



**MELBOURNE  
ROYAL**  
AUSTRALIAN DISTILLED  
SPIRITS AWARDS



**2023 Entry Booklet**

Established in 2015, the Australian Distilled Spirits Awards is the first and only national awards program recognising excellence in Australian distilled spirits and liqueurs.

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The awards provide Australian distillers 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 Australia's leading experts in spirits and liqueurs.



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

**A special thanks to all the 2023 producers,  
judges and stewards**

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# General information

## 2023 Calendar of important dates

Entries open	Tuesday 30 May
Entries close	Friday 23 June
Submit exhibits	Monday 10 July – Thursday 20 July
Judging	Tuesday 25 July – Thursday 27 July
Awards presentation	Thursday 3 August
Exhibitor & Trade Tasting	Friday 4 August

- Medal-winning distillers will be provided with the Australian Distilled Spirits Awards Marketing & PR Kit to assist with promoting their win and marketing their spirits, liqueurs, bitters and vermouths 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 2021) with the same spirit, liqueur, bitter and or vermouths in the same format will be awarded a Consistency of Excellence Medal (see page 15 for details).

## Introduction

Established in 2015 and developed in close consultation with industry experts, the Melbourne Royal Australian Distilled Spirits Awards are judged by Australia's leading specialists in spirits and liqueurs, provide distillers with an essential benchmarking opportunity.

This year celebrating nine years, the program is Australia's first and largest national spirits competition highlighting the innovation and excellence of Australian-manufactured spirits, liqueurs, aromatics and vermouths. In 2022, the Australian Distilled Spirits Awards attracted a record 863 Entries from 208 Exhibitors from all over Australia.

In 2023, the Awards offer two major trophies, as well as seventeen category trophies. Judging will take place over three days in July at Melbourne Showgrounds in Ascot Vale, Victoria.

## Why you should enter

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

- As Australia's leading national spirits competition, the Awards offer exhibitors 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, in Australia.

## What you should know when entering

The Australian Distilled 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 Melbourne Royal Wine Awards, Australian International Beer Awards, Australian Food Awards and the Australian International Coffee Awards.

The judging panel boasts some of the nation's most highly respected spirits and liqueurs 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.



# Shaun Byrne appointed new *Head Judge*

Melbourne Royal is pleased to announce the appointment of Shaun Byrne as the new Head Judge for the Melbourne Royal Australian Distilled Spirits Awards.

Director of two of Australia's most awarded beverage brands, Maidenii Vermouth and Marionette Liqueurs, Shaun is a well-known and respected figure in the Australian spirits industry and brings to the role more than 20 years of experience in hospitality coupled with his extensive judging experience.

Shaun has been involved in the Awards since its inception in 2015 and has watched it grow and evolve to become the most important spirits competition in Australia.

Shaun's appointment has been unanimously endorsed by the Industry Advisory Group of the Melbourne Royal Australian Distilled Spirits Awards, which includes members of the Australian Distillers Association, and we are thrilled to welcome him to the role as the program heads into its ninth year.

It is important to note that with the integrity of the judging process and the impartiality of our judging panel in mind, Shaun is not permitted to enter his products while Head Judge.

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

# New in 2023

In its 9th year, the Melbourne Royal Australian Distilled Spirits Awards welcomes a number of refinements to the program.

## New Design Award

This year, through the introduction of a Design Award, entrants will have the opportunity to receive feedback on their brand execution and packaging. The Award is intended to highlight spirits packaging which can be appreciated for its aesthetics, functionality, environmental impact and novelty. The category will be judged by a panel of leading design industry experts.

Entrants participating in this category alone will be required to submit only one bottle for assessment.

See page 28 for details of the judging criteria for the Design Award.

## Return of the Exhibitor & Trade Tasting

The 2023 Melbourne Royal Australian Distilled Spirits Awards sees the return of the Exhibitor and Trade Tasting at Melbourne Showgrounds on Friday 4 August, from 12–2pm, following the announcement of results the night before.

Anticipating upward of 800 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. Exhibitors and trade are encouraged to “Save the date” with further details to follow.

## Minimum ABV

To bring the Awards into line with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code 2.7.5, the minimum ABV for all ‘Spirit’ classes is now 37%.

The ‘Code’ defines spirit as “a potable alcoholic distillate, including whisky, brandy, rum, gin, vodka and Agave Spirit, which, unless otherwise required by this Standard, contains at least 37% alcohol by volume, produced by distillation of fermented liquor derived from food sources, so as to have the taste, aroma and other characteristics generally attributable to that particular spirit.”

This minimum ABV requirement does not extend to the Liqueur, Alternative Spirit (with exception of Agave), Bitter or Vermouth categories.

## Class Review

Following a detailed review of the competition and through comprehensive consultation with our Industry Advisory Group, the 2023 Awards sees the revision of a number of categories and classes.

### Introduction of ‘Best Fruit or Wine / Grape Gin’ Trophy

Acknowledging the continued growth in these two classes (GIN004 – Fruit, and GIN005 – Wine / Grape), they have been spun out of the Best Other Gin Trophy to form their own. See page 21 for details of the revised class structure.

### Introduction of Gin Liqueur (LIQ006)

Introduced to acknowledge those gin-based, lower ABV spirits with the addition of sugar, entries in the Gin Liqueur class will vie for the Best Liqueur Trophy. See page 23 for details.

### Split of ‘Best Vodka’ Trophy

To better represent the category and its diversity, the Best Vodka Trophy has been split between the two styles resulting in the introduction of two new trophies – ‘Best Neutral Vodka’ and ‘Best Flavoured Vodka’. See page 22 for details of the revised class structure.

### **Rum and Cane Spirit Additional Information**

To better help inform the judging of these two categories, entrants will be asked if their rum or cane spirit is made from molasses or sugar/cane.

Additionally, minimum ABV for Overproof Rum classes is now 57.15%. See page 23 for details.

### **Changes to Agave (ALT006)**

The requirement for entries to be made exclusively from Australian-grown agave has been removed.

### **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). 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.

# Entry eligibility

## Entry eligibility

Exhibitors must be registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) as a licensed distiller or manufacturer and must provide a copy of their ATO Excise Manufacturer Licence (EML) during the entry process.

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.

Entries must be manufactured (distilled) and packaged in Australia.

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

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

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.

Entries must be commercially available in the precise composition and in the same packaging, including the labels, in which it is submitted for judging. Tank samples and especially bottled batches will not be accepted as entries into the competition.

An exhibit can be entered only once into the Australian Distilled 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 Distilled 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.melbourneroyal.com.au/spirits](http://www.melbourneroyal.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 Distilled Spirits Awards for judging.

## Australian Distillers

### Message from Australian Distillers

Australian Distillers Association President Holly Klintworth:

*The Melbourne Royal Australian Distilled Spirits Awards is a fantastic opportunity for Australian distillers to showcase and benchmark their products alongside some of the very best spirits in the industry. The Australian Distillers Association committee and members fully endorse the awards and encourage all distillers to enter the Awards.*

*The Awards recognise the exceptional quality of Australian spirits that continue to go from strength to strength, shared and celebrated amongst fellow distillers, retailers, bartenders, and consumers. The Judging panel is made of highly respected industry professionals full of integrity and provide thorough feedback to each entry. Regardless of the trophy winners, the Awards are a celebration of the Australian spirits industry.*

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AWARD WINNING SPIRITS START HERE

# What our trophy winners say

*To be considered consistently of a high standard by our peers in industry is a very humbling experience. Winning an award not only validates our expertise in our field but also benchmarks our product and provides us with feedback allowing us to make continuous improvements.*

*The Awards bring together the brilliant community of Australian distillers, and we all benefit by collaborating and sharing knowledge. For young brands like ourselves, it's an invaluable experience.*

**Hugh Leech, Marionette VIC**

Winner – Consistency of Excellence Medal, 2022

*Absolutely delighted to win this award. I knew we made great vodka and seeing our name come up as both nominations for Champion Vodka was amazing. At the time, we only produced these two products. To win the trophy and two gold medals was an extremely proud moment for us and everyone involved getting us there.*

*The award has opened doors, which I could not be more excited about; it has helped in growing my business and White Light Vodka's profile within the spirits industry and bar community of Australia. Being a fully independent producer is difficult, with many hurdles you need to conquer, especially in vodka. This award has seen more people and businesses thinking of White Light Vodka before other imported brands.*

*With the increase in business, we have been able to experiment with different varieties of distilled spirits, with a few new lines coming onto the market and other exciting products in the pipeline.*

**Brendon Mitchell, White Light Vodka, VIC**

Winner – Champion Vodka Trophy, 2018

*Winning the whisky trophy two years in a row has helped us tell the story of the care that goes into making our spirits. It is a fantastic affirmation of the hard work and dedication of the team.*

*The Awards highlight the exceptional quality of Australian spirits and supports the industry's growth. For us, it's an honour to be recognised by the Awards for producing a spirit others appreciate as much as we do.*

**Dave Withers, Archie Rose, NSW**

Winner – Champion Whisky Trophy 2021, 2022

*It is a proud moment for me, and a wonderful thing to see how we (the industry) are growing and the respect that our industry is gaining overseas. Bars that we once dreamed of being in now want desperately to have more Australian spirits, and Melbourne really is the mecca for that. Winning this award is a huge honour and surprise.*

**Bill Lark, Lark Distillery, TAS**

Winner – Champion Australian Distiller Trophy, 2015

# Events

## Trophy Presentation Thursday 3 August

Hosted by Melbourne Royal in the Victoria Pavilion at Melbourne Showgrounds, the 2023 Australian Distilled 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, and bitters from the 2023 Awards.

Tickets are available for purchase [here](#).

### Event Details

Time: 7:00pm – 11:30pm

Location: Victoria Pavilion, Melbourne Showgrounds, Ascot Vale 3032

Dress Code: Cocktail/Business attire

### Price

Exhibitors: \$99

General public: \$120

For all ticketing and event enquiries, please email [events@melbourneroyal.com.au](mailto:events@melbourneroyal.com.au) or call the Melbourne Royal office on +61 03 9281 7444.

### Additional Stock Requirement

Exhibitors whose exhibits have won a gold medal at the 2023 Awards will be required to supply, at their own expense, a minimum of six (6) x 500mL bottles or equivalent of their gold medal-winning exhibit for featuring at the Trophy Presentation and the Exhibitor and 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 1 August.

## Exhibitor and Trade Tasting Friday 4 August

The Exhibitor and Trade Tasting of the 2023 Melbourne Royal Australian Distilled Spirits Awards is a not open to the public, ticketed event. Anticipating upward of 800 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: 12–2pm

Location: Building 13, Melbourne Showgrounds, Ascot Vale 3032

Dress Code: Business attire

FOC to exhibitors

# Connect with us

Stay up to date with the latest developments and engage with Melbourne Royal and the Australian Distilled Spirits Awards on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn:

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# Trophies and *eligibility*

Trophy	Eligible classes
Champion Distiller	All – see eligibility below
Best Single Malt Whisky	WKY001 – WKY004
Best Grain or Blended Whisky	WKY005 – WKY007
Best London Dry Gin	GIN001
Best New World / Contemporary Gin	GIN002
Best Navy Gin	GIN003
Best Fruit or Wine / Grape Gin	GIN004 - GIN005
Best Other Gin (Not LD, NW or Navy)	GIN006 – GIN008
Best Pure / Neutral Vodka	VOD001 – VOD002
Best Flavoured Vodka	VOD003 – VOD004
Best Brandy	BRN001 – BRN004
Raymond ‘Spike’ Dessert III Trophy for Best Rum	RUM001 – RUM004
Best Cane Spirit	CNE001 – CNE002
Best Liqueur	LIQ001 – LIQ007
Best Alternative Spirit	ALT001 – ALT008
Best Bitter	BIT001 – BIT002
Best Vermouth	VER001
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 Distilled Spirits Awards for three consecutive years (2021, 2022 and 2023) 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 Australian Distiller Trophy**

The Champion Australian 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 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards Champion Australian Distiller Trophy, a distiller must:

- 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 Australian 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 20 July, the final day to submit your exhibits to Australian Distilled Spirits Awards for judging.

# 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.

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# 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 Friday 4 August.

Class	Quantity required for judging
All Classes except BIT002 – Cocktail Bitters	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

## Held finished bottled stock requirement

100 bottles are the minimum required quantity of held finished bottled stock for all spirits, liqueurs and bitters entered into the Australian Distilled Spirits Awards at the time of delivery, i.e., Thursday 20 July.

## Third party / Contract manufacturing

Third party, contract-produced spirits, liqueurs, and bitters can be entered either by the contract distiller or by the retailer of the spirit, liqueur or bitters; 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 Distilled Spirits Awards as the seller of the spirit, liqueur and or bitters, e.g., a supermarket chain, liquor store outlet, franchise, etc.

## Instructions for entering spirits or liqueur 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 spirits, liqueurs or bitters 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

- Standard Award entry fee \$165 per entry (includes GST)
- Design Award \$85 per entry (includes GST)

## Closing date

The online entry facility at [www.melbourneroyal.com.au/spirits](http://www.melbourneroyal.com.au/spirits) closes Friday 23 June 2023.

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 23 June.

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 Order 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*

## **WHISKY**

For the definition of Whisky styles and classes please see pages 20–21.

**WKY001 – SINGLE MALT WHISKY UNSMOKED**

**WKY002 – SINGLE MALT WHISKY SMOKED**

**WKY003 – SINGLE MALT CASK STRENGTH WHISKY UNSMOKED**

**WKY004 – SINGLE MALT CASK STRENGTH WHISKY SMOKED**

**WKY005 – BLENDED WHISKY**

**WKY006 – GRAIN WHISKY**

**WKY007 – OTHER (OTHER SMOKED, OTHER UNLISTED)**

## **GIN**

For the definition of Gin styles and classes please see page 21.

**GIN001 – LONDON DRY**

**GIN002 – NEW WORLD / CONTEMPORARY**

**GIN003 – NAVY**

**GIN004 – FRUIT (EXCLUDING GRAPE)**

**GIN005 – WINE / GRAPE**

**GIN006 – OLD TOM**

**GIN007 – BARREL AGED**

**GIN008 – OTHER UNLISTED**

## **VODKA**

For the definition of Vodka styles and classes please see page 22.

**VOD001 – PURE (NEUTRAL) VODKA**

**VOD002 – CONTEMPORARY VODKA**

**VOD003 – FLAVOUR DISTILLED VODKA**

**VOD004 – FLAVOUR INFUSED VODKA**

## **BRANDY**

For the definition of Brandy styles and classes please see page 22.

**BRN001 – GRAPE BRANDY, AGE STATEMENT**

**BRN002 – GRAPE BRANDY, NON-AGE STATEMENT**

**BRN003 – FRUIT BRANDY**

**BRN004 – POMACE BRANDY**

## **RUM**

For the definition of Rum styles and classes please see page 23.

**RUM001 – OVERPROOF RUM – DARK**

**RUM002 – UNDERPROOF RUM – DARK**

**RUM003 – SPICED RUM**

**RUM004 – WHITE RUM**

## **CANE SPIRIT**

For the definition of Cane Spirit styles and classes please see page 23.

**CNE001 – CANE SPIRIT**

**CNE002 – SPICED CANE SPIRIT**

## **LIQUEUR**

For the definition of Liqueur styles and classes please see page 23.

**LIQ001 – FRUIT LIQUEUR**

**LIQ002 – CREAM LIQUEUR**

**LIQ003 – WHISKY LIQUEUR**

**LIQ004 – RUM LIQUEUR**

**LIQ005 – COFFEE LIQUEUR**

**LIQ006 – GIN LIQUEUR**

**LIQ007 – OTHER LIQUEUR (NOT IN ANY OTHER CLASS)**

## ALTERNATIVE SPIRIT

For the definition of Alternative Spirits styles and classes please see page 24.

### ALTO01 – FRUIT INFUSED SPIRIT (e.g., LIMONCELLO, ETC.)

### ALTO02 – FRUIT SCHNAPPS

### ALTO03 – OUZO

### ALTO04 – NEW MAKE UNAGED SPIRITS

### ALTO05 – GRAIN SPIRIT

### ALTO06 – AGAVE ALTO07 – ABSINTHE

### ALTO08 – UNLISTED SPIRIT (NOT IN ANY OTHER CLASS)

## BITTER

For the definition of Bitter styles and classes please see page 24.

### BIT001 – BITTER LIQUEUR

### BIT002 – COCKTAIL BITTERS

## VERMOUTH

For the definition of Vermouth please see page 24.

### VER001 – VERMOUTH

## DESIGN

### DES001 – LABELS / SURFACE GRAPHIC

## Explanatory notes for classes

It is essential that all exhibits are entered into their correct class. 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.

### For the classification of Single Malt Whisky

Whisky category entries (Classes WKY001 through WKY004) must be distilled from 100% malted barley, and be the product of a single distillery, yeast and water and must be matured in wooden casks for at least two (2) years [*Excise Act 1901*]. Exhibitors are prohibited from adding any form of sweetener or flavouring, including botanicals, to entries in Whisky Classes WKY001 through WKY004. Sweetened and or flavoured whiskies must be entered into Class LIQ003 – Whisky Liqueur.

- Entries in Class WKY001 – Single Malt Whisky Unsmoked must be made exclusively from malted barley and be the product of a single distillery.
- Entries in Class WKY002 – Single Malt Whisky Smoked must be made exclusively from malted barley, be the product of a single distillery and must also be smoked with the express purpose of adding a smoky character to the final product.
- Entries in Class WKY003 – Single Malt Cask Strength Whisky Unsmoked must have an ABV of 55% or more, must be undiluted out of the cask, made exclusively from malted barley, be the product of a single distillery.
- Entries in Class WKY004 – Single Malt Cask Strength Whisky Smoked must have an ABV of 55% or more, must be undiluted out of the cask, made exclusively from malted barley, be the product of a single distillery and must be smoked with the express purpose of adding a smoky character to the final product.

### For the classification of Grain or Blended Whisky

Whisky category entries (Classes WKY005 through WKY007) must be distilled from cereal grains (barley, wheat, maize [corn], etc.), yeast and water and must be matured in wooden casks for at least two (2) years [*Excise Act 1901*]. Exhibitors are prohibited from adding any form of sweetener or flavouring, including botanicals, to entries in Whisky Classes WKY001 through WKY008. Sweetened and or flavoured whiskies must be entered into Class LIQ005 – Whisky Liqueur.

- Entries in Class WKY005 – Blended Whisky must be a blend of single malt and/or grain whiskies.
- Entries in Class WKY006 – Grain Whisky must be made predominantly from a cereal grain or grains other than malted barley or rye, and/or be produced exclusively on a continuous still. Must state the predominant grain source(s). Examples may include corn-based whiskies, unmalted barley whiskies, column distilled wheat or malt whiskies, or multi-grain whiskies where no one grain is dominant.
- Entries in Class WKY007 – Other must not be eligible for any other whisky class and must also state style.

### For the classification of Gin

Gin category entries (Classes GIN001 through GIN008) must have a minimum ABV of 37%.

Gin category classes are as follows:

- Entries in Class GIN001 – London Dry must be distilled and not compound gin, and have the flavour profile and characteristics of a traditional London Dry Gin with juniper being the predominant flavour.
- Entries in Class GIN002 – New World / Contemporary must have juniper present with the potential inclusions of Australian botanicals. Exhibitors must state if entry is either Australian Dry / Citrus / Contemporary in style.
- Entries in Class GIN003 – Navy must be over 57% abv. Exhibitors must state if entry is either London Dry or New World / Contemporary in style.
- Entries in Class GIN004 – Fruit (excluding Grape) must be produced by the maceration of Australian-grown fruit in gin, with the possible addition of fruit juice. Exhibitors must state fruit used.
- Entries in Class GIN005 – Wine / Grape must be flavoured with the addition of wine or grape juice and have a gin base.
- Entries in Class GIN006 – Old Tom must be predominantly juniper and sweetened with the addition of sugar or botanicals that create the perception of sweetness (e.g., Liquorice).
- Entries in Class GIN007 – Barrel Aged must be matured in a wooden cask or casks.
- Entries in Class GIN008 – Other Unlisted must state style.

To ensure accurate assessment, exhibitors are required to state the production method (distilled or compound), predominant flavourings and Alcohol by Volume (ABV).

### For the classification of Vodka

Vodka category classes are as follows:

- Pure (Neutral) [VOD001];
- Flavour Distilled [VOD002];
- Flavour Infused [VOD003]; and
- Contemporary Vodka [VOD004].

Exhibitors must state if the spirit is made from grape, grain (e.g., wheat, corn, rye or sorghum), potato or other (e.g., sugar cane).

- Entries in Class VOD001 – Pure (Neutral) Vodka must be unflavoured, neutral in style.
- Entries in Class VOD002 – Contemporary Vodka must be unflavoured, but not neutral in style.
- Entries in Class VOD003 – Flavour Distilled Vodka may be sweetened, blended, matured or coloured; however the flavouring must have been imparted during distillation.
- Entries in Class VOD004 – Flavour Infused Vodka may have had their natural or artificial flavours introduced after distillation either by compounding (mixing), infusion (immersion), by maceration (crushing or muddling), or ageing in oak.

Exhibitors are required to state the style in the 'Age and any other relevant information' field on the entry.

### For the classification of 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, and BRN004 – Pomace Brandy, all Grape Brandy entries (Classes BRN001 and BRN002) must be matured in wooden casks for at least two (2) years [*Excise Act 1901*].

'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 wooden containers 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. The age of brandy shall be determined by the age of the youngest component of any blend.

### For the classification of Rum

All Rum category entries (Classes RUM001 through RUM002) must be distilled from sugarcane and must be matured in wooden casks for at least two (2) years [Excise Act 1901]. Exhibitors must declare base if the spirit is made from Sugar/Cane or Molasses

- Entries in Class RUM001 – Overproof (Dark) must have an ABV of 57.15% 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”.
- Entries in Class RUM002 – Underproof (Dark) must have an ABV of 57.14% 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”.
- Entries in Class RUM003 – Spiced Rum must include at least some perceptible spice character such as orange, vanilla, cinnamon, etc. May include sweeteners and alternative flavourings as long as the product is marketed and would be recognised by the consumer as a spiced rum product. Sweetened and or flavoured rums that do not meet the definition of Spiced Rum must be entered into Class LIQ006 – Rum Liqueur.
- Entries in Class RUM004 – White Rum must be matured in wooden casks for at least two (2) years (in accordance with the Excise Act 1901), but be clear in colour and exhibit characteristics generally understood to meet the definition of “white rum”.
- Unaged or Underaged cane spirit products must be entered into Classes CNE001 – Cane Spirit and CNE002 – Spiced Cane Spirit.

### For the classification of Cane Spirit

Cane Spirit entries 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.

### For the classification of Liqueur

Liqueur category entries (Classes LIQ001 – through LIQ006) 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:

- minimum ABV of 15% (except LIQ006 – Gin Liqueur (25%))
  - 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 LIQ006 Gin Liqueur)
- Entries in Class LIQ001 – Fruit Liqueur must contain Australian-grown fruit.
  - Entries in Class LIQ002 – Cream Liqueur must contain Australian dairy cream. Crème liqueurs (those not containing dairy cream) must be entered into their relevant Liqueur Class.
  - Entries in Class LIQ003 – Whisky Liqueur must have a Whisky base (see ‘Explanatory Notes for the Classification of Whisky’).
  - Entries in Class LIQ004 – Rum/Cane Spirit 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 “Spiced Rum” – i.e., the dominant additive(s) should not be predominantly a blend of spices. Examples may include cane-based fruit liqueurs, or cane-based liqueurs where the dominant flavour is chocolate, caramel, honey, etc.
  - Entries in Class LIQ005 – Coffee Liqueur must contain coffee.
  - Entries in Class LIQ006 – Gin Liqueur must have a gin base (see ‘Explanatory Notes for the Classification of Gin’). Exhibits must not fall within the definition of “Gin”
  - Entries in Class LIQ007 – Other Liqueur (Not in Any Other Class).

### For the classification of Alternative Spirit

- Entries in Class ALTO01 – Fruit Infused Spirit (e.g., Limoncello, etc.) must have their natural or artificial flavour introduced by infusion.
- ALTO02 – Fruit Schnapps
- ALTO03 – Ouzo
- Entries in Class ALTO04 – New Make Unaged Spirits must be unaged, i.e., have spent no time in wooden casks.
- Entries in Class ALTO05 – Grain Spirit must either be unaged or under-aged, i.e., with less than two (2) years maturation in wooden casks.
- Entries in Class ALTO06 – Agave
- Entries in Class ALTO07 – Absinthe must contain *Artemisia absinthium* (*A. absinthium*); wormwood.
- ALTO08 – Unlisted Spirit (Not in Any Other Class)

### For the classification of Bitter

Bitter category entries (Classes BIT001 and BIT002) 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. Entries in Class BIT002 – Cocktail Bitters 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).

- Entries in Class BIT001 – Bitter Liqueur must contain not less than 80g/l of sugar
- Entries in Class 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.

### For the classification of Vermouth

In assessing entries into Class VERO01 – Vermouth, the Australian Distilled Spirits Awards judging panel will reference 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:

- at least 75% wine (grape base);
- aromatised with *sp. Artemesia*;
- within the range of 14.5-21% ABV;
- fortified; and
- 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, the wine content must be Australian grown and produced. In addition to *sp. Artemesia* (wormwood), various other herbs, barks and spices may be used.

*Tailored warehousing and distribution services for Australia and New Zealand's favourite drinks.*



# Judging process

## Judging process

Judging of the 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards will take place at Melbourne Showgrounds on Tuesday 25 – Thursday 27 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

A Head Judge will be 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 Judge, in consultation with the Competition Manager, will have the final power to arbitrate the Awards.

Melbourne Royal is delighted to announce Shaun Byrne, as the Head Judge of the 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards.

With the integrity of the judging process and the impartiality of our judging panel in mind, Shaun is not permitted to enter his products while Head Judge. These include Maidenii Vermouths, and Marionette Liqueurs.

## 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

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
<b>Point Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## Medals: Spirits

Medals will be awarded as follows:

<b>Gold</b>	<b>90 – 100 points</b>	A gold medal worthy exhibit is an <b>outstanding</b> spirit, liqueur, bitter or vermouth for the type of product that it is
<b>Silver</b>	<b>82 – 89.9 points</b>	A silver medal worthy exhibit is an <b>excellent</b> spirit, liqueur, bitter or vermouth for the type of product that it is
<b>Bronze</b>	<b>74 – 81.9 points</b>	A bronze medal worthy exhibit is a <b>very good</b> spirit, liqueur, bitter or vermouth 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	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branding consistency across product range</li> <li>• Demonstrates excellence in print and production quality</li> <li>• Reflects excellence in design</li> <li>• Demonstrates shelf stand out and an integrated approach to display</li> <li>• Design features contribute to purchase appeal</li> <li>• Design complements bottle design</li> <li>• Integrates consumer-valued design enhancement features</li> <li>• Demonstrates an application of a 'new idea' (design, material or technique)</li> <li>• Demonstrates a creative use of existing ideas</li> <li>• An excellent example of an existing design/technique</li> <li>• Unique aesthetic characteristics</li> <li>• It is easily integrated into existing distribution channels</li> </ul>
Information	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name or brand visibility</li> <li>• Product ingredients listing</li> <li>• Regulatory information (for country of origin)</li> <li>• Company information</li> <li>• Other unique information</li> <li>• Language and message are appropriate for product type and intended audience</li> </ul>
Target Audience	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successfully appeals to intended audience</li> </ul>
Functionality/Utility	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ease of opening</li> <li>• Durability</li> <li>• Protection of product</li> <li>• Unique or novel technical factor</li> <li>• Container construction</li> </ul>
Environmental	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successfully addresses current and appropriate environmental concerns: reusability, recyclability, material reduction</li> </ul>
<b>Maximum Total</b>	<b>100</b>	

## Medals: Design

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

<b>Gold</b>	<b>90 – 100 points</b>	A Gold Medal package is an <b>outstanding</b> package that is very well executed, relevant, original and inspiring.
<b>Silver</b>	<b>82 – 89.9 points</b>	A Silver Medal package is an <b>excellent</b> package that is well executed, relevant, original and inspiring.
<b>Bronze</b>	<b>74 – 81.9 points</b>	A Bronze Medal package is a <b>very good</b> 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 for entry into the 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards, you will receive by email 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 Distilled 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 Distilled 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 unlabeled 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 Distilled Spirits Awards-issued labels show the:

- (a) Name and year of the competition;
- (b) Class number;
- (c) Australian Distilled 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 Distilled Spirits Awards competition labels will not be judged.

### Addressing deliveries

All cartons must be clearly marked with the following details:

Australian Distilled Spirits Awards  
Attention: Oskar Long  
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 10 and by no later than Thursday 20 July. Please contact the Food & Beverage Awards Program Coordinator Oskar Long (see Contact page) if you wish to hand-deliver your exhibits to the Showgrounds.

Notification of your exhibits having been received in good order by Australian Distilled Spirits Awards will be via email from [spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au](mailto:spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au).

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

# Results

The results of the 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards will be announced at the Trophy Presentation on Thursday 3 August in the Victoria Pavilion at Melbourne Showgrounds and will after this time be made available online via [www.melbournerooyal.com.au/spirits](http://www.melbournerooyal.com.au/spirits) and the Melbourne Royal mobile site [m.melbournerooyal.com.au](http://m.melbournerooyal.com.au). Results will be emailed, and certificates posted following this event.

# Contacts

## Competition

For all general and competition enquiries relating to the 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards please contact:

Oskar Long  
Food & Beverage Awards Program Coordinator  
Australian Distilled Spirits Awards  
T 03 9281 7436  
E [spirits@melbournerooyal.com.au](mailto:spirits@melbournerooyal.com.au)

## Media

For all media enquiries relating to the 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards please contact:

Alastair Dwyer  
Manager – PR, Communications & Engagement  
Communications Manager, Melbourne Royal  
T 03 9281 7444  
E [communications@melbournerooyal.com.au](mailto:communications@melbournerooyal.com.au)

## Trophy presentation

For all enquiries relating to the 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards Trophy Presentation please contact:

Events Team, Melbourne Royal  
T 03 9281 7444  
E [events@melbournerooyal.com.au](mailto:events@melbournerooyal.com.au)

## Sponsorship opportunities

For all enquiries relating to the 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards Trophy Presentation please contact:

Nicole Blandthorn  
Sponsorship & Partnerships Specialist  
T 03 9281 7444  
E [nicole.blandthorn@melbournerooyal.com.au](mailto:nicole.blandthorn@melbournerooyal.com.au)



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# Special Regulations & Conditions of Entry

## 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards

### 1. Definitions and Interpretation

#### 1.1 Definitions

The following definitions apply unless the context requires otherwise:

**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 Organisers 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 Organisers 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 Organisers.

**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 2023 Australian Distilled Spirits Awards (ADSA). Event also includes the period of bump-in and bump-out for the Event and the period of the Event competition.

**Event Organisers** 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.

**Head Judge** means a person appointed by the Event Organisers 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.

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

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

**Product** means a sample of a commercially available spirit.

**Regulations** means the Event Organisers' regulations and conditions of entry for the Australian Distilled 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.

**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 Organisers will set an annual schedule for the entry requirements and the entry fees which will apply to each Australian Distilled Spirits Awards program.

### 2.2 Entries must either be lodged online via [www.melbournerooyal.com.au/spirits](http://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 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 Organisers will provide a full refund on entry fees. The Event Organisers 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.

### 2.4 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.

### 2.5 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.

### 2.6 Alteration and Inspection of Entry Forms

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

## 3. Conduct of Exhibitors

### 3.1 Unacceptable Behaviour

The Event Organisers are 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 Organisers 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 Organisers upon receiving notification of the forfeiture.

### 3.3 Compliance with Directions

The Exhibitor must fully comply with the directions and requests of the Event Organisers. Without limitation, directions and requests of the Event Organisers 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 Organisers 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 Condition 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 <https://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 Organisers in Respect of Control of the Event**

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

The Event Organisers may, at their discretion, refuse to accept an Entry Form, an Exhibit or an Exhibitor.

4.2 Power to cancel or alter

The Event Organisers 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 Organisers 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 Distilled Spirits Awards, the Exhibitor must hold an Excise Manufacturers License issued by the Australian Tax Office.

**Exhibit**

An Exhibit can be entered only once into the Australian Distilled 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 Organisers

Unless otherwise stated, all Exhibits become the property of the Event Organisers 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 Distilled Spirits Awards. Exhibit stock remaining after the Australian Distilled 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 Distilled Spirits Awards-issued competition labels. Australian Distilled 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:

- a. Name and year of the competition,
- b. Class number,
- c. Australian Distilled Spirits Awards Barcode,
- d. Four-digit Catalogue (Exhibit) number,
- e. Class name,
- f. Entry name, and the
- g. Batch / Barrel / Cask / Bottle No

5.3 Inspection of Exhibits

The Event Organisers 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 so 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 Organisers.

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 Organisers 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:

- a. comply in all respects with the criteria established by the Event Organisers for entry in the relevant class;
- b. are the bona fide property of the Exhibitor; and
- c. 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.

**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 Event Organisers, 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.

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 Distilled 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 Organisers 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 Distilled Spirits Awards judging.

6.6 Event Organisers 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 Organisers 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 Organisers 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.
- 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 Organisers, Australian Distilled 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](mailto: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 within three working days of the completion of judging. Trophy winners will be announced following the release of the class results.

## 9 Awards

- 9.1 Gold, Silver and Bronze Certificates will be issued to those Exhibits attaining the requisite points.
- 9.2 Champion Trophies and Certificates will be awarded to the company named and product specified on the Entry Form.
- 9.3 Champion Trophy and Medal winners in Australian Distilled 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 Distilled 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 Distilled 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 spirits and liqueurs 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/manufacture 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 Distilled Spirits Awards graphic trademark. Permissions and its terms are to be at the absolute discretion of the Event Organisers.

### 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 Distilled 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 Organisers and must be adhered to.

## 12 Ownership of Awards

The Exhibitor acknowledges that all awards are owned by the Event Organisers 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 Organisers 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 Organisers a warranty of their authority, and the Event Organisers are not required to make any enquiry as to that authority.

## 14. Information Handling

The Event Organisers are bound by the national Privacy Principles of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and other applicable laws governing policy.

## 15. Governing Law

These Regulations are governed by the laws of the State of Victoria, Australia.



**MELBOURNE  
ROYAL**  
AUSTRALIAN  
DISTILLED  
SPIRITS AWARDS

# 2023 Entry Booklet

Melbourne Royal® is a registered trademark of

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Epsom Road, Ascot Vale VIC 3032

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**Office Bearers**

as at 16/6/22

**Patron**

Her Excellency the Hon Linda Dessau AC  
– Governor of Victoria

**Board of Directors**

MJ (Matthew) Coleman (President)

CGV (Catherine) Ainsworth

D (Darrin) Grimsey

NE (Noelene) King OAM

PJB (Jason) Ronald OAM

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**Company Secretary**

Darryl Ferris

**Industry Advisory Group**

Shaun Byrne

Seb Costello

Stuart Gregor

Luke McCarthy

Sebastian Reaburn

Julian White

**Competition Managers**

Damian Nieuwesteeg

Amy Chung

Oskar Long

Lily Cumper

Email: [spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au](mailto:spirits@melbourneroyal.com.au)



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Celebrating a remarkable 175 years in 2023, Melbourne Royal has been inspiring excellence in agriculture and food production since 1848.

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

### Contact Us


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