

We bottled it! Tap loses in taste test

Pictures: Damien Hickey R504

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■ **LOVELY** Rachel Cappuccini takes part in the taste test

Severn Trent Water

By **FREDDIE WHITTAKER**

A STUDY by food and drink experts has revealed tap water in Gloucestershire is the best by far.

But when we took it to the streets it's quality didn't come close to that of an expensive brand of bottled water.

A panel of judges, including Michelin starred chef Tom Aikens, judged water supplied by Severn Trent as the best quality in the country.

He said the water had a "clean

But it still comes top in country

taste" and was "very fresh".

The Drink Tap Regional Taste Test was launched as a new initiative from environmental group Green Thing,

which promotes the green benefits of tap water over bottled.

Naresh Ramchandani, of Green Thing, said: "Switching to tap for a month will make a huge contribution to helping the environment and it will probably save you a few pennies as well."

David Wickens, quality and environment manager for Severn Trent Water said: "We take the production of high quality drinking water very seriously, so we're naturally delighted to have come top in this test.

"The results demonstrate that

we're doing a good job in providing our customers in Gloucestershire with top quality water."

In February, green campaigners in Cheltenham and Severn Trent Water backed environment minister, Phil Woolas, who said he thought buying imported bottled water "borders on being morally unacceptable" when many people don't have clean water supplies in the developing world.

BOTTLED OR TAP? THE WATER CHALLENGE

We took the taste test

further and put Britain's best tap water up against its bottled counterparts.

In a test hosted by Gusto in Montpellier, we asked four people which water they

preferred and offered them a blind choice between tap water, Co-op Fairbourne Springs water and expensive Penna water, sold in



■ **FRESH:** Carl



■ **WARM:** Roland



■ **BOTTLE:** Rina



■ **TASTIER:** Rachel

glass bottles in cafes and restaurants.

All four chose Penna mineral water.

Roland Boggon, 62, from

Pitchcombe, said: "The tap water tasted warm."

Both Rina Blulcoe, 42, and Carl Ryan, 33, described Penna as

"much fresher".

Gusto owner Rachel Cappuccini said: "I drink tap water but I prefer the bottled stuff."



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"We're doing a good job in providing top quality, great tasting water."

David Wickens