

WORLD COCKTAIL CHAMPIONSHIP (WCC) CLASSIC

Our first IBA President in 1951 reflected on the impact a world bartender association could have on the bar community. We are inspired by his words that ring true even today.

“Well, the IBA founding is done. In this historical moment for barmen-activities we are happy to see around the table barmen from seven countries. If only we will not be too pretentious, the future generations will, with the help of the Associations, have grounds for positive technical satisfactions and professional prestige and better possibilities for mutual friendship and help.”

James Billy Tarling
Torquay 24th February 1951

A. Description, general rules

1. The IBA World Cocktail Championship (WCC) is an opportunity for competitors to meet other bartenders from all over the world and compete in one of our two independent competitions.
2. The level of professional knowledge and skills that a bartender has will be checked and evaluated at our World Cocktail Championship (WCC) Classic. This competition will bring to the world the **IBA Cocktail of the Year** in each of the five cocktail categories, which will include the products of the IBA partners.
3. The winner of all three levels will become the **WORLD BARTENDER OF THE YEAR**.
4. The second competition is our World Cocktail Championship (WCC) Flair, this competition will focus on the best entertainment and best bartender flair skills. The winner will become the **WORLD FLAIR BARTENDER OF THE YEAR**.
5. The International Bartenders Association (IBA) World Cocktail Championship (WCC) is formalized and organized by the host country and IBA Executive Board in accordance with the WCC COMPETITION RULES & REGULATIONS.
6. The IBA will create a random five-year calendar specifying the WCC Competition assigned to each country. The countries involved are informed in advance of the **category** that each association will participate in.
7. Each national association will be paired with one (sometimes two) IBA Associate Member(s). The two contestants (Classic Competition and Flairtending Competition) from one Association will be paired with one (or two) Associate Member(s). Pairing is done by way of an official draw. The results of the draw are announced by the IBA Board.
8. **Each association will submit one recipe per competitor entered in the WCC Classic and WCC Flair. Participation to WCC Flair isn't compulsory.**
9. No competitor may compete at the WCC more than three times in any five-year period. The IBA encourages new talent to gain experience and knowledge by participating at least twice in any five-year period. This rule established since 1 January 2017.
10. A competitor may only compete in one competition of the IBA World Cocktail Championships per year.
11. Discretionary Penalty: WCC Chairperson(s) for Classic and Flairtending competitions may impose a discretionary penalty on any competitor whose national guild-president or their delegate(s) cause a nuisance to the judges, scoring committee or competitors during the competition (competition time, commencement of heat 1 to completion of the last heat of that competition day).
12. National guild-presidents should not enter the competition area without invitation by the WCC Chair Person(s).

13. Competitors must present themselves in **their guild uniform or in their national uniform**. The uniform and bar tools must not carry any commercial branding logo. If they do not comply with this rule, they could be penalized.

B. Scenario

The World Cocktail Championship (WCC) Classic consists of three levels:

1. The competitors from all IBA Guilds will be divided into the five categories.
2. **WCC Classic Level I. Preliminary Round** (65 Participants) – is defined by five different Cocktail Category Competitions. Each national association member of the IBA will be randomly allocated to one cocktail category and have the opportunity for their selected bartender to showcase skills and present a cocktail.
The top three – 3 scoring competitors from each Cocktail Category will move to the next level.
3. **WCC Classic Level II. Semi Final** (15 Participants) – is defined by 3 different challenges that all participants must face.
The top three – 3 scoring competitors will move to the next level.
4. **WCC Classic Level III. Super Final** (3 participants) – is defined by the presentation of a new cocktail during the IBA Grand Gala Dinner.
5. **WCC Classic** is managed by the Chairperson and several sub-committees.

C. Recipe - Submission - Controle

1. Each guild president shall submit the recipe for only one competitor, it must be an original cocktail creation.
2. Recipes for the **World Cocktail Championship (WCC) Classic** must be submitted by the closing date announced by the IBA Board.
3. Recipes must be submitted on the official **World Cocktail Championship (WCC) Classic** entry form. A **portrait** photo (not an 'action shot') of the competitor must be attached as a separate file: full-color, high resolution at least 1MB.
4. Alongside the submission of the recipe, it is mandatory to attach a filled form for Homemade ingredients in case of usage (break down of Alcohol content if relevant and BRIX see homemade section in these rules document).
5. **Alongside the Recipes for the World Cocktail Championship (WCC) Classic Preliminary Round, all competitors must submit the recipe form for the WCC Super Final as well. Sponsor for Super Final not consolidated yet**
6. It is the responsibility of each national President to ensure the recipe complies with these rules.
7. Recipes submitted on time with no mistakes will be awarded +3pt on the Technical Score.
8. All recipes submitted will remain the property of the IBA and IBA Associate Members.

D. Online Classes and Briefings

1. Online classes will be organized and scheduled prior to the WCC. Short briefings will be organized on site at the competition venue by IBA Vice President, WCC Sub-Committees Chairs and IBA Mentors to avoid language barriers. Briefings and online classes are not a forum for discussion about the agreement or disagreement about the rules.
Only competitors are allowed to participate in their briefings.
2. The aim of the online classes is to explain and prepare competitors for the knowledge test part of our competition.
3. The purpose of the briefings is to clarify all rules to the competitors. The judges are there to explain the rules.
4. **There will be a drawing on-site to determine the running order of the competitors.**

5. Competitors must be prepared for the briefing and at the right location on time (5 minutes before briefing time).
6. Competitors must be informed and prepared concerning their own questions.

E. Basic Rules for Cocktail Preparation

1. All alcohol brands in the recipe must be selected from the **WCC Product List**.
2. The World Cocktail Championship (WCC) Classic Sub-committee will not be responsible for any spirits, syrups, garnish and/or bar equipment unavailable during the competition. Any intrusion by national guild Presidents or representatives at the back office beside the competitors and authorized people will result in penalty or disqualification of the same guild competitor.
3. The Host Country will provide a basic list of all fruits, herbs and vegetables available during the event. All ingredients of garnishes are at the competitor's responsibility and expenses. Items missing from the recipe can be changed only after approval by World Cocktail Championship (WCC) Classic Sub-Committee.
4. The Host country will supply ice and crushed ice.
5. Recipes may **not contain more than seven - 7 cl of alcohol** in any cocktail (except for two dashes bitters, which may be used in addition to the 7 cl).
6. Recipes must contain **at least 1.5 cl of the Associate Members'** drawn product, except in the Before Dinner Competition. In this competition a sweet product may not exceed 1 cl. If a country has drawn two or three products, their competitor is entitled to restrict all drawn products used to 1 cl.
7. Recipes must be expressed in centilitre (cl), millilitre (ml), dash (d). A Barspoon is not a measure and will not be accepted.
8. Measuring glasses, jiggers or free pouring are allowed.
9. Cocktails must **not contain more than six - 6 ingredients**.
10. One Homemade ingredient per cocktail is allowed and can be used in any cocktail recipe. The assigned sponsor products as base can't be replaced but can be used as an additional product for producing homemade ingredients. The homemade ingredient must be described in a separate form provided during the subscription. Its primary goal is to increase the taste level and balance of the cocktail.
See session 5 of this document for more explanations.
11. No non-sponsored alcohol or syrup/puree ingredients are allowed.
12. No artificial ingredients or colorants are allowed.
13. No open flame is permitted on stage - special way of preparations may be used only after approval of the World Cocktail Championship (WCC) Classic Sub-Committee.
14. Competitors are responsible for supplying their own fruit. If a specific fruit juice from the WCC Official Product List is not available, then the competitors will be allowed to purchase fruit and make fresh juice backstage on the day of the competition, immediately prior to preparing the garnish. Back Office Judge will assess on competitor wastage practice and the way how dispose or utilize fruits and ingredients, for example: The use of citrus zest is linked to the use of the same citrus fruit juice in the recipe,
15. Dairy products are permitted **but pasteurized one only**.
16. Aers and foams and spherification are allowed in all competitions. All ingredients used to make aers/foams must be prepared on stage and follow the maximum six-ingredients rule. All ingredients and techniques must be explained in detail on the Entry Form.
17. Stones or frozen food items, alone or in ice, will not be allowed.
18. Scotsman Gourmet Ice is the official WCC ice. NO ice in any other shape or form can be brought in by competitors.
19. The methods for preparing cocktails are : build (directly in glass), stir (mixing glass), muddle, shake, blend, throw or any combination of these.

20. Competitors must use their own bar utensils. No bar tools will be supplied by IBA or the host country. The host country will supply basic containers/carafes for the pouring of juices. It is recommended for each competitor to bring everything they need and not rely on host country.
21. Cocktail names including rude, shocking, sexual and racist words, words with a narcotic association, and words alluding to physical diseases or disabilities, are prohibited.

F. Back-Office Practices, Decorations and Garnishes

1. Wastage practice policy and Back-Office Practice

Once the competitor walks into the back-office room to prepare for the mise-en-place before going to the Decoration and Garnish table a WCC Back-Office judge will assess the cleaning standards, wastage policy and Homemade sample.

1. Definition of a Cocktail Decoration

A cocktail decoration is meant to beautify a drink with no impact on flavour or cocktail ingredients. It is an edible food product (fruit peel, fruit, vegetable, root, herb) used to complement and enhance the visual presentation of the drink, and not to alter the flavour. A decoration is placed on or around the glass.

2. Definition of a Cocktail Garnish

A cocktail garnish is made up of an edible food product (fruit peel, fruit, vegetable, herb, root... but, not a liquid) used to compliment the flavour of a mixed drink. It can do this either visually, aromatically, or by influencing the cocktail's taste. A garnish should not be the dominant taste of the mixed drink but instead offer a contrasting or complimentary flavour to the recipe. A cocktail garnish will be placed inside the glass/drink and/or used as an aroma.

1. Neither the decoration nor the garnish shall be counted as an ingredient. They are in addition to the six permitted ingredients.
2. Decorations must be 100% natural food product minus the pick/clip. A judge is encouraged to take a bite out of any part of the decoration. If the decoration meets the liquid of the cocktail this does not incur a penalty.
3. Wood/metal/plastic picks or clips may be used to assist in building the decoration but may not be the focus of the decoration. Large or multiple manufactured items may not overpower the visuals of the natural components of the decoration.
4. Decorations and garnishes must be prepared (cut-up) in the backstage area at the garnish table during the garnish preparation time (15 minutes), prior to going on stage. No pre-fixed or prepared garnishes will be allowed. Dehydrated fruits and vegetables are allowed. Once the 15-minute time is up (HANDS UP !!), no adjustments are allowed to be made to the garnish.
5. Placing the garnish/decoration on the glassware prior to preparing the cocktail is not allowed.
6. Rims and Crustas must be done on the performing stage. Full rim in a glass is considered as an ingredient of the cocktail.
7. The use of a 'side-garnish' and cocktails served on small plates or trays next to the cocktail glass are irrelevant and not adding extra points.
8. Only the cocktail glasses will be taken to the tasting judges panel and presented to the public
9. All garnishes and decoration ingredients must be listed on the recipe entry form.
10. Straws will be used only in tasting room by tasting judges, not in cocktails glasses on stage.
11. The garnish needs to be placed on the glass firmly so that it can be safely transferred to the tasting jury.

H. Glassware

1. Competitors may not use their own glassware.
2. Glassware will be provided by the IBA (APPENDIXES).
3. Competitors must use the glassware stated in the recipe submission document.

I. Sequence of Competition

1. All competitors will receive their ingredient bottles and/or bar-backs from the storekeepers on the competition stage. Competitors must not enter the competition area before their time allows.
2. Use of freshly squeezed juices or similar preparation needs to be notified prior to the competition and be prepared in the back area under surveillance.
3. Competitors will have **two minutes to set-up for the competition** (be sure to have all your ingredients, tools, supplies, polish glassware, checked ice, dump bucket, bottles, etc). **Technical judges will be responsible for checking this 2-minute set-up time.**
4. It is not allowed to use the two minutes preparation time to fill glasses, mixing glasses, or shakers with ice, working on decorations/garnishes, and not pour any ingredients from the bottles.
5. Before the competition begins on stage, competitors will give a one-minute speech to share the inspiration/story behind the cocktail. It shows how well competitors engage with the audience. Each speech will be judged by the Personal Presentation Judge on their clarity and confidence, rather than their English-language skills. No translator is permitted as English is the official language of the IBA. A competitor who does not speak English should be able to memorize a short speech in English to share on stage.
6. Mise-en-place must reflect the personal natural way of pouring left hand or right hand. Competitors must present bottles to the public during their routine. Bottles labels must be always visible.
7. When pouring the finished cocktail into glasses, competitors should partly fill the glass and then move onto the next glass respecting natural personal handling with maximum 3 movements per drink. Glasses must be filled identically in terms of content, volume and level. Before topping for the Sparkling & Long Drink category and at the end of the routine for all 5 categories. Straight posture and professional body language is encouraged, curving back and shoulder towards the glass while pouring will be penalized.
8. Competitors must prepare five identical cocktail portions. Four to Tasting Judges and one for the Presentation Area.
9. Competitors are not allowed to taste their cocktails on stage.
10. The competitors will stop the clock by raising the completed cocktail and presenting it to the audience.
11. Competitors will be judged on hygiene, efficiency, and professionalism when preparing the cocktail.
12. In the event of unexpected accidents during the preparation or transportation of the cocktails (through no fault of the competitor) to the Tasting Jury, WCC Classic Sub-Committee will resolve this with the Jury. The competitor will not be penalized.
13. The technical judges enter their score to the scoring sheet. Points are deducted based on the Technical Judge's observation. The remaining points will be the final score for the technical performance.
14. If competitors do not prepare cocktails as stated in the recipe (wrong/missing ingredient), the technical judges will inform the **WCC Classic Sub-Committee**. Penalty points will be deducted by Technical Judges their decisions are final.

J. Time and Penalties

1. Garnish and decoration preparation will be limited to **fifteen (15) minutes**. After its expiration the competitors must stop and use what they have prepared up to that point in time, by notify the judges and **hands up**.
2. If competitors change the recipe or garnish in any way, or fail to follow the original recipe/presentation, 40 penalty points will be deducted from each technical judge.
3. If competitors fail to make all five cocktails, the competitors will only receive the scores from the number of judges that receive cocktails. Competitors will be penalized for not preparing all the cocktails required.
4. Competitors will have seven - 7 minutes to mix their signature cocktails. Competitors exceeding the time limit will be penalized by the Technical Judges: **10 points will be deducted every 10 seconds over 7 minutes**
5. Competitors will have a maximum of 8 minutes to mix their signature cocktails. After 8 minutes, they will present their cocktails as they are, even if they are not finished.
6. The one-minute introduction speech will not be considered as part of the seven minutes allowed to mix the cocktail.
7. Competitors will be told when the seven minutes starts and to begin mixing their cocktail.
8. Discretionary Penalty: the WCC Chairperson(s) may impose a discretionary penalty on any competitor whose national guild-president or their delegate(s) cause a nuisance to the Judges, Scoring Sub-Committee or competitors during any part of the competition. Any area intrusion by national guild Presidents or representatives beside the competitors and authorized people will result in penalty or disqualification of the same guild competitor.

K. WCC Level I – Categories Round

a. Before Dinner Cocktail Category

1. A drink designed to stimulate the appetite. An aperitif is dry rather than sweet (e.g.: champagne, pastis, sherry, vermouth, Americano, Dry Martini and Negroni). Judges will favor dryer and/or bitter cocktails rather than sweet cocktails when scoring on taste.
2. Before Dinner Cocktails must not contain more than 1 cl of sweetened products.
3. The following products are classified as sweet products: cordials/liqueurs, sweet-fortified wines, Pedro Ximenez/cream Sherry, Port, sweet sparkling wines, red vermouth, dessert wines and sweet fruit juices.
4. Dry Marsala, dry sherry, bitter aperitif and dry Vermouth are permitted and NOT considered sweetened products!!

b. Long Drink Cocktail Category

Long Drink is served in a tall glass: it may be refreshing, sweet, sour, or tropical, and is served in a glass that has a large volume as provided by IBA Associate Members.

c. Coffee Cocktail Category

1. Coffee cocktail must contain a minimum of 2.5 cl of coffee and at least 2.5 cl of alcohol.
2. Pasteurized dairy products are permitted.
3. Homemade products are authorized.
4. Competitors may choose from the following various preparation methods, including shaker, mixing glass, built technique, electric blender or a combination of these methods.
5. No restrictions regarding the maximum volume of the cocktail, as reminder the minimum volume of the cocktail is 7cl.
6. Serving vessel must comply with the IBA sponsors list
7. Coffee cocktail must primarily evoke the aroma and taste of coffee, ensuring that its essence remains the dominant sensory experience.
8. To maintain consistency, all participants will use the same coffee, which will be prepared in the back office by a local barista/bartender.

9. The coffee cocktail should seamlessly integrate coffee with complementary aromatic components - such as spirits, liqueurs, syrups, dairy, or spices - to create a refined and innovative drinking experience.
10. It may be served either cold or warm, allowing for versatility in presentation and enjoyment.

d. After Dinner Cocktail Category

1. After Dinner cocktails are sophisticated, flavourful drinks designed to be enjoyed after a meal.
2. These cocktails often incorporate ingredients such as cream, liqueurs, coffee, chocolate, or aged spirits, creating a smooth and indulgent experience.
3. The flavour profile is typically sweet, rich, and well-balanced, complementing the conclusion of a dining experience.
4. The texture may range from velvety and creamy to bold and spirit-forward, depending on the ingredients used.
5. While traditionally served in short drink glasses, these cocktails are crafted to provide a lingering, satisfying finish to a meal, making them an essential category in cocktail competitions focused on technique, creativity, and flavour harmony.

e. Oriental Fusion Cocktail Category

Sponsor not consolidated yet

Oriental Fusion Cocktail mixing is a way to approach Asian Spirits and products mixed with other worldwide type of ingredients

1. Cocktail category inspired by Oriental products in combination with the WCC Product List.
2. Inspiration by typical oriental flavours like for example Umami, Yuzu, Ginger, oriental berries, etc.
3. Be creative and apply for example, an oriental cocktail style presentation into the preparation.
4. Cocktail may contain **a minimum of 2 cl of the main category oriental spirit.**
5. Composition and detailed preparation of the cocktail will respect the general IBA rules like any other category.
6. Judges will positively evaluate drinks that are respecting the authenticity of the oriental environment and appearance.

L. WCC Level II. - Semi Final Round

The 3 best competitors of each Cocktail Category from the Preliminary Round will proceed to the Semi Final.

All 15 Semi Finalists start this round with 0 points.

The Semi Final consists of three mandatory parts which will follow one after the other.

a. Sensory Skills

Competitors will be asked using a set of written tests to identify different sensory items.

Individual tests will faithfully demonstrate bartender basic sensory abilities for working with raw materials and show the ability to react quickly on it.

Individual tests are limited by a very short time for their execution.

The tests include, for example:

1. Olfactory test of typical aromas of fruits, vegetables, herbs, spices and other aromas used in the bar for the preparation of cocktails.
2. Taste recognition test
3. Knowledge test of various well-known alcoholic products.

b. Knowledge Skills

Multiple choice questionnaire test.

Every competitor will be given an exam document to study once their recipe submission has been received. This document refers to the IBA Academy Manual. Those that choose to buy or download an electronic copy can use either the book or the short competition packet to study.

- Spirit facts
- Spirit history facts
- IBA History
- Name glasses
- Define measurement
- Social Responsibility

c. The WCC Market Challenge

The WCC Market Challenge, is a rigorous test of bartenders' expertise, adaptability, and creativity. In this high-stakes challenge, our 15 Semi-Finalist face the ultimate trial: creating one exquisite cocktail within a tight timeframe.

The winner will be selected in relation to:

- **Knowledge** (Demonstrating a deep understanding of spirits, bartending techniques, and flavour profiles),
- **Skills** (Navigating the market efficiently, selecting top-quality ingredients, and executing precise measurements),
- **Creativity** (Innovating on the fly, crafting unique flavour combinations, and surprising the judges),
- **Flexibility** (Adapting to unexpected ingredients and last-minute changes),
- **Pressure** (Thriving under time constraints, maintaining composure, and delivering excellence).

The judging panel awaits, ready to evaluate not only the taste but also the inspiration behind the created cocktail.

M. WCC Level III. - WCC Superfinal Sponsor Super Final not consolidated yet

The best 3 competitors from the Semi Final will move to compete in the WCC Super Final for the "IBA World Bartender of the Year" award. This award will be presented to the bartender with the best performance and best tasting cocktail in the Super Final.

The competitors will be judged on complexity, communication, creativity, cocktail taste and technical skills by a panel of four judges.

Full briefing of the Super Final will be disclosed on the day.

The judges will expect to be entertained and will engage in discussion and question the competitors during their presentations.

The competitors' overall performance will determine their technical score.

The drawing of lots will determine the sequence of competitors.

Competitors will prepare five cocktails, four for the judges and one for the photo.

During the seven-minute performance the judges will ask questions in English and engage the competitors in conversation about the cocktail, his/her philosophy, inspiration or story (all in front of the audience). Competitors will be equipped with a microphone (Headset).

Competitors exceeding the seven -minute time limit will be penalized.

If there is a tie, the overall impression will break the tie. If there is still a tie, the highest points awarded for tasting will be the deciding factor.

- ~~1. Competitors will present their Madeira Wine WCC Superfinal recipe entry to be submitted at the same time as the Preliminary Round cocktail.~~
- ~~2. It is mandatory to use at least 2 cl of Madeira wine in the super final. "medium sweet" type. There will be 3 brands: "Miles", "Barbeito" and "J.Faria". All 3 brands must be used by the 3 super finalists. Each one will use one of the brands that will be drawn on stage during the Superfinal.~~

N. Classic Cocktail Competition Awards & Prizes

Awards presented during Super Final event:

1. IBA Cocktails Of The Year

Best cocktail in each category will be announced as a IBA Cocktail Of The Year. Competitors created the recipe will be awarded. (Long Drink Cocktail Of The Year, After Dinner Cocktail Of The Year etc...)

2. Cocktail Art Award

The cocktail with the best design (best looking drink) of the Preliminary round will be awarded.

3. Best Technical Skills

The competitor with the best efficiency of the Preliminary round will be awarded.

4. Best Knowledge Skills

The competitor with the best knowledge results in the Semi Final round.

5. Best Sensory Skills

The competitor with best sensorial skills results in the Semi Final round.

6. The WCC Market Challenge Trophy

The winner of the WCC Market Challenge in the Semi Final round will be awarded.

7. World Bartender of The Year

The highest award is given to the competitor with the best result in the Super Final. The winner will receive an invitation to attend the IBA World Cocktail Championships the following year as a guest of the IBA. The award includes travel arrangements and accommodation (for the winner only). This prize is non-transferable and there is no cash alternative. Runners up and Third place of the Superfinal will be also awarded.

8. Eagle Reward Prize

This award is presented to the competitor in WCC Classic and Flair competitors under 24 years at the time of competing with the highest score after combining the tasting and technical scores.

Competitors' birthdate will be provided upon recipe subscription.

9. Team Prize (Challenge Cup)

This prize is presented to the National Association whose competitors in WCC Classic and Flair Competitions obtained the highest ranking together.