

# Culinaire

## 2021 ALBERTA BEVERAGE AWARDS



**Registration is now open!**

### ***Celebrating Alberta's Best Beverages***

The Alberta Beverage Awards celebrates the very best wines, beers, spirits, mixers, meads, and sake available to Albertans. Visit [culinairemagazine.ca/aba](http://culinairemagazine.ca/aba) to enter your products!

**Registration Deadline June 25**  
**Judging Takes Place July 19-21**

For more information, contact competition director Tom Firth: [tom@culinairemagazine.ca](mailto:tom@culinairemagazine.ca)

[culinairemagazine.ca/aba](http://culinairemagazine.ca/aba)

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**ENTER YOUR PRODUCTS NOW AT [CULINAIREMAGAZINE.CA/ABA](http://CULINAIREMAGAZINE.CA/ABA)**

# 2021 ALBERTA BEVERAGE AWARDS

The Alberta Beverage Awards were launched in 2013 by Culinaire Magazine to help identify the very best wines, beers and spirits available in the dynamic Alberta beverage marketplace, quickly becoming the largest and most reputable beverage competition in the province.

Judging takes place mid July, in Calgary, by some of Alberta’s finest professional palates including buyers, sommeliers, retailers, educators, and media. Prior to the judging, every product is placed

into a category and assigned to a flight with like products. The entries are evaluated blind by dedicated wine, beer and spirits panels, and moderated by an experienced panel captain.

Beverages deemed superior in the preliminary rounds proceed to final rounds where the very best are awarded “Best in Class”. The top performing products in a category may earn a “Judges Selection”. A winning product may be assigned a “Top Value” showcasing a top performer that also over-delivers on value.



## WHAT ARE THE ALBERTA BEVERAGE AWARDS? (ABA)

The Alberta Beverage Awards are produced by Culinaire Magazine. They are an annual competition to find the best wines, beers, spirits, coolers, mixers, meads, sakes, and non-alcoholic beverages available in the Alberta market.

Products are evaluated blind by panels of Alberta beverage experts to identify the best in each category. Judges know the type of product (such as varietal or blend), but do not know the country, producer or even the price of entries.

In addition to a sound competition method, we work very hard to keep the ratio of award winners to total entries at less than 30 per cent – meaning we don’t hand out “participation” awards. The total number of awards in a category depends on the number of suitable entries in that category.

Overall, only about one third of total entries will earn an award at the Alberta Beverage Awards, which ensures results are meaningful, and only the best will be featured in the results.

## WHAT ABOUT THE RESULTS?

The results are printed in Culinaire Magazine in the fall as well as appearing online at [culinairemagazine.ca](http://culinairemagazine.ca). Several of our judges are involved with various publications and are encouraged to write about their favourites, the results of the ABA, or products they might have tried.

All the judges go home with their tasting notes and a key indicating all the samples they tasted as well, to reference throughout the year or for further attention. Last year most of our judges brought in products they had tasted to feature in their liquor stores and restaurants too!

## WHO CAN ENTER THE ABAS?

Anyone can enter a product in the ABAs, whether it is the producer (brewery, distillery, or winery) or the agent or representative of the product. The only stipulation is that the product must be available in the province or be in the process of being listed for sale in Alberta. Each product should have a CSPC or be in the process of getting one.

## WHY SHOULD I ENTER?

Winners stand out from the crowd. The Alberta Beverage Awards were created and designed to identify the best beers, wines, spirits, and non-alcoholic beverages available to Albertans judged by Alberta experts.

Our competition is valuable tool in your marketing toolbox, elevating your product above its peers, and giving you an opportunity for added sales and reach for your brands. We also regularly include products entered in the Awards in features and articles in Culinaire.





# 2021 ALBERTA BEVERAGE AWARDS

## WHAT DOES A WIN MEAN FOR ME?

First off, congratulations!

If you receive an award, your product was selected by our judges as being an exceptional product from amongst all the other products in its category.

Whether it's a Best in Class, a Judges Selection, or a Top Value Award, the win is a tool to help you market your product, so share your win with your customers, on social media, on your website, or even shout it from the rooftops!

## PROMOTING YOUR WIN

Producers or agents who wish to advertise their award(s) in Culinaire Magazine can also take advantage of special discounted rates for winners, and reach even more consumers!

Included with your win are 250 complimentary foil stickers (more available to purchase) to help your bottle or pack stand out on the shelf. We also provide digital medals so you can include your win on your sell sheets, and other marketing collateral.

This year, we're working on a number of optional physical awards too for you to help celebrate your wins, with items that might look good in your facility or tasting room, or at your next consumer show (whenever that might be!).

Your results are not embargoed in any way, so you can share the good news as soon as you wish, and for however long you like!

## HOW CULINAIRE IS PROMOTING YOUR WINS

Winning products are featured in October's Culinaire Magazine and online, with prices and CSPCs as well as a bottle shot. We also feature winners in our social media throughout the year until the next Beverage Awards, reaching well over 250,000 Albertans.

This doesn't include other media, or producers' and importers' own efforts to reach consumers with their wins.

Readers see your winning product, they know how to find it, and how much they should expect to pay for it on the shelf.

## NEW FOR 2021!

We've been hard at work on a number of strategic partnerships with various media outlets such as radio and tv to increase the reach of the awards for Albertans.

We're also working towards additional relationships to promote ABA winners in liquor stores and restaurants, building on the success of last year when almost all our liquor store and on-premise judges brought in products they had tasted at the ABAs for shelf features and wine lists.

While it is too early to yet to list all our partners, we can confirm that a major retail chain will be bringing in some of the winners and featuring them in their flyer in October, with bottle/pack shots too!

## WHAT CAN I ENTER IN THE ALBERTA BEVERAGE AWARDS?

The Alberta Beverage Awards are open to any alcoholic beverage available for retail sale in the province of Alberta.

Alberta-based products that are sold direct from the manufacturer, in farmers markets, and at retail are eligible too.

Recently, with the growth of non-alcoholic options, we have added categories for non-alcoholic wine, spirits, beers, and mixers.

**Entries are classified in these three broad categories:**

**Wine:** Any product (alcoholic or not) made from grapes or other fruit that is not distilled. Red, white, rosé wines, including sparkling wines and fortified wines, are eligible.

**Spirits:** Any distilled product such as gin, vodka, whisk(e)y, rum, tequila, or the like, including liqueurs.

**The Beer category includes (for entry management and fees):**

**Beer:** Any style of brewed beverage in any style that would be classified as beer.

**Cider:** alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages made from apples or other fruits. Flavoured ciders are also in this category.

**Mead:** Any honey-based beverage that is not distilled.

**Sake:** Any alcoholic rice-based product.

**Coolers:** A packaged product meant to be served cool, with any base, flavourings, or alcoholic strength. Carbonated or Non-Carbonated. Excluding beer or mead products.

**Mixers and Non Alcoholic Beverages:** This category is for any product that might be primarily used for a mixer in an alcoholic drink, or used as a non-alcoholic beverage, including bitters.

**Premade Cocktails:** Any premixed product having all the ingredients to classify as a cocktail in a single package.

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## SUBMISSIONS

Bottles will be photographed on-site, so please ensure that labels are current and in good repair. We have made arrangements with our photographer to provide these professional bottle shots at a small cost to interested parties.

## DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS

Samples can be delivered to the attention of our competition director, Tom Firth. Please contact him directly for address and/or to arrange a time:  
[tom@culinairemagazine.ca](mailto:tom@culinairemagazine.ca), 403-818-5304.

## WINE ENTRIES

For sample purposes, we require three bottles (750 ml or equivalent volume) of wine for judging. Entries are \$75 per wine less any applicable discount, as detailed on the entry worksheet. Note: For dessert wine entries, we require only two bottles, which includes wines typically available in small formats (i.e. ice wines).

## SPIRITS ENTRIES

For sample purposes, we require one bottle per entry or equivalent volume of spirits for judging. Entries are \$75 per entry less any applicable discount.

## BEER, CIDER, COOLERS, MIXERS, SAKE, AND MEAD

For sample purposes, we require one six-pack or equivalent volume of beer for judging. Entries are \$50 per entry less any applicable discount. Mixers, coolers, meads, sake (one bottle), non-alcoholic beverages, and coolers, are entered in the beer category.

A 10% discount will be offered for the submission of 12 or more entries (not applicable on top of IVSA discount), and for Alberta Craft producers entering more than 5 products.

For payment, please contact Linda Garson: [linda@culinairemagazine.ca](mailto:linda@culinairemagazine.ca)  
403-870-9802 with a credit card number or for interac email payments, cheques etc.

## 2021 TIMELINE

*PLEASE NOTE: due to the continuing developments of the COVID-19 Pandemic some dates may be subject to change. Please contact [tom@culinairemagazine.ca](mailto:tom@culinairemagazine.ca) for the most current dates.*

Registration opens: March 1

Registration closes: June 25

Product sample delivery ends: July 9

Judging begins: July 19

Judging ends: July 21

Results announced to winners: early August

Results published in October Culinaire Magazine and online at [culinairemagazine.ca](http://culinairemagazine.ca).

## QUESTIONS?

For more information please visit [culinairemagazine.ca/aba/faq](http://culinairemagazine.ca/aba/faq) or contact:

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and to be included in our update emails.

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