



SPIRITS ENTRY GUIDE

COMPETITION. CONNECTION. COMMUNITY



WHO WE ARE

The IWSC (International Wine and Spirit Competition) is one of the world's oldest and most respected competitions, often referred to as the "Olympics of the drinks industry".

Since 1969, we have been setting the global benchmark for quality across an extensive range of wine, spirits, and other drink categories. Evaluating over **12,000 entries annually from more than 90 countries**, we connect producers to both trade experts and consumers.



WHY CHOOSE US?



JUDGED BY GLOBAL TRADE EXPERTS

We **connect** producers with **key industry decision-makers** – our judges, offering access to Head Buyers, Master Distillers, Beverage Directors, Communicators and other experts whose **opinions shape markets**.



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**.



GREATER EXPOSURE WITH MULTIPLE ENTRIES

IWSC OFFERS THE BEST VALUE AND VISABILITY FOR PRODUCERS ENTERING MULTIPLE SPIRITS.

Submitting 3 or more entries turns individual medals into a story of consistent excellence, and gives your brand greater exposure across trade and media.



Get Recognised

Producers of the Year Trophies

Top performers shortlisted for Producer Trophies, with winners celebrated at the IWSC Awards Celebration.



Get Ranked

IWSC Top 50

Highlighting the most consistent and high-performing producers across their full range.



Reach Customers

IWSC Events

Discounted stand and participation fees for IWSC events, including The World Whisky Experience

The IWSC is more than a medal - we champion our winners across trade and consumer channels, with priority exposure for multi-entry brands.

DISCOUNTED ENTRY FEES

Save £12 per entry when you enter 4 or more wines.

Full Price £174 ex VAT versus discounted price of £162 ex VAT.

That's not all!

Discover more opportunities in our Winners' Pack

MORE INFO



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



LOW, NO & 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 and we will be happy to help.

IWSC SPIRITS JUDGING COMMITTEE

Our **Spirits Judging Committee**, comprised of world-class industry professionals including Master Distillers, Master Blenders, Senior Buyers, and top Communicators, leads a team of key decision-makers who shape the UK and global spirits scene.



Ian Burrell
Rum

UK Rum Fest creator, award-winning drinks consultant,



Marie Cheong Thong
Asian Spirits

A wine and spirits expert, educator and judge who leads Asian Spirits judging at the IWSC.



Dawn Davies MW
Scotch Whisky/Worldwide Whiskey
Head Buyer at The Whisky Exchange and one of World's leading spirits authorities.



Joel Harrison
Cognac. Armagnac & Brandy
Award-winning drinks writer & commentator. He leads Brandy for the IWSC



Deano Moncrieffe
Tequila & Mezcal
Agave expert, bar owner and brand consultant.



Richard Paterson OBE
Scotch Whisky
One of the most respected figures in Scotch. Master blender at Whyte & Mackay for over 50 years.



David T Smith
Vodka & Liqueurs
A writer and communicator specialising in vodka and liqueurs.



Oliver Ward
Gin & RTDs
A leading expert & member of the Gin Guild who has consulted with brands throughout the World.

WHO ARE OUR JUDGES?

The IWSC is set apart from other drinks competitions by the quality and professionalism of our judges. We have a core team of around 100 **judges**, of which **more than 90% are senior buyers**. All IWSC judges are paid for their time.



Denis Broci
All Spirits
Director of Bars
Birley Group



Guy Hodcroft
All Spirits
Spirits Buyer
Bordeaux Index



Antony Moss MW
Asian Spirits
WSET



Edward Bates
Cognac
Distilled London



Demond Payne MBE
Gin
Master Distiller Emeritus
Beefeater



Anne Brock
Gin
Master Distiller
Bacardi



Oscar Angeloni
All spirits
Bar Manager
The Connaught



Peter Holland
Rum
Sugarcane Spirits Educator
The Floating Rum Shack



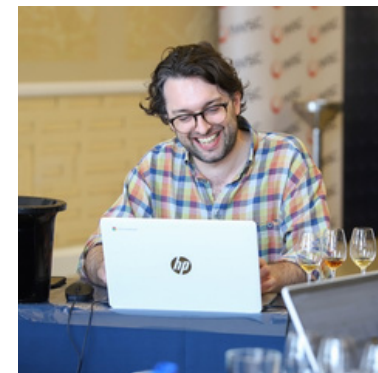
Sly Augustin
Rum
Managing Director
Trailer Happiness



Adam Cocker
All Spirits
Master Distiller
Beefeater



Tom Bartram
All spirits
Sales Manager
The Whisky Exchange



James Phillips
All Spirits
Wine & Spirits Buyer
Jeroboams



Becky Paskin
Whisky
Drinks Journalist



Oscar Angeloni
All Spirits
Bar Manager
The Connaught



Ryan Chetiyawardana
All Spirits
Bar Owner/Consultant
Mr Lyan



Millie Milliken
Tequila, white spirits
Spirits journalist & writer



Billy Leighton
Whisky
Master Blender Emeritus
Irish Distillers



Dr Bill Lumsden
Whisky
Director of Distilling
The Glenmorangie Co.



Emma Walker
Whisky
Master Distiller
Johnnie Walker



Desmond Payne MBE
Gin
Master Distiller



Dr Jim Beveridge OBE
Whisky
Master Blender
Consultant



Kristiane Westray
Whisky
Writer & Educator



Sandy Hyslop
Whisky
Director of Blending
Chivas Brothers



Billy Abbott
Whisky
Whisky Ambassador
The Whisky Exchange

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 Spirits 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**.





ANNUAL UK JUDGING

SEND YOUR SPIRITS TO THE IWSC FOR OUR LARGEST JUDGING SESSION IN LONDON

The IWSC annually evaluates over **12,000 entries from more than 90 countries**. Each year, our expert judges convene over one month in London, UK, to assess each drink. Using a rigorous panel process, we ensure fair evaluation, guaranteeing that the first drink receives the same attention as the last.



“An IWSC accolade is one of the key pieces of getting your name out there, to actually tell people not only that you exist but also that you have quality, that you are a great product.”

Billy Abbott, IWSC Judge, Whisky & Fine Spirits Expert at The Whisky Exchange

“With the experts that the IWSC has, producers get excellent feedback. It means that, even if you don’t get a medal you get great feedback from people who really know what they’re doing”

Colin Hamden-White, IWSC Judge, Writer & Broadcaster

GLOBAL JUDGING

BRINGING THE IWSC TO YOU

In addition to our annual Judging in the UK, we take our experts to wine and spirit regions around the world to judge on-site.

- Our judges delve deeply into each region's unique offerings through the distillery visits and workshops, gaining comprehensive knowledge that enables them to represent these regions effectively in the global market.
- Producers gain invaluable opportunities to connect with influential decision-makers in the industry. These interactions pave the way for lasting partnerships and offer insights into the UK market.
- Judges have access to a broader range of spirits directly at the source, allowing for a thorough understanding of the country.

We hold Global Judging events worldwide, including USA, Georgia, South Africa and China. To find out the Global Judging programme for 2026, click [here](#).

"My overall impression of the IWSC Judging in Kentucky has been one of awe. We've all been working together - distillers, judges - and visited many of the wonderful distilleries here."

Richard Paterson, IWSC Spirits Judging Committee



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.

[Discover More](#)



COMMUNITY AWARDS

Recognising the contribution of individuals across the industry:

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

[Discover More](#)



IWSC TOP 50

Launched in 2025, the IWSC TopThe IWSC Top 50 showcases the industry's most distinguished producers, those whose unwavering pursuit of excellence has defined three years of remarkable success.



DESIGN AWARDS

Rewarding innovation, creativity and brand personality in bottle design and packaging.

[Discover More](#)



MIXER ADD-ON AWARDS

Awarding the best spirit & 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 winning wines and spirits at international trade fairs, trade & press tastings and our annual Awards Celebration.



TRADE & CONSUMER TASTING SUPPORT

We support large events with, signage, tasting trails and masterclasses and more, providing an independent quality endorsement to visitors.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Are you an 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.



BRAND PR CONSULTANCY

For brands entering or expanding their UK brand footprint we offer a range of PR support packages in partnership with Major PR

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 spirits.

“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 campaign



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

Magazine

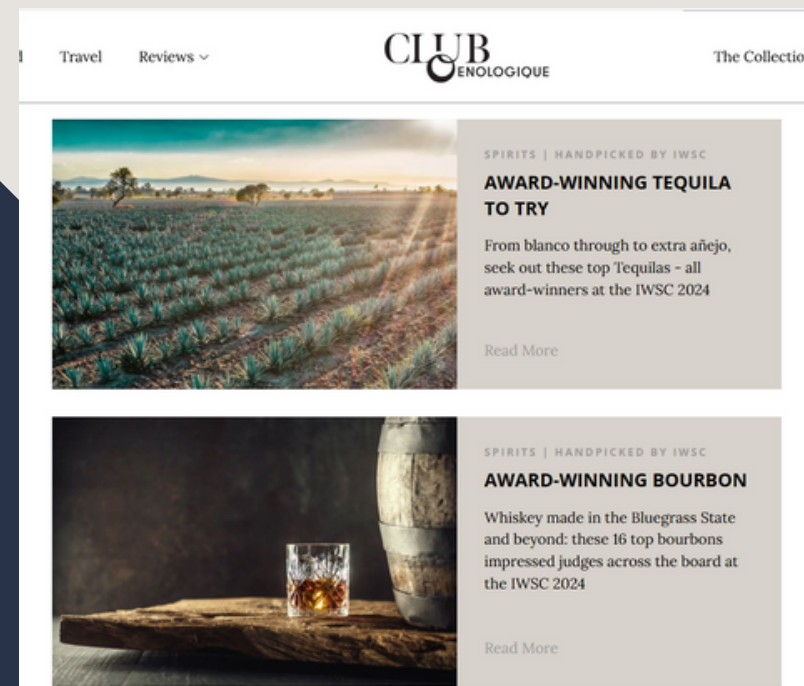
- **15K** circulation per issue

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



“One of the draws to the competition is the feedback from the judges on the profile of the gin. This was very important to me, as it allowed me to make minor adjustments to improve the spirit for the marketplace, as well as provide customers tasting notes from the experts.”

As a result of our IWSC win, we were featured on Channel 4’s Sunday Brunch. Our sales increased by over 830% following the show, this has now steadied back down, but the Great Bustard Gin continues to be a popular choice.”

Hugh Anderson
Founder & Distiller at
Downton Distillery (UK)



“We get approached by many spirit competitions all over the world and when we evaluated the benefits of each one, we decided that entering our brands in IWSC is no-brainer! When you consider the longevity of the IWSC, the knowledgeable, experienced and talented judges and of course the quality of the entries this is a competition where winning a medal means a lot.”

Alexander Kong
Commercial Manager at
Worthy Park Estate (Jamaica)



“The IWSC is an important competition and has been since we launched Four Pillars in 2013. Whilst it is the ideal opportunity to benchmark our gins against the best in the world, we also value the feedback on some of our smaller batches and innovations. The judging panels are exceptional.”

Cameron Mackenzie
Co-Founder at
Four Pillars Gin (Australia)

**Read more
winners success
stories [here](#)**



HOW TO ENTER



STEP 1 SELECT

Select your finest spirits and complete the entry form.



STEP 2 SHIP

While you can choose any shipper, our partnership with Hellmann Worldwide Logistics offers the most cost-effective and secure option. Send bottles to a local Hellmann depot for all-inclusive shipping, covering duties, taxes, and customs.



STEP 3 SHOWCASE

Showcase your results and connect with our industry experts.



HOW TO SHIP



STEP 1

Find you 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 spirits will be delivered safely to us in proud partnership with



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

KEY DATES

ENTER & PAY ONLINE

£162 + VAT per entry (4 or more entries)

or £174 +VAT per entry

13 November 2025



ENTRIES
OPEN

6 March 2026



CONSOLIDATED
SHIPPING DEADLINE

20 March 2026



ENTRY
DEADLINE

27 March 2026



DIRECT SHIPPING
DEADLINE

11 -19 May 2026



SPIRITS
JUDGING

12 June 2026



RESULTS
ANNOUNCEMENT

[ENTER HERE](#)



Ready to enter? Contact us.

Sales

Peter Everall - peter.everall@iwsc.net

Diego Carrejo - diego.carrejo@iwsc.net

Simone Esposito - simone.esposito@iwsc.net

Janine van Zyl - janine.vanzyl@iwsc.net

Marketing

Rebecca Fraser – marketing@iwsc.net

General enquiries

info@iwsc.net

www.iwsc.net | [@theiwsc](https://www.instagram.com/theiwsc)

