

BrandSpark announces call for entries for the second annual 2015 Best New Menu Item Awards



Toronto (April 7, 2015) – Which new quick and full service menu items do Canadians think are the best? Market research and innovation insights firm BrandSpark International wants to know and so do restaurateurs and their patrons.

BrandSpark, the research company behind the Best New Product Awards (BNPAs), Canada’s most credible consumer packaged goods awards program, brings their research expertise to the quick and full service restaurant (QSR and FSR) industries with its national restaurant awards program – the Best New Menu Item Awards (BNMI Awards) recognizing the best new menu items and the BrandSpark Restaurant Awards that recognizes the best restaurants, as voted by consumers.

The BNMI Awards are 100% consumer-voted using a national survey of thousands of Canadians who regularly frequent restaurants. In addition to the award winners, this information will be used to learn about the eating habits of restaurant customers and will be published in the second annual BrandSpark Restaurant Study.

“The inaugural year for BrandSpark’s Best New Menu Item Awards was a tremendous success,” said Mark Baltazar, vice president and partner of BrandSpark International, “and we continue to build momentum with this new award program. Canadians have been extremely receptive in sharing their thoughts about Canada’s restaurants and learning about the best new menu items and the best restaurants from their fellow Canadians. It’s this wealth of information that we collect and analyze for our BrandSpark Restaurant Study that has proven to be extremely valuable for our restaurant clients as they continue to develop new menu items.”

“We identified some key QSR trends in the 2014 BrandSpark Restaurant Study, including: ‘Canada’s brewing coffee war’ that saw McDonald’s hot on the heels of 2014 winner Tim Horton’s; and the ‘better burger movement’ with A&W winning ‘Best-Tasting Burger’ over industry heavyweight McDonald’s,” said Denis Hancock, director, consumer insights. “These are clearly two hot trends in today’s QSR industry and we’re excited to deliver further consumer insights for 2015.” To learn more about 2014 results and winners, please visit www.BestRestaurantAwards.com.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a 2015 BNMI Award, new menu items must have been launched between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014 and have sufficient distribution to find past buyers.

Registration

The deadline to register is May 1, 2015 and winners will be announced in the summer 2015. There is no cost to enter the program. To enter either visit or contact Denis Hancock: DHancock@BrandSpark.com, 647-727-4580 or Mark Baltazar: MBaltazar@BrandSpark.com, 647-727-4578 for the Best New Menu Item Awards.

About BrandSpark International

We work with brands that are searching for breakthrough insights, not just data. We reveal insights that inspire meaningful innovation and help ignite brands. We believe that great research gets to the heart of *HOW* consumers think, *WHY* they act the way they do, and *WHAT* our clients need to do about it. BrandSpark has developed the leading consumer-voted awards programs: the Best New Product Awards (www.BestNewProducts.ca) and the BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards (www.BrandSparkMostTrusted.com) helping Canadians make smarter choices every day. For more information, visit www.BrandSpark.com.

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

JDA: Jefferson Darrell, 416-357-0234, JDA@JeffersonDarrell.com

BrandSpark International:

Denis Hancock, DHancock@BrandSpark.com or Mark Baltazar, MBaltazar@BrandSpark.com