hard for him'
- Saban explains 'mistake' that gifted LSU two TDs in 20 seconds: 'I take all the blame'
- Watch: Crowd for LSU-Alabama has minute-long uproar as Donald Trump hits big screens
- Clancy DuBos: Eddie Rispone disrupts, deflects, dodges — like Ray Nagin — during gubernatorial debate
- Alabama columnist: It doesn't matter if Tua plays against LSU, Crimson Tide don't need win

---

**MORE FROM OUR PARTNERS**

- 
- 
- 
- 

Recommended by

|