



MELBOURNE
ROYAL

AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL
SPIRITS AWARDS

*Distilling Excellence.
Rewarding Brilliance.*



Entry Booklet 2026



Established in 2015, the Australian International Spirits Awards recognises excellence in the global distilling industry.

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The Awards provide distillers from around the world with an essential benchmarking opportunity.

Developed in close consultation with industry experts, including Executive Committee members of the Australian Distillers Association, the Awards are judged by experts in the spirits industry.

Melbourne Royal thanks the following partners and supporters for their involvement.

A special thanks to all the 2026 producers, judges and stewards.

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General information

2026 calendar of important dates

Entries Open	Tuesday 14 April
Entries Close	Friday 29 May
International Deliveries to the Awards	Monday 15 June – Tuesday 30 June
Australian deliveries to the Awards	Monday 22 June – Thursday 2 July
Judging	Tuesday 7 July – Thursday 9 July
Awards Presentation	Monday 27 July
Exhibitor & Trade Tasting	Tuesday 28 July

Introduction

Established in 2015 and developed in close consultation with industry experts, the Melbourne Royal Australian International Spirits Awards are open to distilleries of all sizes, from small to large-scale commercial production and provide distillers around the globe with an essential benchmarking opportunity.

Now in its 12th year, the program is Australia's first and largest national spirits competition highlighting the innovation and excellence in distilling. In 2025, the Australian International Spirits Awards attracted 820 Entries from 219 Exhibitors.

In 2026, the Awards offer 6 major trophies, as well as 21 category trophies. Judging will take place over three days in July at Melbourne Showgrounds in Ascot Vale, Victoria.

The results will be announced at the Trophy Presentation on Monday 27 July.

Why you should enter

There are many reasons to enter products into the Australian International Spirits Awards, including:

- An unparalleled opportunity to benchmark their products against industry standards.
- In reporting results to exhibitors, exhibit scores are represented on distribution graphs (where there is sufficient data to do so) enabling exhibitors to see how their products rank against those of their peers around the world.
- Medal-winning distillers will be provided with the Australian International Spirits Awards Marketing & PR Kit to assist with promoting their win and marketing their product with a seal of quality.
- Exhibitors can promote and position their products through Melbourne Royal associated events.
- Gold Medal-winning exhibitors who have demonstrated consistency across three consecutive years (since 2024) with the same product in the same format will be awarded a Consistency of Excellence Medal (see page 14 for details).

What you should know when entering

The Australian International Spirits Awards is a credible and impartial competition that is endorsed by the Australian Distillers Association and conducted by one of Australia's most highly esteemed royal agricultural societies, Melbourne Royal, the organisation responsible for the Australian International Beer Awards, Melbourne Royal Wine Awards and Australian Food Awards.

The judging panel boasts some of the most highly respected spirits industry professionals, from educators, writers and consultants through to retailers, distributors and distillers.

Entries are blind tasted and judged on their own merits against a set of criteria (see 'Scoring and Medals' for details).

Entries are allocated a tasting order number, separate from the Catalogue (Exhibit) Number, to ensure the anonymity of the exhibit and to protect the integrity of the judging process.

Holly Klintworth and Sebastian Reaburn appointed new Head Judges

Melbourne Royal is pleased to announce the appointment of Sebastian Reaburn and Holly Klintworth as the new Head Judges for the Melbourne Royal Australian International Spirits Awards.



Holly Klintworth has been judging the Awards since 2021 and is the Managing Director of Bass & Flinders Distillery, one of the few second-generation distilleries

in Australia. She leads the family business, built on a passion for eau de vie and grape-to-glass gins, brandies and liqueurs.

Elected as the first woman President of the Australian Distillers Association (2022–2025), Holly has played a key role in championing Australia’s innovative and dynamic spirits sector, celebrating Australian-made products, native ingredients and the continued evolution of flavour, craft and provenance.



Sebastian Reaburn is a distiller and industry leader, immersed in the world of flavour and recognised for excellence across both production and hospitality.

He currently serves as a committee member of the Australian Distillers Association, contributing as a subject matter expert to the development of the Certificate IV in Artisan Distilling and the Introduction to Distillery Safety course. Sebastian is also a member of the Industry Advisory Committee for the Melbourne Royal Australian International Spirits Awards and has been a judge since the competition’s inception in 2014.

Sebastian and Holly’s appointments have been unanimously endorsed by the Industry Advisory Group of the Melbourne Royal Australian International Spirits Awards, which includes representatives from the Australian Distillers Association. Melbourne Royal is thrilled to welcome them to the role as the program enters its twelfth year.

To uphold the integrity and impartiality of the judging process, Sebastian and Holly will not enter their own products into the Awards while serving as Head Judges.

To read the media release, please visit [here](#).

What's new in 2026

Since opening up to the world in 2025, the Awards have continued to evolve. In 2026, categories and classes have been fine-tuned to evolve and better reflect the shifting landscape of the spirits industry.

New Gin & Tonic Category

Gin producers will have the opportunity to have their gins assessed as a gin & tonic, with StrangeLove Tonic Waters. Exhibitors will be able to enter as an optional extra that can be selected when entering a Gin into a gin class for a special introductory entry fee of \$80, with no additional product required to be sent.

Eligibility: Only products entered in the Gin category that have been entered into the tasting section will be eligible.

Entries will be assessed with chilled tonic water at the ratio of after 1 part Gin (15mL) to 3 parts Tonic Water (45mL).

Exhibitors will have choice of one of the following StrangeLove Tonic Waters to have mixed with their Gin:

- Tonic No 8 – <https://strangelove.com.au/collections/premium-mixers-1/products/tonic-water-8>
- Coastal Tonic – <https://strangelove.com.au/products/coastal-tonic-water>
- Light Tonic – <https://strangelove.com.au/collections/premium-mixers-1/products/light-tonic>

New Small, Medium and Large Champion Australian Distiller Trophies

The Champion Australian Distiller Trophy has been refined to recognise excellence across different distillery size categories, ensuring fair and meaningful competition among peers. By awarding Champions within each size classification, the trophies acknowledge the diversity of Australia's distilling landscape and creates greater opportunity for distilleries of all scales to be recognised for their achievement.

To be eligible for a Champion Australian Distiller Trophy, the distillery must be located within Australia and must be the licensed distiller and exhibitor of the awarded exhibit. The award will be judged on the distillery's top three (3) scoring exhibits, at least one of which must be a gold-medal winning exhibit.

Australian nomad-distilled exhibits and exhibitors who have had the awarded exhibits made under contract by a contract distiller are not eligible to win a Champion Australian Distillery Trophy, as the exhibitor who entered the exhibit is not a distillery.

See 'Entry Fees' on page 17 for distillery size specifications.

New Classes

RUM006 – Other Rum will cater for rums that don't fit in the existing rum classes and have unusual production methods and/or are blends, such as cane juice and sugarcane honey or cane juice and molasses.

BRN007 – Pisco – Unaged Brandy distilled from fermented grape juice from Peru or Chile.

Updates to existing categories and classes

Rum

RUM003 – Spiced Rum has been renamed to RUM003 – Flavoured and Spiced Rum / Flavoured and Spiced Cane Juice Rum.

RUM005 – Rhum Agricole has been renamed to RUM005 – Cane Juice Rum with sub-styles for Underproof, Overproof and Blanco.

Cane Spirit

Introduction of CNE003 – Other Cane Spirit, which will be for cane spirits that don't fit in existing cane spirit classes and have unusual production methods and/or are blends, such as cane juice and honey or cane juice and molasses.

The class will replace CNE003 – Rhum Agricole (1-2yo) and CNE004 – Cachaça (less than 2yo) classes.

Agave Spirit

Entries will now be categorised by style:

- Blanco (Silver)
- Joven (Gold)
- Reposado (Aged)
- Añejo (Extra Aged)
- Extra Añejo (Ultra Aged)
- Mixto
- Flavoured

Brandy

BRN001 – Grape Brandy, Age Statement and BRN002 Grape Brandy, Non-Age Statement have replaced by BRN001 – Grape Brandy, Under 6 Years and BRN002 – Grape Brandy 6 Years and Older.

Trophy Review

The Best Ready to Serve Cocktail, Pre-Mix or Spritz has been split into Best Ready to Serve Cocktail and Best Ready to Serve Pre-Mix or Spritz.

The Best Vermouth Trophy will now merge with the Best Bitter Trophy to become the Best Bitter or Vermouth Trophy.

Entry eligibility

Entry eligibility

Entries must be commercially available in the precise composition and in the same packaging, including labels, in which it is submitted for judging. Entries packaged especially for the competition that are not ordinarily available in packaged form will not be accepted – this includes entries in growlers. Exhibitors may be required to verify commercial availability by providing the details of at least one stockist or outlet. Tank samples and especially bottled batches will not be accepted as entries into the competition.

If the exhibitor is not the manufacturer (distiller) of the product entered, the exhibitor warrants that they have the relevant permits and/or licences to enter the product.

Australian entries must comply with Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Standard 2.7.5 – Spirits, and must not contain any illegal additives.

All entries must comply with the Australian regulatory requirements that apply in relation to product, labelling, and excise (including the Excise Act 1901).

International Entries must comply with their local jurisdiction's regulations regarding Spirits.

Entries must be of sound, marketable quality from a commercial production or batch, finished and sealed in their final container with Batch / Barrel / Cask / Bottle Numbers.

An exhibit can be entered only once into the Australian International Spirits Awards, however an exhibitor can enter multiple exhibits into a class so long as they can demonstrate a technical difference between the exhibits.

Entrants are responsible for ensuring the prompt and safe delivery of their entries.

How to enter

There are three simple steps to enter the Australian International Spirits Awards:

1. Read through the competition Entry Booklet (this document) and the categories available for entering product into;
2. Complete the online entry process at www.melbournerooyal.com.au/spirits and arrange payment for your entries; and
3. Upon receiving confirmation of acceptance of your entries and product delivery instructions, submit your exhibits to the Australian International Spirits Awards for judging.

Audit procedures

To uphold the integrity of the competition and its results, Melbourne Royal conducts a physical and telephone audit of entrants and entries in the lead up to, during, and after judging, to ensure compliance with stated ABV, category compliance, etc. Entrants are encouraged to ensure the information they provide during the entry process is accurate.

Entrants are also reminded that exhibits must be entered in their correct class according to category. The category of spirit stated on the commercial label must match the category entered and must comply with its commonly accepted definition; for example, if the category of spirit stated on the commercial label is Whisky, then the spirit must be entered into a Whisky class and must meet the definition of Whisky in accordance with the Excise Act 1901 (distilled from cereal grains, yeast and water, and matured in wooden casks for at least two (2) years) and the regulations in the country of origin of where the product was made.

Conversely, if there is no category of spirit stated on the commercial label, then the spirit cannot be entered as a Whisky unless it meets the definition of Whisky above. Note that an exhibit will be disqualified if the commercial label of the entry specifies that the product differs from the category it was entered.

What our *trophy winners* say

Entering the Australian International Spirits Awards allows us to benchmark our Mezcal against the best in the world and celebrate the craft, culture and partnership behind our Kiwi-Mexican brand. Winning a trophy is huge for us. Recognition that our small, independent, two-culture collaboration can stand among the top agave spirits. It helped lift our profile, build trust with retailers and customers, and opened new opportunities for tastings, stockists and partnerships. As a brand we have strengthened our foundations, boosted confidence in our brand and reinforced our mission of celebrating togetherness through world-class Mezcal.

Entering the Australian International Spirits Awards allows us to benchmark our mezcal against the best in the world while celebrating the craft, culture and partnership behind our Kiwi-Mexican brand. Winning a trophy was huge for us, recognition that our small, independent, two-culture collaboration can stand alongside the top agave spirits globally.

The award lifted our profile, built trust with retailers and customers, and opened new opportunities for tastings, stockists and partnerships. As a brand, it strengthened our foundations, boosted confidence in who we are, and reinforced our mission of celebrating togetherness through world-class mezcal.

Hayden Bigelow and Adrian Martinez-Ruiz
Amigos Aotearoa
Best Tequila or Agave Spirit, 2025

The Australian International Spirits Awards are an incredibly efficient way to seek independent validation of your product's quality as your business evolves.

Competitions allow us to see how our spirits stack up against industry leaders and give us confidence that the recipes we're developing have real industry traction.

Trophies represent the culmination of immense hard work and collective effort. Just as a team strives to lift a trophy at the end of a season, distillery teams and brands work tirelessly to create the best spirits possible and recognition at that level is deeply meaningful.

Significant Australian awards such as these have had a material impact on how customers perceive our brand and the value they attach to our products. Succeeding in a competition that features world-leading global brands can be truly career-defining.

Sean Baxter

Never Never Distilling
Best Fruit or Wine/Grape Gin and Best Design,
2025

Winning Champion Australian Distiller at the 2023 and 2025 Melbourne Royal Australian Spirits Awards has been a crowning achievement for both the brand and myself professionally. As Australia's most respected spirits competition, the event carries enormous industry influence, and the public recognition that comes with a gold medal or trophy cannot be overstated.

I strongly encourage both established and emerging distilleries to participate. The feedback from the skilled and diverse judging panel is detailed, rigorous and unbiased, offering a level of relevant local industry insight that surpasses many international spirits competitions.

Hugh Lumsden

Prohibition Liquor
Champion Australian Distiller, 2025

Events

Trophy Presentation Monday 27 July

Hosted by Melbourne Royal in the Victoria Pavilion at Melbourne Showgrounds, the 2026 Australian International Spirits Awards Trophy Presentation is open to exhibitors, trade, and consumers.

The cocktail event will include an official presentation announcing the trophy winners and will feature gold medal and trophy-winning spirits, liqueurs, ready to serves and bitters from the 2026 Awards.

Event details

Time: 6.30pm – 10.30pm

Location: Victoria Pavilion, Melbourne Showgrounds, Ascot Vale 3032

Dress Code: Smart Casual

Exhibitors and Members (individual ticket): \$149

Non-Exhibitors and Non-Members (individual ticket): \$169

Additional stock requirement

Exhibitors whose exhibits have won a gold medal at the 2026 Awards will be required to supply, at their own expense, a minimum of four (4) x 500mL bottles or equivalent of their gold medal-winning exhibit for featuring at the Trophy Presentation and the Exhibitor & Trade Tasting the following day.

Melbourne Royal reserves the right to purchase additional stock as required for this event at wholesale price. Exhibitors will be notified under embargo by email to advise if additional stock is required.

Exhibitors should arrange immediate delivery to arrive by no later than Wednesday 9 July.

The Awards acknowledge that international exhibitors may face challenges in ensuring their gold-medal-winning exhibits arrive on time. Where possible, exhibitors are encouraged to coordinate with distributors in Australia to facilitate delivery.

Exhibitor & Trade Tasting Tuesday 28 July

The Exhibitor & Trade Tasting of the 2026 Melbourne Royal Australian International Spirits Awards is a not open to the public, ticketed event. Anticipating upward of 900 entries, with each being made available for sampling, this is going to be an unparalleled opportunity to sample, critique, and learn about your contemporaries, and to spruik to trade.

Exhibitors are eligible for two non-transferable tickets. Details of ticketing will be announced closer to the time.

Event details

Time: 11am – 3pm

Location: Building 13, Melbourne Showgrounds, Ascot Vale 3032

Dress Code: Smart Casual

Free for exhibitors

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Every great spirit starts with Bintani.



And it all begins with the right foundations. That's why our specialty malt and yeast are key in the making of a truly great spirit. The same goes for our ingredients – sourced for the best quality and taste. To ensure each of your creations shines as bright as the last, begin with Bintani.

**Get your spirit started today.
Call us on 03 8587 9888**



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Trophies and *eligibility*

Trophy	Eligible classes
Champion Australian Small Distiller	All except Design, Ready to Serve and Non-Alcoholic Spirit – see eligibility below
Champion Australian Medium Distiller	All except Design, Ready to Serve and Non-Alcoholic Spirit – see eligibility below
Champion Australian Large Distiller	All except Design, Ready to Serve and Non-Alcoholic Spirit – see eligibility below
Champion International Distiller	All except Design, Ready to Serve and Non-Alcoholic Spirit – see eligibility below
Champion Australian Nomad Distiller	All except Design, Ready to Serve and Non-Alcoholic Spirit – see eligibility below
Champion Australian Gin	All Australian Gins – GIN001 – GIN012
Champion Victorian Distiller	All Victorian distillers – see eligibility below
Champion Victorian Gin	All Victorian Gins – GIN001 – GIN012
Best Australian Single Malt Whisky	ASM001 – ASM004
Best International Single Malt Whisky	ISM001 – ISM007
Best Grain Whisky	GWY001 – GWY013
Best Blended Malt Whisky	BMW001 – BMW008
Best London Dry Gin	GIN001
Best New World / Contemporary Gin	GIN002 – GIN005
Best Navy Gin	GIN006
Best Fruit or Wine / Grape Gin	GIN007 – GIN008
Best Other Gin	GIN009 – GIN012
Best Unflavoured Vodka	VOD001
Best Flavoured Vodka	VOD002 – VOD004
Best Brandy	BRN001 – BRN008
Raymond ‘Spike’ Dessert III Trophy for Best Rum	RUM001 – RUM007
Best Cane Spirit	CNE001 – CNE003
Best Tequila or Agave Spirit	AGV001 – AGV003
Best Liqueur	LIQ001 – LIQ009
Best Alternative Spirit	ALT001 – ALT008
Best Bitter or Vermouth	BIT001 – BIT002, VER001
Best Ready to Serve Cocktail	RTS001
Best Ready to Serve Pre-Mix or Spritz	RTS002 – RTS003
Best Non-Alcoholic Spirit	NON001
Best Gin & Tonic	Add on option within Gin class
Best Design	DES001

Note: An exhibit must be awarded a gold medal to be eligible for a Champion Trophy. If no gold medals are awarded in a trophy category, the Champion Trophy for that category will not be awarded.

Consistency of Excellence

Exhibits of the same label that have been awarded a gold medal at the Australian International Spirits Awards for three consecutive years (2024, 2025 and 2026) will be awarded a Consistency of Excellence certificate. To be eligible, exhibits need to have been submitted in the same format, under the same label and in the same Class each year and to have achieved a gold medal consistently.

Champion Small, Medium and Large Australian Distilleries

Eligible Classes: All except Design, Ready to Serve and Non Alcoholic Spirit

To be eligible for a Champion Australian Distiller Trophy, the distillery must be located within Australia and must be the licensed distiller and exhibitor of the awarded exhibit, The award will be judged on the distillery's top three (3) scoring exhibits, at least one of which must be a gold-medal winning exhibit.

Australian nomad-distilled exhibits and exhibitors who have had the awarded exhibits made under contract by a contract distiller are not eligible to win a Champion Australian Distillery Trophy, as the exhibitor who entered the exhibit is not a distillery.

See 'entry Fees' for distillery size specifications.

NB: Australian exhibitors must be registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and hold an Excise Manufacturer Licence (EML).

Champion International Distiller

Eligible Classes: All except Design, Ready to Serve and Non Alcoholic Spirit

To be eligible for the Champion International Distiller, the distillery must be located outside of Australia and must be the licensed distiller and exhibitor of the awarded exhibit, The award will be judged on the distillery's top three (3) scoring exhibits, at least one of which must be a gold-medal winning exhibit.

International exhibits and exhibitors who have had the awarded exhibits made under contract by a contract distiller are not eligible to win a Champion International Distillery Trophy, as the exhibitor who entered the exhibit is not a distillery.

Champion Australian Nomad Distiller

Eligible Classes: All except Design, Ready to Serve and Non Alcoholic Spirit

The Australian nomad distiller or distilling company with the highest average scoring top two (2) Exhibits of different styles (Classes), at least one of which must be a gold medal-winning exhibit, will be awarded the Trophy. Australian exhibitors must declare during the entry process if they qualify for the Australian Nomad Distiller Award – i.e., the exhibitor developed and owns the recipe to the exhibit and oversaw the brewing of the exhibit but does not own the distillery where the exhibit was distilled. The Nomad Distiller Award is open only to Australian residents for exhibits distilled in Australia that are commercially available at the time of judging (Tuesday 1 July). An exhibit distilled by a nomad distiller or distilling company is ineligible for consideration towards a Champion Australian Distillery Trophy as the exhibitor who entered the exhibit is not a distillery, however a nomad distilled exhibit is eligible for a Best-in-Class Trophy. The distillery where the spirit has been distilled will also be recognised in the award.

NB: Australian exhibitors must be registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and hold an Excise Manufacturer Licence (EML).

[See 'Explanatory Notes for Classes' for definitions].

NB: The minimum required held quantity of finished bottled stock must have been commercially bottled by Thursday 2 July, the final day to submit your exhibits to Australian International Spirits Awards for judging.

Champion Victorian Distiller Trophy

Eligible Classes: All except Design, Ready to Serve and Non Alcoholic Spirit

The Champion Victorian Distiller Trophy acknowledges outstanding achievement in distilling excellence. The trophy will be awarded to the distiller with the highest average score, calculated from the distiller's top three (3) scoring exhibits, at least one of which must be a gold medal-winning exhibit.

Eligibility

- To be eligible for the 2026 Australian International Spirits Awards Champion Victorian Distiller Trophy, a distiller must:
- Be located in Victoria;
- Be the manufacturer of the eligible exhibits;
- Have distilled the exhibits at their own distillery (spirits produced under contract by a third party will not be eligible for the award); and
- Have entered a minimum of three (3) entries.

NB: All exhibitors must be registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and hold an Excise Manufacturer Licence (EML). Exhibitors who have had the awarded spirits made under contract by a contract-distiller are not eligible to win Champion Victorian Distiller as the exhibitor who entered is not a distiller.

[See 'Explanatory Notes for Classes' for definitions].

NB: The minimum required held quantity of finished bottled stock must have been commercially bottled by Thursday 26 June, the final day to submit your exhibits to Australian International Spirits Awards for judging.

Champion Australian Gin

Awarded to the Australian Gin exhibit with the highest combined scores when the scores of the trophy-judging panel are tallied.

Eligible Classes

All Gin classes

Champion Victorian Gin

Awarded to the Gin exhibit made by a Victorian Distiller with the highest combined scores when the scores of the trophy-judging panel are tallied.

Eligible Classes

All Gin classes

Exhibit requirements

Following are the minimum quantities required to be submitted for judging – remembering that an exhibit may only be entered if it is commercially available in the precise composition and in the same packaging, including the labels, in which it is sent for judging. Exhibits entered not meeting these criteria will not be judged. Surplus product will be showcased at the Exhibitor & Trade Tasting on Monday 20 July.

Class	Quantity required for judging
All Classes except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BIT002 – Cocktail Bitters • RTS001 – Ready to Serve Cocktail, • RTS002 – Ready to Serve Pre-Mix • RTS003 – Ready to Serve Spritz 	Two (2) x 500mL bottle or equivalent volume across multiple bottles of the same batch
Class BIT002 – Cocktail Bitters	One (1) x 100mL bottle or equivalent volume
RTS001 – Ready to Serve Cocktail	100mL or less = 10 250mL or less = 4 500mL or greater = 2
RTS002 – Ready to Serve Pre-Mix RTS003 – Ready to Serve Spritz	250ml or less = 16 375mL or greater = 8
GNT001 – Gin & Tonic	No additional product required

Held finished bottled stock requirement

100 bottles/cans are the minimum required quantity of held finished bottled stock for all exhibits entered into the Australian International Spirits Awards at the time of delivery, i.e., Thursday 2 July.

Third party / Contract manufacturing

Third party, contract-produced entries can be entered either by the contract distiller or by the retailer of the product; however, each must acknowledge the other in the entry process. Both the producer and the retailer will be recognised in all official announcements of results by Melbourne Royal, including announcements of class results and trophies, and in the Results Catalogue – trophy status will recognise the producer of the exhibit 'on behalf of' the retailer. Spirits, liqueurs and bitters produced under contract by a third party are ineligible for the Champion Australian Distiller Trophy.

A retailer is defined by the Australian International Spirits Awards as the seller of the product, e.g., a supermarket chain, liquor store outlet, franchise, etc.

Instructions for entering products produced under contract

For contract-distillers

Third-party, contract-distillers entering spirits, liqueurs or bitters that have been produced under contract for, or on behalf of, a retailer must acknowledge the retailer during the entry process by providing their name and contact details. When entering online, contract-distillers must create an account in their own name, rather than in the name of the retailer, and must declare the exhibit as being exhibited 'on behalf of' the retailer.

For retailers and distributors

Retailers entering products that have been produced for them under contract by a distillery must acknowledge the contract-distiller during the entry process by providing their name and contact details. When entering online, retailers must create an account in their own name, rather than in the name of the distiller.

If you are entering spirits, liqueurs and bitters on your own behalf as well as for a company for whom you are contract-distilling, you will need to establish two separate accounts. One account will be in your name for your entries. A separate account will need to be created as per the above instructions for the entries which you have contract-distilled for a retailer. Note that the same product cannot be entered twice.

Entry fees and *payment*

Entry fees

Distillery size/award	Entry fee (A\$ inc. GST)
Small Distillery (annual production up to and including 3,400 LALs)	\$180
Medium Distillery (annual production between 3,401–50,000 LALs)	\$255
Large Distillery (annual production above 50,000 LALs)	\$295
Gin & Tonic Class	\$80
Design Award	\$100

Closing date

The online entry facility at www.melbourneroyal.com.au/spirits closes Friday 29 May 2026.

Entries received after this time will be processed at the discretion of Melbourne Royal and attract an AUD\$15 per entry late fee.

Payment

Entries and full payment must be received by Melbourne Royal no later than midnight on Friday 29 May.

Entries received after the closing date will not be guaranteed admission to the competition.

Entries will not be accepted until the entry fee is received in full. Visa, MasterCard, Cheque and

Money orders are all accepted, Amex is not. Please make cheques and money orders payable to the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Ltd.

Online entries will not be validated until payment is received. Entry fees are non-refundable.

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)

Please enter the exhibitor name in the reference field and make payment to:

Company: RASV Ltd

Company Address: Epsom Road, Ascot Vale VIC 3032, Australia

Bank Account: 03-769-4755

Swift code: NATAAU3303M

Beneficiary Bank: National Australia Bank Limited

Beneficiary Bank Address: Level 28, 500 Bourke St, Melbourne VIC 3000, Australia

Sections and classes of entry

Explanatory notes for classes

It is essential that all exhibits are entered into their correct class and will be judged according to the class they have been entered into.

All exhibits must comply with the Australian regulatory requirements that apply in relation to product, labelling, and excise (including the Excise Act 1901) and the regulations, including technical files in their country of origins. All entries labelled Brandy, Rum and Whisky must be matured in wood for at least two (2) years and bottled at a minimum 37%. Exhibits not correctly entered will be determined to be 'out of class' and will not be assessed.

Should you need assistance in determining which class your product should be entered, please contact the Competition Manager.

AUSTRALIAN SINGLE MALT WHISKY

Whisky category entries (Classes WKY001 through WKY004) must be distilled from 100% malted barley, yeast and water, be the product of a single distillery, and must be matured in wood for at least two (2) years [Excise Act 1901] in Australia.

Sweetened and or flavoured whiskies must be entered into Class LIQ003 – Whisky Liqueur.

ASM001 – AUSTRALIAN SINGLE MALT WHISKY UNSMOKED

Low level of smoke acceptable.

ASM002 – AUSTRALIAN SINGLE MALT WHISKY SMOKED

Must be smoked with the express purpose of adding a smoky character to the final product.

ASM003 – AUSTRALIAN SINGLE MALT CASK STRENGTH WHISKY UNSMOKED

Must have an ABV of 55% or more and must be undiluted out of the cask. Low level of smoke acceptable.

ASM004 – AUSTRALIAN SINGLE MALT CASK STRENGTH WHISKY SMOKED

Must have an ABV of 55% or more, must be undiluted out of the cask and smoked with the express purpose of adding a smoky character to the final product.

INTERNATIONAL SINGLE MALT WHISKY

ISM001 – SCOTTISH SINGLE MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in Scotland and matured in oak casks not exceeding 700 litres for a minimum of three years and a minimum ABV of 40%.

ISM002 – JAPANESE SINGLE MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in Japan, aged in oak for a minimum of 3 years and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

ISM003 – IRISH SINGLE MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery for a minimum of 3 years on the island of Ireland and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

ISM004 – AMERICAN SINGLE MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery for 2 years in the United States of America and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

ISM005 – CANADIAN SINGLE MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in Canada and aged in oak for a minimum of 3 years and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

ISM006 – NEW ZEALAND SINGLE MALT WHISKY

Must follow the definition for New Zealand Single Malt Whisky in the Distilled Spirits Aotearoa New Zealand Whisky Guidelines and Definitions – February 2021, on page 1 section 2.

ISM007 – OTHER COUNTRY SINGLE MALT WHISKY

Single Malt Whisky made from a country not listed in any other class.

GRAIN WHISKY

All grain whiskies must be distilled from cereal grains (barley, wheat, maize (corn), etc.), yeast and water and must be matured in wood casks for at least two (2) years (Excise Act 1901), unless specified in the class definition).

GWY001 – STRAIGHT BOURBON

Must be fermented, distilled and aged for a minimum of 2 years at a distillery in the United States of America and contain a minimum of 51% corn and matured in new oak barrels and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

GWY002 – FLAVOURED BOURBON

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in the United States of America and contain a minimum of 51% corn and matured in new oak barrels and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV. Entrants must list additional flavours and sugars.

GWY003 – TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in the state of Tennessee, United States of America and contain a minimum of 51% corn, matured in new oak barrels and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

GWY004 – CORN WHISKY

Must contain at least 51% corn.

GWY005 – CANADIAN WHISKEY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in Canada and aged in oak for a minimum of 3 years and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

GWY006 – JAPANESE GRAIN WHISKY

Must only contain grain and be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in Japan and aged in oak for a minimum of 3 years and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

GWY007 – IRISH GRAIN WHISKEY

Must contain a maximum of 30% malted barley and be distilled in a column still and aged in wooden casks for a minimum of three years on the island of Ireland and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

GWY008 – IRISH POT STILL WHISKEY

Must contain a minimum of 30% malted barley and 30% unmalted barley. Must be distilled in a pot still and aged in wooden casks for a minimum of three years on the island of Ireland and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

GWY009 – AMERICAN RYE WHISKY

Must contain at least 51% rye and made in the United States of America and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

GWY010 – RYE WHISKY

Must contain at least 51% rye.

GWY011 – WHEAT WHISKY

Must contain at least 51% wheat.

GWY012 – BLENDED GRAIN WHISKY

Must be a blend of grain whiskies.

GWY013 – OTHER GRAIN WHISKY

Not eligible for any other grain whisky class.

BLENDED MALT WHISKY

A blend of two or more single malt whiskies from different distilleries. Cask Strength entries must be undiluted and have a minimum ABV of 55%.

BMW001 – AUSTRALIAN BLENDED MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in Australia.

BMW002 – SCOTTISH BLENDED MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in Scotland and matured in oak casks not exceeding 700 litres for a minimum of three years and a minimum ABV of 40%.

BMW003 – JAPANESE BLENDED MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery in Japan, aged in oak for a minimum of 3 years and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

BMW004 – IRISH BLENDED MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged at a distillery on the island of Ireland for a minimum of 3 years and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV.

BMW005 – AMERICAN BLENDED MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged for a minimum of 3 years and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV at a distillery in the United States of America.

BMW006 – NEW ZEALAND BLENDED MALT WHISKY

Must be fermented, distilled and aged for a minimum of 2 years and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV at a distillery in New Zealand and follow the definition for New Zealand Whisky in the Distilled Spirits Aotearoa New Zealand Whisky Guidelines and Definitions – February 2021, on page 1 section 2.

BMW007 – OTHER COUNTRY BLENDED MALT WHISKY

Blended Malt Whisky made from a country not listed in any other class.

BMW008 – INDEPENDENT SINGLE MALT BOTTLING

A blend of single malt whiskies produced from another distillery, bottled and or aged under an independent label.

GIN

Gin category entries (Classes GIN002 through GIN012) must have a minimum ABV of 37%, (unless specified in the class definition). To ensure accurate assessment, exhibitors are required to state the production method (distilled or compound).

GIN001 – LONDON DRY GIN

- (a) London Dry is distilled gin which meets the following requirements:
 - (i) it is produced exclusively from ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin, with a maximum methanol content of 5 grams per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol, the flavour of which is imparted exclusively through the distillation of ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin in the presence of all the natural plant materials used;
 - (ii) Flavoured with juniper berries and other ingredients
 - (iii) The flavour is predominantly juniper.
 - (iv) the resulting distillate contains at least 70% alcohol by vol.;

- (v) any further ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin that is added shall comply with the requirements laid down in Article 5 but with a maximum methanol content of 5 grams per hectolitre of 100% vol. alcohol;
 - (vi) it is not coloured;
 - (vii) it is not sweetened in excess of 0,1 grams of sweetening products per litre of the final product, expressed as invert sugar;
 - (viii) it does not contain any other ingredients than the ingredients referred to in points (i), (iii) and (ix), and water.
- (b) The minimum alcoholic strength by volume of London gin shall be 37.5%.
 - (c) The term 'London gin' may be supplemented by or incorporate the term 'dry'.

GIN002 – AUSTRALIAN DRY GIN

Must be juniper forward and dry in style with the inclusion of Australian botanicals

GIN003 – AUSTRALIAN CONTEMPORARY GIN

Must have juniper present and be Australian botanical forward. Exhibitors must state if dry or sweet in style.

GIN004 – CITRUS GIN

Must have juniper present and be citrus forward. Exhibitors must state if dry or sweet in style.

GIN005 – CONTEMPORARY GIN

Must have juniper present. Exhibitors must state if dry or sweet in style. Must not be London Dry style, citrus, or Australian botanical forward.

GIN006 – NAVY GIN

Must be over 57% abv. Exhibitors must state if entry is dry or sweet in style and either:

- London Dry – Must meet the class definition set out in GIN001 – London Dry
- Australian Dry – Must meet the class definition set out in GIN002 – Australian Dry
- Australian Contemporary – Must meet the class definition set out in GIN003 – Australian Contemporary
- Citrus – Must meet the class definition set out in GIN004 – Citrus
- Contemporary – Must meet the class definition set out in GIN005 – Contemporary

GIN007 – FRUIT GIN

Must be produced by the maceration of fruit, (excluding grape) in gin, with the possible addition of fruit juice. Exhibitors must state fruit used.

GIN008 – WINE / GRAPE GIN

Must be flavoured with the addition of wine or grape juice and have a gin base.

GIN009 – OLD TOM GIN

Must be predominantly juniper and sweetened with the addition of sugar or botanicals that create the perception of sweetness (e.g., Liquorice).

GIN010 – BARREL AGED GIN

Must be matured in a wooden cask or casks.

GIN011 – DUTCH-STYLE Jenever

Must state style and have a minimum 35% ABV.

GIN012 – OTHER UNLISTED GIN

Must state style.

VODKA

VOD001 – UNFLAVOURED VODKA

Must be unflavoured.

VOD002 – FLAVOUR DISTILLED VODKA

May be sweetened, blended, matured or coloured; however the flavouring must have been imparted during distillation.

VOD003 – FLAVOUR INFUSED VODKA

May have natural or artificial flavours introduced after distillation either by compounding (mixing), infusion (immersion), by maceration (crushing or muddling).

VOD004 – BARREL-AGED VODKA

Must be matured in a wooden cask or casks.

BRANDY

Brandy means a spirit obtained from the distillation of wine, fermented preparations of grapes or grape product, or fermented preparations of fruit other than grapes. With exception of entries in Classes BRN003 – Fruit Brandy, BRN004 – Pomace Brandy, BRN007 – Calvados.

‘Grape Brandy’ means the spirit obtained by the distillation of wine in such a manner as to ensure that the spirit possesses the taste, aroma and other characteristics generally attributed to brandy, in accordance with the requirements set out below:

- Must contain no less than 250mL/L of the spirit distilled at a strength of no more than 830mL/L at 20°C of ethanol.
- May contain water, caramel, sugars, grape juice and grape juice concentrates, wine, prune juice, honey, and flavourings.
- Must not contain methanol in a proportion exceeding 3g/L of the ethanol content thereof at 20°C.
- Must be matured in wood for no less than 2 years.

Source: Australian Society of Viticulture & Oenology, 2015 Wine Show Best Practice Recommendations.

Exhibitors must state the age of their brandy for all entries into class BRN001 – Grape Brandy, Age Statement, BRN005 – Cognac, BRN006 – Armagnac and BRN007 – Calvados. The age of brandy shall be determined by the age of the youngest component of any blend.

All exhibits must follow the regulations in their country of origin, regarding age statements.

BRN001 – GRAPE BRANDY, UNDER 6 YEARS OLD

BRN002 – GRAPE BRANDY, 6 YEARS AND OLDER

BRN003 – FRUIT BRANDY

BRN004 – POMACE BRANDY

BRN005 – COGNAC

Must be distilled twice in copper pot stills and aged at least two years in French oak barrels from Limousin or Tronçais. Grape base must be at least 90% Colombard, Folle blanche, Jurançon blanc, Meslier Saint-François, Montils, Sémillon, or Ugni blanc, and up to 10% Folignan or Sélect.

Must adhere to the product specification of Cognac-controlled appellation of origin: www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/49s

BRN006 – ARMAGNAC

Must be single distilled, aged in oak barrels and only contain Ugni-Blanc, Folle Blanche, Baco, Colombard, Clairette de Gasogne, Jurançon Blanc Plant de Graisse, Meslier Saint François or Mauzac Blanc grapes.

Must adhere to the product specification of Armagnac-controlled appellation of origin: www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/31s

BRN007 – CALVADOS

Must be distilled from Cider or Perry from Normandy, France.

Must adhere to the product specification of Calvados controlled appellation of origin: www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/32s

BRN008 – PISCO

Unaged Brandy distilled from fermented grape juice from Peru or Chile.

RUM

Rum must be distilled from sugarcane. Exhibitors must declare base if the spirit is made from Sugar/Cane, Molasses or both.

All entries labelled as Rum must be matured in wood for at least two (2) years and bottled at a minimum 37%. Rum less than two (2) years is to be entered into Cane Spirit.

RUM001 – UNDERPROOF RUM – DARK

Must be 57.14% ABV or less, must exhibit a colour and flavour clearly associated with maturation in wooden casks, and exhibit characteristics generally understood to meet the definition of “dark rum”.

RUM002 – OVERPROOF RUM – DARK

Must be 57.15% ABV or more, must exhibit a colour and flavour clearly associated with maturation in wooden casks, and exhibit characteristics generally understood to meet the definition of “dark rum”.

RUM003 – CANE JUICE RUM

Must be made from Sugar Cane Juice. Must state style.

RUM004 – WHITE RUM

Must be clear in colour and exhibit characteristics generally understood to meet the definition of “white rum”.

RUM005 – FLAVOURED AND SPICED RUM / FLAVOURED AND SPICED CANE JUICE RUM

May have natural or artificial flavours introduced pre or post-distillation. Spiced Rums must have a spice character. May include sweeteners and alternative flavourings. Sweetened and or flavoured rums that do not meet the definition of Spiced Rum must be entered into Class LIQ006–Rum Liqueur.

RUM006 – CACHAÇA

Must be made from cane juice and produced in Brazil.

RUM007 – OTHER RUM

For rum blends, e.g. cane juice and molasses, cane juice and sugarcane honey or rums not eligible for any other rum class.

CANE SPIRIT

Must be distilled from sugar cane AND must either be unaged or under-aged, i.e., with less than two (2) years maturation in wooden casks.

Exhibitors must declare base if the spirit is made from Sugar/Cane or Molasses.

CNE001 – CANE SPIRIT

CNE002 – FLAVOURED AND SPICED CANE SPIRIT

May have natural or artificial flavours introduced pre or post-distillation. Spiced cane spirits must have a spice character.

Must have spice character. May include sweeteners and alternative flavourings.

CNE003 – OTHER CANE SPIRIT

For cane spirit blends, e.g. cane juice and molasses, cane juice and honey or cane spirit not eligible for any other cane spirit class.

TEQUILA OR AGAVE SPIRIT

AGV001 – TEQUILA

Entries must follow the Appellation of Origin of “Tequila”. The classification of the following Tequila styles are outlined on page 9–10, Chapter 4.36: <https://www.crt.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/NOM-006-SCFI-2012%20-%20INGLES.pdf>

AGV002 – MEZCAL

Entries must follow the Mexican Official Standard of “Mezcal” – NOM-070-SCFI-1994: comercam-dom.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/DOF-2017.02.23-NOM-070-SCFI-2016-Alcoholic-Beverages-Mezcal-Specifications.pdf

AGV003 – AGAVE SPIRIT

Agave entries that aren’t eligible for any other class. Must state style.

LIQUEUR

Liqueur’s must be produced using ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin or a distillate of agricultural origin or one or more spirit drinks or a combination thereof, which has been sweetened and to which one or more flavourings, products of agricultural origin or foodstuffs have been added and must contain:

- i. minimum ABV of 15% (except LIQ007 – Gin Liqueur (25%).
- ii. minimum content of sweetening products, expressed as invert sugar, of not less than 100g/l (grams per litre), except 80g/l (grams per litre for LIQ007 Gin Liqueur).

LIQ001 – FRUIT LIQUEUR LIQ002 – CELLO LIQUEUR

Must contain Citrus and state type of “Cello” e.g. Limoncello, Arancello.

LIQ003 – CREAM LIQUEUR

Must contain dairy cream. Crème liqueurs (those not containing dairy cream) must be entered into their relevant Liqueur Class.

LIQ004 – WHISKY LIQUEUR

Must have Whisky base (see Explanatory Notes for the Classification of Single Malt Whisky and for Grain or Blended Whisky).

LIQ005 – RUM/CANE LIQUEUR

Must have a Rum or Cane Spirit base (see Explanatory Notes for the Classification of Rum and for Cane Spirit). Exhibits must not fall within the definition of “Flavoured or Spiced Rum” – i.e., the dominant additive(s) should not be predominantly a blend of spices.

LIQ006 – COFFEE LIQUEUR

Must contain coffee.

LIQ007 – GIN LIQUEUR

Must have a gin base (see Explanatory Notes for the Classification of Gin). Exhibits must not fall within the definition of “Gin”. Must be bottled at a minimum ABV of 25%.

LIQ008 – NUT LIQUEUR

Must contain nuts.

LIQ009 – OTHER LIQUEUR (NOT IN ANY OTHER CLASS)

ALTERNATIVE SPIRIT

ALTO01 – FRUIT INFUSED SPIRIT

Must have their natural or artificial flavour introduced by infusion.

ALTO02 – FRUIT SCHNAPPS ALTO03 – ANISE SPIRIT

- (a) An aniseed-flavoured spirit drink is a spirit drink produced by flavouring ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin with natural extracts of star anise (*Illicium verum* Hook f.), anise (*Pimpinella anisum* L.), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare* Mill.), or any other plant which contains the same principal aromatic constituent, using one of the following processes or a combination thereof:
 - (i) maceration or distillation or both;
 - (ii) distillation of the alcohol in the presence of the seeds or other parts of the plants specified above;
 - (iii) addition of natural distilled extracts of aniseed-flavoured plants.
- (b) The minimum alcoholic strength by volume of an aniseed-flavoured spirit drink shall be 15%.
- (c) An aniseed-flavoured spirit drink may only be flavoured with flavouring preparations and natural flavouring substances.

(d) Other natural plant extracts or aromatic seed may also be used, but the aniseed taste shall remain predominant.

Entrants must provide underlying anise style e.g. Pastis, Ouzo, Absinthe, Sambuca.

ALTO04 – NEW MAKE UNAGED SPIRITS

Must be unaged, i.e. not have spent time in wood.

ALTO05 – BAIJIU

Must contain grain and be fermented with Juiqu “qu”.

ALTO06 – SHOCHU

Must be fermented with a white, black or yellow Koji (*Aspergillus oryzae*).

ALTO07 – SOJU

A clear and colourless spirit traditionally made from rice. Must be fermented with Nuruk or Koji.

ALTO08 – UNLISTED SPIRIT (NOT IN ANY OTHER CLASS)

BITTER AND VERMOUTH

Bitter must have predominantly bitter taste produced by flavouring ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin or distillate of agricultural origin or both with flavouring substances or flavouring preparations or both and a minimum ABV of 15%.

Exhibitors are required to state the base spirit, which must be Australian made, the predominant flavourings and ABV of their entries.

BIT001 – BITTER LIQUEUR

Must contain not less than 80g/L of sugar.

BIT002 – COCKTAIL BITTERS

Must be made from neutral spirit and bittering and or flavouring agents that are intended for use in small quantities (i.e., drops or dashes) to enhance or accent the taste of beverages and result in a bitter, sour or bittersweet finish.

Entries will be assessed both neat and in soda water at room temperature at the ratio of 1mL ($\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon) bitters to 30mL soda water (1:30mL).

VERO01 – VERMOUTH

Entries must adhere to the European Union (EU) Council Regulation No. 1601/91, of 10 June 1991. The regulation provides general rules on the definition, description and presentation of

aromatized wines, aromatized wine-based drinks and aromatized wine product cocktails. It states that vermouth must be:

- i. at least 75% wine (grape base);
- ii. aromatised with sp. *Artemesia*;
- iii. within the range of 14.5–21% ABV;
- iv. fortified; and
- v. sweetened only by means of caramelized sugar, sucrose, grape must, rectified concentrated grape must and concentrated grape must. Artificial sweeteners are disallowed.

For the purpose of this competition. In addition to sp. *Artemesia* (wormwood), various other herbs, barks and spices may be used.

READY TO SERVE

All entries must be packaged ready for consumption.

RTS001 – READY TO SERVE COCKTAIL

Must be a pre-packaged cocktail.

Exhibitors must state the base spirit used, underlying cocktail style and any additional notes on the entry such as ingredients used or processing which influence perceived sensory outcomes.

RTS002 – READY TO SERVE PRE-MIX

Are made up of a base spirit combined with a mixer.

Exhibitors must state the base spirit used, underlying drink style e.g., whisky and cola and any additional notes on the entry such as ingredients used or processing which influence perceived sensory outcomes.

RTS003 – READY TO SERVE SPRITZ

Exhibitors must state the base wine and any additional alcoholic ingredients (if any) used and any additional notes on the entry such as ingredients used or processing which influence perceived sensory outcomes.

GIN & TONIC

The Gin & Tonic class is an optional extra that can be selected when entering a Gin into a gin class. No additional bottles are required to be sent.

Eligibility: Only products entered in the Gin category that have been entered into the tasting section will be eligible.

Entries will be assessed with chilled tonic water at the ratio of after 1 part Gin (15mL) to 3 parts Tonic Water (45mL).

Exhibitors will have choice of one of the following StrangeLove Tonic Waters to have mixed with their Gin:

- Tonic No 8 - <https://strangelove.com.au/collections/premium-mixers-1/products/tonic-water-8>
- Coastal Tonic - <https://strangelove.com.au/products/coastal-tonic-water>
- Light Tonic - <https://strangelove.com.au/collections/premium-mixers-1/products/light-tonic>

NON-ALCOHOLIC SPIRIT

The ABV for all entries must be below 0.5%, to be classed as a non-alcoholic spirit.

Entries must state the style the non-alcoholic spirit intends to be.

NON001 – NON-ALCOHOLIC SPIRIT

DESIGN

DES001 – LABELS / SURFACE GRAPHIC

Judging process

It was a real pleasure to judge the Melbourne Royal AISA in 2025. The range and quality of gins entered was impressive, offering a fantastic snapshot of Australian distilling, particularly the creative use of native botanicals and the diversity of emerging styles. What I valued most overall was the integrity of the judging process. Judges are given the time and structure needed to assess each spirit properly, ensuring fairness and thoughtful discussion. That space also allowed us to provide detailed, constructive feedback, honouring the care, creativity and hard work behind every bottle. A truly enjoyable experience.

Dr. Anne Brock

Master Distiller, Bombay Sapphire

Judging process

Judging of the 2026 Australian International Spirits Awards will take place at Melbourne Showgrounds on Tuesday 7 – Thursday 9 July. Judging is closed to exhibitors and the public.

Entries will be allocated a Tasting Order Number, separate from the Catalogue (Exhibit) Number, to ensure the anonymity of the exhibit and to retain the integrity of the judging process. Additionally, exhibits will be judged 'blind'. Exhibits are judged according to class and by percentage alcohol (% ABV); lowest to highest. Exhibits are critically and quantitatively evaluated for their commercial excellence, quality attributes and trueness to type. Exhibits are not judged or ranked against each other but are assessed on their own merits.

Entries will be judged to the internationally recognised 100-point scoring system. Attribute scores for each exhibit will be awarded, checked, and entered by the judging panel. Classes will be judged to award bronze, silver and gold medals. The process for determining the trophy winner of each category requires an additional level of scrutiny. The gold medal-winning spirits from each category will be individually and independently reassessed and ranked using the Borda Count method – only gold medal awarded exhibits are eligible for trophies.

To illustrate the ranking, if there are four (4) top gold medal-winning Gin exhibits, those four exhibits will be reassessed and ranked from highest to lowest with three (3) being the highest, two (2), one (1), and zero (0), with the highest

scoring exhibit (in this example, the exhibit ranked three [3]) winning the Champion Gin Trophy. If there are five (5) top gold medal-winning Gin entries, the rank is from four (4) to zero (0), and so on.

Head Judge

Holly Klintworth and Sebastian Reaburn are the Head Judges appointed by Melbourne Royal to ensure that the judging is conducted in an efficient and professional manner, to ensure consistency in scoring across the judging panels, and to adjudicate where panels may be divided in the awarding of a score. The Head Judges, in consultation with the Competition Manager, will have the final power to arbitrate the Awards.

With the integrity of the judging process and the impartiality of our judging panel in mind, Holly and Seb are not permitted to enter their products while Head Judge.

Panels

Each judging panel will consist of a Panel Chair, two (2) Judges and one (1) or two (2) Associates.

Associate Judges participate in the judging under the guidance of their Panel Chair to aid their professional development as judges. Their exhibit scores and commentary are not included in the final score but assist in the development of the Associates' judging ability and their understanding of the judging process.

Awards may be withheld or restricted in any class where exhibits are considered unworthy or if insufficient entries are available. The Head Judge, in consultation with the Competition Manager, shall have the power to reallocate, dismiss or disqualify as being ineligible for judging, any exhibit, which, in their opinion, does not comply with the regulations in every respect, and such reallocation, dismissal or disqualification, shall be accepted as final.

The above instructions do not in any way limit or restrict any of the powers, discretions, rights, and duties conferred upon the Judges by the regulations or Melbourne Royal's powers under the regulations.

Scoring and *medals*

Criteria: Spirits, Ready-to-Serve and Gin & Tonic

All entries other than Design will be scored out of one hundred (100) points and will be assessed against the below criteria:

Criteria	Points
Colour / Appearance	10
Nose	20
Palate	40
Balance	10
Finish	20
Point Total	100

Medals: Spirits, Ready-to-Serve, Gin & Tonic

Medals will be awarded as follows:

Gold	90 – 100 points	A gold medal worthy exhibit is outstanding for the type of product that it is
Silver	82 – 89.9 points	A silver medal worthy exhibit is excellent for the type of product that it is
Bronze	74 – 81.9 points	A bronze medal worthy exhibit is very good for the type of product that it is

Criteria: Design

Exhibits entered into class DES001 – Design will be scored out of 100 points and assessed against the following attributes:

Criteria	Points	Attribute
Branding, Marketing and Information	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates shelf stand out and an integrated approach to display • Name or brand visibility • Company information • Other unique information • Language and message are appropriate for product type and intended audience • Successfully appeals to intended audience • Product ingredient listing • Regulatory information (for country of origin)
Design	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates excellence in print and production quality • Reflects excellence in design • Design features contribute to purchase appeal • Design complements bottle design • Demonstrates an application of a ‘new idea’ (design, material or technique) • Demonstrates a creative use of existing ideas • An excellent example of an existing design/technique • Ease of carrying • Container Construction
Attention to Detail	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typography, font, spelling etc
Maximum Total	100	

Medals: Design

Medals will be awarded to design Class DES001 – Labels / Surface Graphic:

Gold	90 – 100 points	A Gold Medal package is an outstanding package that is very well executed, relevant, original and inspiring.
Silver	82 – 89.9 points	A Silver Medal package is an excellent package that is well executed, relevant, original and inspiring.
Bronze	74 – 81.9 points	A Bronze Medal package is a very good package that is reasonably well executed, relevant, original and inspiring.

Submissions

Submitting your entries

Once payment has been received and your entries have been verified as correct and accepted, you will receive, by email from spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au, an exhibitor entry confirmation containing your labels in PDF format and instructions on how to submit your entries. Please contact the Competition Manager if you do not receive this email.

Labelling of exhibits

In addition to bearing commercial labels, all exhibits must bear Australian International Spirits Awards-issued competition labels. These labels, in PDF format (as an attachment), will be included in the Exhibitor Entry Confirmation email that will be sent once your entries have been validated and payment received in full. Exhibitors are required to print the labels in the precise format they are sent, preserving size, font, etc., and securely attach them to each bottle submitted for entry.

Labels can either be printed on A4 paper, cut out and affixed with clear packing tape, or alternatively printed (using a laser printer) on Avery L7163 adhesive labels (99.1 x 38.1mm x 14).

The Australian International Spirits Awards competition label must not obscure or cover the commercial label and should be run up the side of the bottle between the front and back commercial labels. **Note that unlabelled entries will not be judged.**

Exhibitors also entering the Best Design class, must affix both the class entry label for tasting and the Best Design label. **Both bottles must have two labels each.**

As the Best Design criteria requires that all information on the bottle be easily viewed for judging, the labels must not obscure the commercial label or any other pertinent information. Alternatively, the two labels may be affixed around the neck of the bottle using a strong reinforced option such as cable ties.

For exhibits that are entering the Best Design class only, please affix the single Best Design label on the bottle itself or tied around the neck of the bottle. The label must not obscure the commercial label or any other information found on the packaging.

The Australian International Spirits Awards-issued labels show the:

- (a) Name and year of the competition;
- (b) Class number;
- (c) Australian International Spirits Awards Barcode;
- (d) Four-digit Catalogue (Exhibit) number;
- (e) Class name;
- (f) Exhibitor name;
- (g) Entry name; and the
- (h) Batch / Barrel / Cask / Bottle No (where required)

For design awards

Exhibitors who are submitting exhibits for both tasting and Best Design must ensure that both bottles have two labels, one for each of the classes. Exhibitors are not required to submit a separate bottle just for the Best Design class. Bottles that have only one label will only be judged on the label attached.

Exhibitors submitting exhibits for Best Design only are only required to submit a single bottle.

Please read the **Labelling of exhibits** section for clear instructions. Entries not bearing Australian International Spirits Awards competition labels will not be judged.

Addressing deliveries

All cartons must be clearly marked with the following details:

Australian International Spirits Awards
Attention: Cass Cochrane
Gate 5, Building 13 Melbourne Showgrounds
Langs Road Ascot Vale VIC 3032

Exhibitor name

Entry name (as entered)

Catalogue number (the four-digit number shown on the competition label)

Number of cartons being sent (e.g. 1 of 3)

By clearly marking your cartons with the above information you will help the organisers accurately identify your entries and may enable us to notify you earlier if we suspect there may be missing exhibits.

Delivery of exhibits

Exhibits should arrive at Melbourne Showgrounds in the week commencing Monday 15 June and by no later than Thursday 2 July.

Please contact the Food & Beverage Awards Program Manager Harrison Straw at spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au if you wish to hand-deliver your exhibits to the Showgrounds.

Notification of your exhibits having been received in good order by Australian International Spirits Awards will be via email from spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au.

Exhibitors will be advised if exhibits have not been received or have arrived damaged.

Options for submitting your exhibits to the Awards

International exhibitors

All Exhibits must be sent IWCO Terms Delivered Duty Paid (DDP) – i.e., international exhibitors must pay all costs associated with transporting their spirits. This includes paying for shipping costs, export and import duties, insurance and any other expenses incurred during shipping.

All customs clearance charges remain the responsibility of the exhibitor and must be paid before you send your Australian International Spirits Awards samples. The Australian International Spirits Awards will not pay outstanding customs clearance fees.

All goods must be addressed to the Australian International Spirits Awards and include the phone number of the sender who can help with any customs queries that may arise.

Delivery address for all international entries:

Australian International Spirits Awards
Gate 5, Langs Road, Melbourne Showgrounds
Ascot Vale VIC 3032 Australia

Receival Dates:

Monday 15 June – Tuesday 30 June
9:00am to 4:30pm each day

Australian exhibitors

personally drop off to Melbourne Showgrounds between Monday 22 June and Thursday 2 July 2026, 9am to 4:30pm each day. Instructions on direct delivery to Melbourne Showgrounds will be included in the entry confirmation.

Results

The results of the 2026 Australian International Spirits Awards will be announced at the Trophy Presentation on Monday 27 July in the Victoria Pavilion and will after this time be made available online via www.melbourneroyal.com.au/spirits and the Melbourne Royal mobile site m.melbourneroyal.com.au.

Results will be emailed to exhibitors from

spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au following the Trophy Presentation. Where medals have been awarded, exhibitor results emails will include links to downloadable digital medal artwork as well as a link to a Marketing & PR Tool Kit.

Contacts

Competition

For all general and competition enquiries relating to the 2026 Australian International Spirits Awards please contact:

Oskar Long
Manager, Food & Beverage Awards
Australian International Spirits Awards
T 03 9281 7436
E spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au

Media

For all media enquiries relating to the 2026 Australian International Spirits Awards please contact:

Communications Manager
Melbourne Royal
T 03 9281 7444
E communications@melbourneroyal.com.au

Trophy presentation

For all enquiries relating to the 2026 Australian International Spirits Awards Trophy Presentation please contact:

Events Team, Melbourne Royal
T 03 9281 7444
E events@melbourneroyal.com.au

Sponsorship Team

For all enquiries relating to sponsorship please contact partnerships@melbourneroyal.com.au

Special Regulations & Conditions of Entry

2026 Australian International Spirits Awards

1. Definitions and Interpretation

1.1 Definitions

The following definitions apply unless the context requires otherwise:

Advisory Group means those persons appointed by the Event Organiser to provide industry guidance on the Event.

Agent means authorised representative of an Exhibitor i.e. importer/distributor. An agent cannot be named on any awards or certificates.

Associate Judge means a person appointed by the Event Organiser as a trainee Judge.

Award means a prize awarded by the Judges to a Exhibit in a class.

Chief Steward means the person appointed by the Event Organiser to oversee the Stewards and dispensing of Exhibits.

Closing Date means the date and time set out in the entry booklet after which entries for the Event may not be accepted by the Event Organiser.

Commercially Available means available for retail in the precise composition and in the same packaging, including labels, in which it is submitted for judging. Entries packages especially for the competition that are not ordinarily available in packaged form will not be accepted. Exhibitors may be required to verify commercial availability by providing the details of at least one stockist or outlet.

Entry Form means an entry form (or online equivalent) supplied by Melbourne Royal for an Event.

Event means the 2026 Australian International Spirits Awards (AISA). Event also includes the period of bump-in and bump-out for the Event and the period of the Event competition.

Event Organiser means The Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Limited trading as Melbourne Royal (ACN 006 728 785)

Exhibit means the item entered into the Event by an Exhibitor.

Exhibitor means a commercial Brewery, Brewer or Agent authorised, licensed or registered in their country of origin, who has entered one or more commercially available exhibits in the Event.

Nomad Distiller means an Australian resident distiller who has developed and owns the recipe to an Australian-made Exhibit but does not own the Distillery or Still where the Exhibit was distilled. A Nomad Distilled Exhibit is ineligible for consideration towards a Champion Distiller trophy as the Exhibitor who entered the Exhibit is not a Distillery. It is however eligible for a Category Trophy. The Nomad Distiller Award is only open to Australian residents for Spirits distilled in Australia.

Head Judge means a person appointed by the Event Organiser to oversee judging of the Event.

Judge means a person appointed by the Event Organisers to judge the Event.

Judging Panel means a panel consisting of not less than 3 judges and not more than 5.

LAL's means litres of alcohol.

Large Distillery annual production greater than 50,000 LAL's.

Medium Distillery annual production from 3,401 LALs to 50,000 LAL.

Premises means the Melbourne Showgrounds, Epsom Road, Ascot Vale, Victoria, Australia

Product means a sample of a commercially available spirit.

Regulations means the Event Organiser's regulations and conditions of entry for the Australian International Spirits Awards competition, including without limitation the relevant Entry Form, all provisions set out in the Entry Booklet, the description of sections and classes of entry, and description of awards.

Small Distillery annual production up to and including 3,400 LAL's.

Steward means a person occupying or acting in the position of steward.

1.2 Interpretation

Headings are for convenience only and do not affect interpretation. The following rules apply unless the context requires otherwise:

- a. The singular includes the plural and conversely;
- b. A gender includes all genders;
- c. If a word or phrase is defined, its other grammatical forms have a corresponding meaning;
- d. A reference to a person, corporation, trust, partnership, unincorporated body or other entity includes any of them;
- e. A reference to a regulation, rule or condition of entry is to the regulation, rule or condition of entry as amended, varied, supplemented, novate or replaced, except to the extent prohibited by these regulations;
- f. A reference to a right or obligation of any two or more persons confers that right, or imposes that obligation, as the case may be, jointly or severally.

2. Entries

2.1 Entry Requirements

The Event Organiser will set an annual schedule for the entry requirements and the entry fees which will apply to each Australian International Spirits Awards program.

- 2.2 Entries must either be lodged online via www.melbournerooyal.com.au/spirits or be made on the official Entry Form, and must be submitted by the Closing Date and be accompanied by the applicable entry fee for each Exhibit.

Exhibitors must state on the entry form:

- a. the class;
- b. the product's commercial brand name;
- c. particulars of Exhibit;
- d. ingredients; and
- e. any other information required on the entry form.

2.3 Limit of Entries

- a. An Exhibit can only be entered once into the Event, though it may be submitted in both the tasting and the design section.
- b. There is no limit to the number of Exhibits an Exhibitor can enter provided each Exhibit is a different product.

2.4 Entry Fee

The Entry Fee becomes the property of the Event Organisers on receipt and, without limitation, the fee paid in respect of the Exhibits withdrawn or which do not satisfy the conditions of eligibility will not be refunded.

If the Event and/or Award program is cancelled due to government-imposed health regulations or restrictions due to a pandemic, the Event Organiser will provide a full refund on entry fees. The Event Organiser will not be liable for any other costs or loss incurred as a result of the cancellation such as costs associated with the delivery, collection and return shipping of any Exhibitor products entered into the Event.

2.5 Warranty

Each Exhibitor warrants and certifies that each Exhibit entered is representative of a commercially available product. All Exhibits must be 100% Australian produced or manufactured. Please refer to the category requirements for specific information.

2.6 Entries subject to rules and regulations

Upon submission of an Entry Form in accordance with the entry requirements, the Exhibitor agrees to be bound by the rules and regulations set out in the Entry Booklet.

2.7 Alteration and Inspection of Entry Forms

An Entry Form may not be altered or inspected after the Closing Date.

2.8 Brand Name and Packaging

Entries containing any language, text, logo, image, design or representation in either the brand name or packaging that is offensive, obscene, indecent, or likely to offend or be misconstrued may be refused or disqualified, or subject to publication and presentation restrictions, at the Event Organiser's absolute discretion.

3. Conduct of Exhibitors

3.1 Unacceptable Behaviour

The Event Organiser is committed to providing a fair and equitable Premises and Event for all participants, free from all forms of harassment, bullying and violence. The following behaviours will not be tolerated and may result in the Exhibitor/persons being removed from the competition Premises and/or disqualified from the competition and formal procedures initiated:

- a. Violence;
- b. Bullying;
- c. Harassment;
- d. Sexual harassment;
- e. Unlawful discrimination;
- f. Victimization.

Persons breaching unacceptable standards of behaviour may be banned from entering future Events and/or the Premises.

3.2 Compliance with Rules and Regulations

Where an Exhibit and/or Exhibitor and/or Agent fail to comply with any of the Rules and Regulations, the Event Organiser may impose one or more of the following penalties on the Exhibit or Exhibitor or both of them:

- a. Disqualification;
- b. Suspension;
- c. A fine;
- d. Order the Exhibit or the Exhibitor, or any Agents be removed from the Premises; or
- e. Any other penalty.

Without limiting the above, the Event Organisers may forfeit an award, and upon forfeiture, the Exhibitor must immediately return any evidence of that award to the Event Organiser upon receiving notification of the forfeiture.

3.3 Compliance with Directions

The Exhibitor must fully comply with the directions and requests of the Event Organiser. Without limitation, directions and requests of the Event Organiser may apply to the entry of the Exhibit, the Exhibitor, the conditions of the Event, the conduct of the Exhibitor, the conduct of the Event, the decision of the Judge, or the award of prizes.

3.4 Statements

The Exhibitor must not make a statement regarding an Exhibit which in the opinion of the Event Organiser is fraudulent, false, erroneous, misleading or deceptive or likely to mislead or deceive.

3.5 Tampering

An Exhibit must not be or have been tampered with or otherwise improperly dealt with.

3.6 General Conditions of Entry

All Exhibitors and/or persons entering the Premises are required to adhere to the Conditions of Entry whilst on site which can be found at www.melbourneshowgrounds.com/terms-and-privacy/conditions-of-entry/

3.7 Smoking

The Premises is a completely smoke-free zone. Exhibitors/persons wanting to smoke must exit the Premises to do so.

3.8 Australian Customs Clearance

It is each Exhibitor's responsibility to obtain Australian Customs Clearance of their Exhibit(s) into Australia, including payment of all costs.

4. Powers of the Event Organiser in Respect of Control of the Event

4.1 Power to refuse to accept an Entry Form, Exhibit or Exhibitor

The Event Organiser may, at its absolute discretion, refuse to accept an Entry Form, an Exhibit or an Exhibitor, without providing a reason.

4.2 Power to cancel or alter

The Event Organiser may, without assigning a reason:

- a. alter the closing Date for the Event;
- b. remove any Exhibit from the Premises or cause any Exhibit to be removed from the Premises;
- c. amend an Exhibit to, without limitation, substitute an alternate class or sub-class for the class or sub-class in which the Exhibit was entered;
- d. alter the conditions of the Event, including but not exclusive to the judging conditions and process followed;
- e. rule that an Exhibit or Exhibitor may not compete or is ineligible to compete;
- f. alter the date, time or place on or at which the event is scheduled to take place;
- g. alter the Judge scheduled to judge the event; or
- h. cancel the Event.

The rights set out above apply notwithstanding:

- a. the Event Organiser's acceptance of an Entry;
- b. inclusion of an Entry into the Event catalogue;
- c. the issue of an Exhibit ticket; or
- d. the issue of any other document.

5. Exhibitor and Exhibits

To be eligible to enter Australian International Spirits Awards, the Exhibitor must hold an Excise Manufacturers License issued in their country of origin and may need to provide proof to Melbourne Royal if requested.

EXHIBITS

An Exhibit can be entered only once into the Australian International Spirits Awards, however an Exhibitor can enter multiple Exhibits into a class so long as they can demonstrate a technical difference between the Exhibits.

Exhibits must be submitted with commercial branding and or labelling.

A brand owner who has had a product produced under contract by another manufacturer/producer may also enter an Exhibit but only if the producer of the contracted product is listed.

- 5.1 All Exhibits become the property of the Event Organiser
- Unless otherwise stated, all Exhibits become the property of the Event Organiser and may be used for promotional purposes. The Event Organisers accept no responsibility for the loss or damage to any Exhibit whether occurring before, during or after Australian International Spirits Awards. Exhibit stock remaining after the Australian International Spirits Awards judging has been completed will remain the property of the Event Organisers.
- 5.2 Labelling of Exhibits
- In addition to bearing commercial labels, all Exhibits must bear Australian International Spirits Awards-issued competition labels. Australian International Spirits Awards competition labels in PDF format (as an attachment) will be included in the Entry Confirmation email that will be sent once entries have been validated and payment received in full. These labels show the:
- Name and year of the competition,
 - Class number,
 - Australian International Spirits Awards Barcode,
 - Four-digit Catalogue (Exhibit) number,
 - Class name,
 - Entry name, and the
 - Batch / Barrel / Cask / Bottle No

5.3 Inspection of Exhibits

The Event Organiser may nominate a person or persons to inspect and/or analyse any Exhibit to verify that it meets the relevant conditions for the class in which it was exhibited, and that the product held by the Exhibitor represents the Exhibit provided for judging. The Exhibitor must permit the nominated person or persons to take samples of the product if requested. Any inspection and/or analysis is to be conducted within four weeks of the announcement of the Awards. The nominated person or persons appointed to carry out the inspection and/or analysis must make a written report to the Event Organiser.

Should the inspection and/or analysis prove that the Exhibit for that class is incorrect; all awards for that Exhibit shall be forfeited.

5.4 Access to Exhibits

Except for the Event Organiser and the Steward team, no person will be permitted access to the Exhibits until after the judging is completed.

5.5 Compliance of Exhibits

An Exhibitor may only enter Exhibits which:

- comply in all respects with the criteria established by the Event Organiser for entry in the relevant class;
- are the bona fide property of the Exhibitor; and
- represent the product listed on the entry form.

5.6 Compliance with Australian Food Standards

All Exhibits must comply with the requirements of the Australian Food Standards Codes or both product and packaging.

Exhibit quantities

Each Exhibit requirements must be sent in branded packaging either in cans or bottles in the quantities below:

All Classes **except**:

BIT002 – Cocktail Bitters, RTS00 – Ready to Serve Cocktail, RTS002 – Ready to Serve Pre-Mix, RTS003 – Ready to Serve Spritz
 • 2 x 500mL bottle or equivalent volume across multiple bottles of the same batch.

BIT002 – Cocktail Bitters
 • 1 x 100mL bottle or equivalent volume.

RTS001 – Ready to Serve Cocktail
 • 100mL or less = 10
 • 250mL or less = 4
 • 500mL or greater = 2

RTS002 – Ready to Serve Pre-Mix, RTS003 – Ready to Serve Spritz
 • 250mL or less = 16
 • 375mL or greater = 8

SECTIONS**Large Distillery Section**

This section is open to all commercial distilleries, distillers or agents authorised, licensed or registered in their country of origin, with an annual production volume greater than 50,000 LALs. The Exhibit must be commercially available, i.e., is on sale at one or more licensed outlets. Exhibits must be commercially available as entered, including final commercial labels that meet all legal labelling requirements in their country of origin.

Medium Distillery Section

This section is open to all commercial distilleries, distillers or agents authorised, licensed or registered in their country of origin, with an annual production volume 3,401 LALs up to and including 50,000 LALs. The Exhibit must be commercially available, i.e., is on sale at one or more licensed outlets. Exhibits must be commercially available as entered, including final commercial labels that meet all legal labelling requirements in their country of origin.

Small Distillery Section

This section is open to all commercial distilleries, distillers or agents authorised, licensed or registered in their country of origin, with an annual production volume equal or less than 3,400 LALs. The Exhibit must be commercially available, i.e., is on sale at one or more licensed outlets. Exhibits must be commercially available as entered, including final commercial labels that meet all legal labelling requirements in their country of origin.

PROOF OF ANNUAL PRODUCTION OF LAL's

Exhibitors may be required to produce an annual excise statement from their national taxation office from the last year prior to entry into this Event, as proof of annual production of LALs.

In case the primary language of the country of origin is not English, the Exhibitor is required to provide a formal English translation. The annual excise statement (incl. translations) should be forwarded to the Australian International Spirits Awards Event Manager at spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au if requested. All excise statements submitted will be treated confidentially and destroyed directly following the announcement of the awards.

AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS CLEARANCE

It is each Exhibitor's responsibility to obtain Australian customs clearance of their Exhibit(s) into Australia, including payment of all costs.

6. Judging

- 6.1 How judging is conducted
All entries will be blind tasted and judged against a specified set of criteria.
- 6.2 Interference by Exhibitor
An Exhibitor, their invitees or agents, must not consult, influence or interfere with a Judge or attempt to consult, influence or interfere with a Judge or do any other thing which may interfere with the Judge's freedom of choice or judgement.
- 6.3 Disqualification of Exhibit or Exhibitor
The Head Judge, in consultation with the The Head Judge, in consultation with the Event Organisers, will have the power to disqualify or dismiss any Exhibitor who has not complied with the rules and regulations.
Exhibitors who are disqualified or who have an Exhibit disqualified will be required to cover the costs associated with the disqualification of the Exhibit and/or the Exhibitor. These costs will also include, but are not exclusive to, the correction of, and the republication of marketing material relating to the Australian International Spirits Awards as a result of the disqualification.
- 6.4 Forfeiture of Award if disqualified
Where an Exhibit or an Exhibitor is disqualified and their prize is forfeited, the Event Organiser may (but is not obliged to) promote the Exhibit next in order to that prize, whether the Exhibit was awarded a prize or a reserve number.
Exhibits next in order, whether awarded a prize or reserve number, may also be promoted to the prize next in order.
- 6.5 Appointment of Head Judge
The Event Organiser will appoint a Head Judge on an annual basis. The Head Judge will be responsible ensuring that the judging process and the judging panel are conducted in a professional, ethical and efficient manner during Australian International Spirits Awards judging.
- 6.6 Event Organiser and Judges Decisions Final
All decisions of the Event Organiser and the judges as to the application of the Regulations, or any decisions made under the Regulations, will be final and binding on all Exhibitors, save that the Event Organiser may, in its absolute discretion, elect to review and alter any decision made by it or the Judges under the Regulations at any time. This includes without limitation, the conferring of awards or decisions of the Judges. The Event Organiser may in its absolute discretion take all such actions or steps it considers appropriate in respect of the Regulations including without limitation, revoking awards and suspending or prohibiting persons from future entry in any Event.

7 Protests

- 7.1 Protests may only be made by Exhibitors with Exhibits in the class to which a protest relates, and only if the results of that class directly impact on their own entry. The Event Organiser has the power to disqualify or dismiss, as being ineligible for judging, any Exhibit which, in its opinion, does not comply with the Regulations in every respect, and such disqualification will be final.
- 7.2 No protest will be entertained unless made within seven calendar days of the announcement of the Awards. Such protest must be in writing and addressed to the Event Organiser, Australian International Spirits Awards and either:
- Mailed to or lodged with The Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Limited, Melbourne Showgrounds, Epsom Road, Ascot Vale VIC 3032
 - Via email spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au

Such protests must be accompanied by a deposit of \$200.00 (incl. GST) which may be forfeited to the Event Organisers if in the opinion of the Event Organisers the protest is unfounded, frivolous or vexatious. The Event Organisers will determine in their absolute discretion the process to be adopted in considering any protest and any sanction or other result of any successful protest.

8 Feedback and Results

- 8.1 Feedback
All Exhibitors will receive feedback from the Judges on the product that they entered into the competition. The Judges' feedback to an Exhibitor will remain commercial-in-confidence and will not be shared with any other Exhibitors.
- 8.2 Results
Class results, including medals will be made available following the announcement of the Trophy Winners at the Presentation.

9 Awards

- 9.1 Gold, Silver and Bronze Certificates will be issued to those Exhibits attaining the requisite points.
- 9.2 Champion Trophies will be awarded to the company named and product specified on the Entry Form.

- 9.3 Champion Trophy and Medal winners in Australian International Spirits Awards are required to supply, at their own expense, product to be used at the Awards Presentation Function. Trophies will be presented at the official Australian International Spirits Awards Presentation event.
- 9.4 The Event Organiser will determine the medal ranges for Gold, Silver and Bronze medals and judging criteria for Australian International Spirits Awards on an annual basis. The Event Organiser will determine what trophies are awarded and what eligibility requirements will apply to them on an annual basis.

10 Trophies and Eligibility

- 10.1 An Exhibit must be awarded a Gold Medal to be eligible for a Champion Trophy. To determine the Trophy winners, the Gold Medal exhibits from each category will be individually and independently reassessed and ranked using the Borda Count method.
- 10.2 Certificates will be awarded to Gold, Silver and Bronze medal winning Exhibits.
- 10.3 If a Gold medal is not awarded in an eligible trophy class or classes, the trophy will not be awarded.
- 10.4 Champion Australian Distiller will be awarded to the Australian Distiller with the highest average score derived from their three (3) highest scoring entries in the competition, at least once of which must have attained a Gold Medal.
- 10.5 To be eligible for the trophy the exhibitor must have:
- distilled the Exhibit in Australia; and
 - entered a minimum of three entries.
- 10.6 Where a trophy is awarded to an Exhibit which has been produced under contract, the trophy will recognise both the producer/manufacturer of the Exhibit as well as the brand owner.

11 Advertising and Ownership of Awards

- 11.1 Licence to use Trademark
Exhibitors awarded a Champion Trophy must apply in writing to the Event Organisers for a licence to use the Australian International Spirits Awards graphic trademark. Permissions and its terms are to be at the absolute discretion of the Event Organiser.

11.2 Exhibitor advertising

No Exhibitor shall advertise or allow to be advertised by any means whatsoever, whether by broadcasting, pictorially, or in writing, the fact that any Exhibit has won any award unless such advertisement shows clearly:

- a. the year of award;
- b. description of class;
- c. the name under which the Exhibit was entered; and
- d. in the case of on-packaging advertising, the Exhibits must carry the same name and relevant information under which the Exhibit was entered.
- e. Medal and trophy artwork shall only be featured on a product that has been entered into Australian International Spirits Awards and awarded a medal and/or Trophy. The medal artwork shall show the year of the award.

Medal style guidelines are available upon request to the Event Organiser and must be adhered to.

12 Ownership of Awards

The Exhibitor acknowledges that all awards are owned by the Event Organiser and that the Exhibitor may not promote the winning of any award or any association with an award or the Event, other than in accordance with the Regulations. The Event Organiser may take any action considered necessary in respect of any advertising that does not comply with the Regulations, including without limitation, revoking any award conferred upon an Exhibit.

13. Agents

Any person purporting to act as an agent of an Exhibitor is deemed to have given the Event Organiser a warranty of their authority, and the Event Organiser is not required to make any enquiry as to that authority.

14. Consent of Images

The Exhibitor agrees to the Event Organiser publishing or reproducing information and images associated with them or with their Exhibits at any time, in any medium, for any purpose and in perpetuity, without notification, acknowledgement or compensation. Copyright in the images will be wholly owned by the Event Organiser.

15. Workplace Surveillance

The Event Organiser operates surveillance cameras which are located in and around facilities requiring security monitoring for the safety and security of individuals and property. Please note that security camera monitoring is continuous and ongoing and it is deemed that a person, by entering the Premises, consents to this photographing, filming or taping. The Event Organiser strictly complies with the Surveillance Devices Act 1999.

16. Information Handling

The Event Organiser is bound by the national Privacy Principles of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and other applicable laws governing privacy.

Please refer to the privacy policy which can be found at: <https://www.melbourneroyal.com.au/privacy/>

17. Indemnity

The Exhibitor indemnifies, holds harmless and keeps indemnified the Event Organiser and its officers, employees, contractors, officials and agents against all actions, claims, demands, losses, damages, costs, expenses and liabilities including without limitation, consequential loss and loss of profits (whether arising under statute, from negligence, personal injury, death, property damage or infringement of third party rights) in connection with the Exhibit, the Exhibitor or the relevant Event;

18. Governing Law

These Regulations are governed by the laws of the State of Victoria, Australia. In the event of a dispute each party irrevocably submits to the exclusive jurisdiction of the court of the State of Victoria and waives any right to claim that those courts are an inconvenient forum.



**MELBOURNE
ROYAL**
AUSTRALIAN
INTERNATIONAL
SPIRITS AWARDS

2026 Entry Booklet

Melbourne Royal® is a registered trademark of

The Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria Limited

ABN 66 006 728 785

ACN 006 728 785

Melbourne Showgrounds

Epsom Road, Ascot Vale VIC 3032

www.melbourneroyal.com.au

Office Bearers

as at 10/12/2024

Patron

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC – Governor of Victoria

Board of Directors

MJ (Matthew) Coleman (President)

CGV (Catherine) Ainsworth

D (Darrin) Grimsey

P (Peter) Hertan

R (Robert) Millar

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Company Secretary

Darryl Ferris

Industry Advisory Group

Shaun Byrne

Seb Costello

Luke McCarthy

Sebastian Reaburn

Julian White

Caroline Ashford

Holly Klintworth

Cara Devine

Nian Ju Evelyn Liong

Competition Managers

Kirrily Waldhorn

Oskar Long

Harrison Straw

Taylor Blayney

Email: spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au





MELBOURNE
ROYAL



For more than 175 years, Melbourne Royal has been inspiring excellence in agriculture and food production.

In this pursuit of excellence, Melbourne Royal, on behalf of the Australian food and beverage industries, conducts a range of world-class food programs and events recognising premium products in food and beverage.

These awards include:

- Melbourne Royal Wine Awards
- Melbourne Royal Australian Food Awards
- Melbourne Royal Australian International Beer Awards
- Melbourne Royal Australian International Spirits Awards

Contact Us


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 Melbourne Royal