



# BEYOND WINES & SPIRITS: OTHER ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

ENTRY GUIDE

COMPETITION. CONNECTION. COMMUNITY



# WHO WE ARE

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*The IWSC is the world's oldest drinks competition, founded in 1969 and often referred to as the "Olympics of the drinks industry."*

We are a globally recognised authority in drinks excellence. Each year, we assess more than 12,000 wines, spirits and other drinks from over 90 countries, setting an **international benchmark** for quality and expertise.

Every IWSC entry is assessed by a respected category specialists. This helps ensures impartiality and means that an IWSC medal represents **genuine credibility and trust**.

An IWSC award carries **real commercial weight**. Our winners gain visibility, build consumer confidence and strengthen their position in markets around the world.



## WHY CHOOSE US?



### JUDGED BY GLOBAL TRADE EXPERTS

We **connect** producers with **key industry decision-makers** whose opinions help shape the market.

IWSC judges are experts in their fields, coming from senior buying, production and communications roles, with **relevant category expertise**. Entries are flighted in categories, and each panel chaired by an expert in that field.



### ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS

Our **rigorous judging** process, where daily assessments are **limited to 65 samples**, ensures **fair evaluation and detailed feedback** for **all entries**. Our transparent approach fosters valuable industry connections.



### UNPARALLELED EXPOSURE

Leveraging **over 50 years** of industry connections, we **showcase your brand** to media, trade, and consumers, while connecting you with top suppliers, retailers, and hospitality professionals across the **entire industry ecosystem**.



## WHAT WE JUDGE

Our main categories include:



### WINE

- White
- Red
- Rosé
- Orange
- Sparkling
- Fortified
- Dessert



### SPIRITS

- Gin
- Scotch Whisky
- Worldwide Whiskey
- Rum
- Agave
- Vodka
- Cognac & Armagnac
- Absinthe
- Aquavit
- Distilled Flavoured Spirits/ Fruit/ Seed/ Nut Spirit
- Grain Spirits
- Asian Spirits (including Shochu & Baijiu)
- Grape Brandy
- Bitters & Liqueurs
- Calvados
- Pisco



### OTHER ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

- Sake & Rice Wine
- Vermouth
- Wine-based Flavoured drinks
- RTDs & Pre-mixed
- Cider



### NO, LOW & MID-STRENGTH DRINKS

- Low Alcohol
- No Alcohol
- Lighter Alcohol
- Mid-Strength Alcohol



Can't find a category for your innovative drink?  
Contact [info@iwsc.net](mailto:info@iwsc.net) and we will be happy to help.

# OUR EXPERT JUDGES

The IWSC Judging Committee leads and oversees the IWSC's judging team. They are some of the most influential and respected professionals in the global drinks scene, with in-depth technical and commercial knowledge. Our **Judging team**, is composed of world-class industry professionals who include Masters of Wine, Master Sommeliers, Beverage Directors, Top Mixologists, and Senior Buyers. They are key decision-makers who shape the UK and global drinks scene. These are just a few of them.



**Olivier Ward**  
**IWSC Judging Committee**  
Leading expert in spirits and RTDs focusing on gin and RTDs for the IWSC.



**David T Smith**  
**IWSC Judging Committee**  
Leading spirits expert covering a variety of spirits, liqueurs and vermouth for the IWSC



**Marie Cheong-Thong**  
**IWSC Judging Committee**  
A global wine and spirits expert focusing on Asian spirits, sake and rice wine for the IWSC.



**Sarah Jane Eichler**  
Sarah has more than 40 years experience in hospitality. She is founder of Negroni Club UK and aperitif curator for Spirits Kiosk and Spirits Beacon



**Salvatore Castano**  
Salvatore is buyer at Friarwood Fine Wines. Before this he was a sommelier, named ASI Best Sommelier Europe & Africa 2021



**Antony Moss MW**  
A educator, judge and consultant. Antony was Director of Strategy at the WSET and now uses his expertise in sustainability and organisational efficiency to drive positive change.



**Myles Cunilife**  
Myles is a leading authority in the drinks industry. His knowledge of spirits, mixology and his flair for teaching awarded him the Imbibe Educator of the Year in 2017.



**Ortis Deley**  
Ortis is an expert spirits judge and co-founder of Glassmates, an educational platform dedicated to the exploration of quality spirits.

# HOW WE JUDGE



## PRE-TASTING

- Our **expert panel** of judges is **restricted** to the **world's most eminent buyers** and **key decision-makers**.
- Expert panels assembled from **over 30 countries**.
- **Balanced representation** across industry sectors.



## DURING THE TASTING

- **Double-blind tastings:** samples poured behind screens to ensure complete anonymity.
- **Daily limit of 65 samples** to avoid judges' palate fatigue.
- **Panel evaluation** and **group discussions** for each entry.
- **Re-tasting all gold-medal winners** by the Judging Committee



## AFTER THE TASTING

- Our **winners** receive **comprehensive tasting notes** and **scores** from our judges.
- We are the **only industry award body** to share **free constructive feedback** with **non-winners**.
- We are **one of the only competitions** to **reveal the names of the judges** who assessed your drinks, **connecting you to trade experts**.

# COMMUNITY & ADD-ON AWARDS

Celebrating excellence across the drinks industry, championing sustainability and giving back to the community.



## PRODUCER TROPHIES

Following the announcement of the IWSC's results, the brands that performed best are put forward for our prestigious Producer Trophies.

## COMMUNITY AWARDS

Recognising the contribution of individuals across the industry:

- Emerging Talent
- Communicator Awards
- UK Sommelier Of The Year
- National Drinks Retailer Awards

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[Discover More](#)

## DESIGN AWARDS

Rewarding innovation, creativity and brand personality in bottle/can design and packaging

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## MIXER ADD-ON AWARDS

Awarding the best no, low and mid-strength spirits & mixer pairings across several categories.

[Discover More](#)



## IWSC WEBSITE

Weekly IWSC features and recommendations on IWSC website.

**Global page views: 325K + /month**



## IWSC NEWSLETTER

Fortnightly IWSC e-newsletters highlight winners and awards.

**18K+ global subscribers.**



## IWSC SOCIAL MEDIA

Year-round social media campaigns on our trade (IWSC) and consumer (Club Oenologique) platforms.

**Global reach - 80K+ users/month**



## IWSC EVENTS

Showcasing award-winning drinks at international trade fairs, trade & press tastings and our annual Awards Celebration.

# HOW WE CAN HELP

**Are you an IWSC award winner? Be it bronze, silver or gold, here's how our expert in-house team with global industry connections and decades of cross-sector experience can help**



### CONNECT WITH KEY DECISION-MAKERS

We are the only competition to reveal judges' names for your entries and to share your details with judges post-results, facilitating industry connections.



### THE DRINKING HOUR PODCAST

Showcasing IWSC winners on global consumer radio station Food FM's "The Drinking Hour" podcast.

**25,500+ total downloads.**



### CLUB OENOLOGIQUE

Our winners are regularly featured in our consumer magazine, Club Oenologique, published online and in print.

**Global page views 1.4+mln.**

# AMPLIFYING YOUR SUCCESS

Global promotion is at the heart of the IWSC



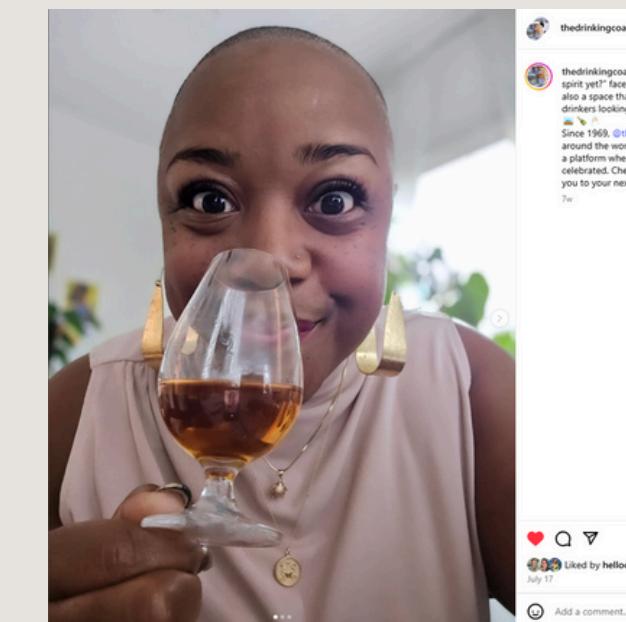
## GLOBAL REACH

- **1.8 BILLION +** media reach
- Featured in Forbes, Vino Joy, UK Nationals
- PR partners in London, Asia and North America



## CONSUMER IMPACT

- **144 MILLION +** UK & US consumer reach
- **1 MILLION +** engaged wine lovers via influencers
- Storytelling fronted by IWSC judges and ambassadors



## AUTHORITY & CREDIBILITY

Winning at the IWSC positions your brand as part of the **Global Standard** in drinks.

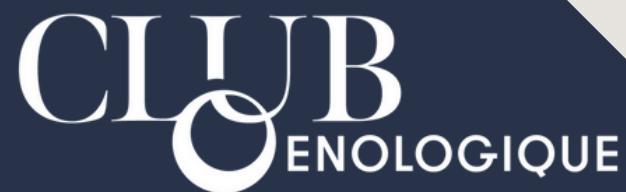
*"There are lots of awards around the world, but the oldest and most mature one is IWSC. People look at it as a defined quality path that others just follow. An IWSC medal is like winning an Oscar. It sets you apart from the rest."*

Arthur Nagle, IWSC judge and spirits educator.



# AMPLIFYING YOUR SUCCESS

The IWSC amplifies your success through our own platforms: Club Oenologique and IWSC trade marketing campaigns



The IWSC results are promoted extensively through our consumer platform Club Oenologique.

## Magazine

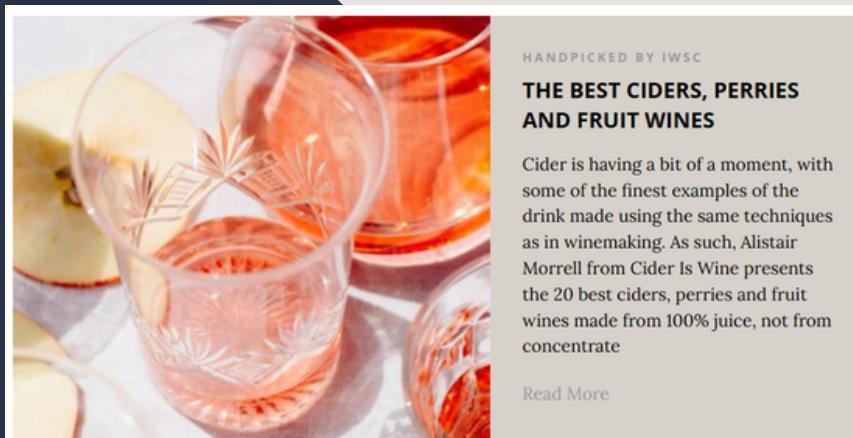
- **15K** circulation per issue

## Online

- **80K** website users per month
- **11K** newsletter subscribers
- **200K** average monthly global social reach

## Audience

Concentrated in the UK, North America, Europe and Asia, with significant numbers in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

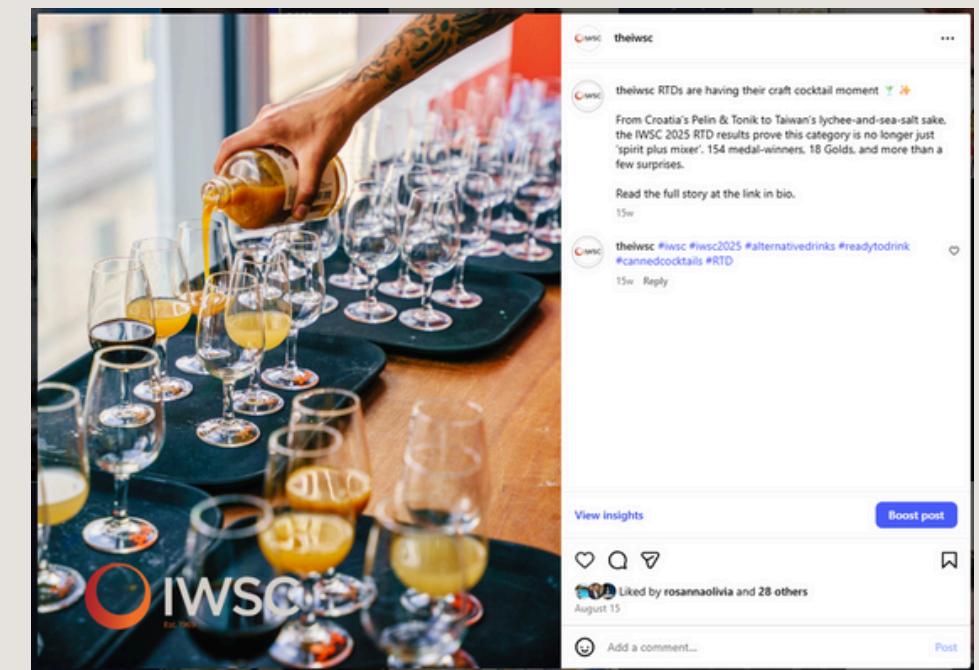


## 2025 IWSC Results Campaign

Reaching a global B2B audience through a **16-week campaign** celebrating this year's award-winning producers.

- **85K +** Social media reach
- **8.5K+** Unique blog readers

An editorial-style campaign combining results and insights with IWSC judges' feedback and interviews, designed to engage, educate, and inspire the global drinks trade.



## WHAT OUR WINNERS SAY



*"The IWSC award not only validated our product but also gave us a powerful story to share with our partners and investors. It's a tangible marker of quality that has propelled us forward in a competitive market."*

**Imme Ermgassen**  
**Co-founder at Botivo (UK)**



*"The Producer Trophies have been enormous for our business, they represent a level of global recognition that category managers and industry insiders worldwide give significant weight to. The IWSC is regarded for its quality and impartiality, and serves as a benchmark for any category entrant to measure their product against peers."*

**Matt Sanger**  
**Managing Director at**  
**Curatif (Australia)**



*"We entered the IWSC because of the competition's strong standing within the spirits world, the rigorous judging process and panel, and especially due to the IWSC's attention to the non-alcoholic category. Many competitions have been slow to really embrace NA drinks, often lumping us together with other categories that don't really make any sense. At the IWSC we felt we had a fair place at the table, and were being judged appropriately."*

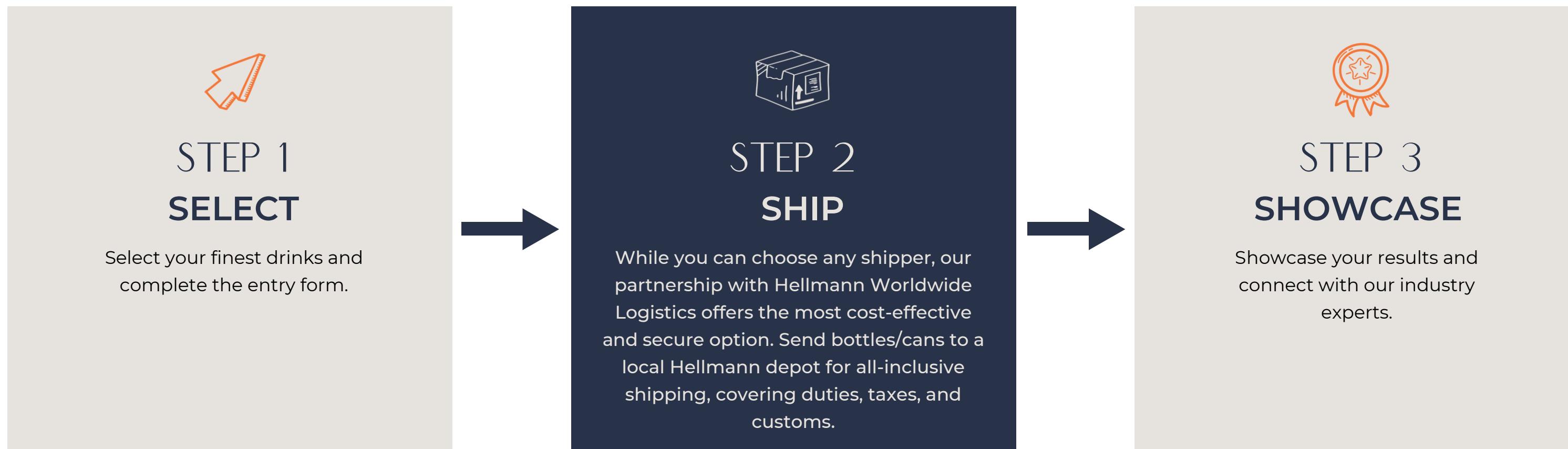
**Ian Blessing**  
**Co-Founder & Owner**  
**of All The Bitter (USA)**

**Read more**  
**winners success**  
**stories here**



## HOW TO ENTER

# HOW TO ENTER





# HOW TO SHIP



## STEP 1

Find your nearest Hellmann depot on [IWSC website](#).



## STEP 2

Send your samples to your nearest Hellmann depot.



## STEP 3

Hellmann handles customs clearance and sample delivery with an all-inclusive fee.

## NO HIDDEN COSTS

Your samples will be delivered safely to us in proud partnership with



To find out how to ship your drinks to us directly, please visit our [website](#).

## KEY DATES

ENTER & PAY ONLINE

**£162 + VAT per entry** (for 4 + entries)

or £174 + VAT per entry

13 November 2025 ↓ ENTRIES OPEN	6 March 2026 ↓ CONSOLIDATED SHIPPING DEADLINE	27 March 2026 ↓ ENTRY DEADLINE	2 April 2026 ↓ DIRECT SHIPPING DEADLINE	May 2026 ↓ ALTERNATIVE DRINKS JUDGING	28 May 2026 ↓ RESULTS ANNOUNCEMENT
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[ENTER HERE](#)



## Ready to enter? Contact us.

### **Sales**

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Diego Carrejo - diego.carrejo@iwsc.net  
Simone Esposito - simone.esposito@iwsc.net  
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### **Marketing**

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