

Patrón Perfectionists cocktail competition back for 2023 with brand-new education programme

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At the beginning of this month, the international Patrón Perfectionists cocktail competition opened for 2023, bringing a new bartender education and engagement programme to South Africa. The programme gives mixologists a chance to showcase their skills and pursuit of perfectionism.



Patrón Perfectionists Global Finals 2022, Hacienda Patrón

As the cocktail competition has significantly broadened its reach and distinction in the mixology world, Patrón tequila has extended its long-standing commitment to inspire and support South African bartenders. Through the programme, mixologists will grow their skillset with the Academia Patrón Perfectionists Education Programme launch. This year, 19 countries and cruise liners will participate in the cocktail competition, with additional countries signing up for the global training modules and workshops.

While exciting new layers have been added to accompany participants on their journey to perfection, the core entry of the programme still asks bartenders to create a recipe reflecting their homes and the unwavering commitment to quality that goes into every drop of Patrón tequila.

The Academia Patrón Perfectionists Education Programme will allow the bartenders to appreciate that the best flavour develops slowly and naturally. Handcrafted to perfection, Patrón never takes shortcuts and uses only high-quality raw ingredients with zero additives.

The entire tequila-making process takes place at Hacienda Patrón, where only Patrón is made. Pride is taken in everything about it, especially in the people involved in making the world's finest tequila – it takes 60 hands from beginning to end to make one bottle of Patrón tequila.

The entry challenge, called Hometown Hero, requires entrants to develop a cocktail that blends Patrón Silver tequila with the

bartender's culture, using ingredients from a prescribed list. The initial entry submissions will be judged on appeal, appearance, inspiration, and originality.

"The Academia Patrón Perfectionists Education Programme was a real learning curve for me, not only in perfecting my bartending skills, but the entire process of making Patrón. One of my most significant lessons was that it is sourced from a specific species of plant that takes a really long time to mature, then we make something as delicious and authentic as tequila. Every entrant is bound to grow their skills, knowledge, and experience, just by participating," said last year's Patrón Perfectionist winner, Cassandra Eichhoff, hailing from Windhoek, Namibia.

Bartenders are invited to attend Academia Patrón Perfectionists Masterclasses, alongside other educational initiatives hosted throughout South Africa. Focusing on flavours, ingredients, techniques, and topical trends in the tequila category and mixology, the Patrón Masterclass modules support professional growth and the preparation for the Patrón Perfectionists competition entry.

Following the education and entry stages, 10 bartenders will be shortlisted for the national finals due to take place throughout November and December. This year's national finals will engage bartenders across various topics and challenges, and the bartenders' cumulative scores will determine the South African winner.

This year, a special Wild Card Entry will also be selected by a global judge from the contestants of the national finals. All national winners and the Wild Card winner will go on to the much-coveted global finals experience taking place at Hacienda Patrón, Mexico, in March 2023. During the global finals, bartenders will undertake a new series of challenges, testing each part of a bartender's skillset.

Cameron Hawkins, sub-Saharan Africa brand ambassador for Bacardi, said: "We are incredibly excited for the upcoming 2023 Patrón Perfectionists programme. Over the years, it has brought an invaluable contribution to the category thanks to the advocacy of bartenders creating and sharing outstanding Patrón recipes around the globe. We are lucky enough to call these bartenders our Patrón family, and we cannot wait to welcome many more. The bartenders who enter the Perfectionists competition have a common thirst for knowledge, growth, and connections. With this enhanced format, we will support them further throughout their journey as they strive for their vision of perfection," said Hawkins. This year's Patrón Perfectionists entries are open until 7 October 2022 and are to be submitted via the entry portal www.academiapatron.com/patronperfectionists.

South African finalists will be announced by mid-October and receive guidance on the upcoming national final events from Patrón.

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