



COMPETITION RULES

Barcelona Beer Challenge 2026

Preamble

The XI edition of the Barcelona Beer Challenge (BBC) is organised by Beer Events SL (BE), a company specialised in beer-related events. Its aim is to promote beer culture, highlighting its gastronomic and social aspects, and to encourage responsible consumption.

Among the main events organised by BE are:

- **Barcelona Beer Festival**, which this year celebrates its XV edition and is a benchmark for brewing industry in Southern Europe.
- **InnBrew: The Brewers Convention**, a professional meeting point for the sector.

These events support the BBC and provide it with media visibility.

The rules and all additional information regarding the BBC can be consulted on the website:

<http://www.barcelonabeerchallenge.com>

For any questions or clarifications, please contact the organisers at: info@barcelonabeerchallenge.com





Contest Presentation

Objectives:

The motivations behind the launch of the BBC competition are as follows:

- Promote and give value to quality beer.
- Encourage excellence in the sector by awarding a trophy to beers that meet high standards.
- Raise awareness of the diversity of recognised beer styles.
- Create a competitive environment for both national and international breweries.
- Support the internationalisation of local beer productions.
- Promote education and knowledge of quality beer among consumers.
- Reflect trends in the beer world at both national and international levels.
- Convey a message of variety and quality associated with the wide range of existing beers.
- Foster a culture of responsible consumption, highlighting beer as a gastronomic product.
- Establish a quality seal to recognise deserving beers, providing the public with a guiding tool for their consumption choices.



Who May Participate in the Competition

- Breweries that comply with the current legislation of their country regarding the production and marketing of beer.
- Beer brands that produce their products in facilities of a brewery with the appropriate permits to brew and market the product. A producer is not allowed to submit a beer made for another brand under their own name.

Entry Submission

To register, each participant must complete the form available on the competition’s website. www.barcelonabeerchallenge.com



The registration period
will close on 30/01/2026

The entry fees are detailed in the table below. The final cost will depend on the number of beers submitted.

Number of Beers Entered	Total Price (excluding VAT)	Unit Price per Beer (excluding VAT)
Entry for 1 Beer	126€	126 €
Entry for 2 Beers	190€	95 €
Entry for 3 Beers	237€	79€

From the fourth beer onwards, the cost will be €32 per additional beer.



Terms and Conditions of participation and registration

- Each participating brewery may enter a maximum of **15 beers**.
- The BBC organisers will confirm receipt of the entry by email. Participation will be considered formalised upon payment of the corresponding amount to BE (the organising company) for the beers entered.
- An invoice will be issued in the name of the entrant using the tax details provided in the registration form. It is the participant's responsibility to ensure the accuracy of the information supplied. The organisers reserve the right to verify the information provided through any legal procedures or actions they deem necessary.

Logistical Aspects

Receipt of Entered Beers

The period for receiving samples will be between the dates indicated below, inclusive of both days.

Beers received outside this period will not be accepted for the competition, and no refund of the entry fee will be granted.

START OF SAMPLE RECEIPT	FINAL OF SAMPLE RECEIPT
09/02/2026	20/02/2026

The organisers reserve the right to close entries before the deadline stated in these rules if the registration of 1,500 beer references is exceeded during the entry period.



Samples Required for Participation

For each beer entered in the competition, participants must provide **4 samples** of the product submitted.

Shipping Details

The shipping address will be provided at the time of registration. All shipping costs will be borne by the participant. Any additional logistical or customs charges arising from the shipment will not be covered by the organisers, but by the brewer/participant.

Shipping Recommendations

- Breweries within the EU: It is advised not to use the public postal service and to always work with private courier companies that guarantee delivery and assume responsibility for it.
- Breweries outside the EU: After pre-registration, the organisers will contact the brewery to assess the best way to ensure correct shipment and to provide information on the required documentation, additional costs, and possible delays at Spanish Customs.

Shipping Documentation and Responsibility

- It is recommended to accompany the sample box with a pro forma invoice identifying each package with the participating brewery, including a list of the beers submitted and stating “samples with no commercial value.”
- The organisers accept no responsibility for theft, loss, damage, or delays during shipping.
- Samples with partially or completely damaged packaging will not be accepted in the competition.



To avoid issues with the receipt of samples, it is recommended that the packaging of the entered beers is suitable for the handling carried out by the courier company.

Our Recommendation: Pack the bottles in an upright position, using appropriate packaging, with separators between the bottles, and clearly indicate on the outside of the package the fragility of the contents and the orientation in which the package should be kept throughout the transport process (preferably with markings such as “this side up” or arrows indicating the correct storage direction).

The BBC reserves the right to reject samples if any irregularities are detected upon receipt of the beers. The organisers will notify participants with the aim of rectifying the issue, as far as possible. Participants may be required to send new samples via express courier (provided there is a reasonable time margin).

Inspection and Storage of Received Samples

The organiser guarantees optimal storage of the samples received for participation in the competition, keeping them in a secure location, at the appropriate temperature and atmospheric conditions to ensure the proper preservation of the beers.

The BBC will organise the samples according to the style declaration associated with each one, as indicated in the registration form.

Samples that arrive outside the stipulated submission period, that have not been correctly registered, or that do not correspond to the registered product will not be presented in the competition.

Upon receipt of the samples, the organisers will verify that the beers comply with the labelling regulations in accordance with the production standards of the country of origin. The BBC reserves the right to reject samples that do not meet the specified requirements.



Internal Organisation of the Competition

The organisation of the BBC consists of three distinct bodies: the Steering Committee, the Technical Secretariat, and the Jury, to which the following functions are assigned:

Steering Committee

It serves as the highest decision-making body in the organisation of the BBC. Its mission is to ensure the proper development of the competition, as well as the coordination of the different areas that make it up.

The Committee is composed of the Beer Events team (the organising team of the Barcelona Beer Challenge).

Main tasks carried out by the Committee:

- Design of the strategic guidelines for the competition.
- Development of the governing rules, as set out in these regulations.
- Ensuring the proper conduct of the contest in accordance with the governing rules.
- Coordination of the different areas, particularly the Jury and the Technical Secretariat.
- Coordination with external stakeholders involved in the various phases of the competition (design, communication, etc.).
- Selection and appointment of the competition Jury.
- Analysis of the Jury evaluation data and proposal of winners.
- Supervision of the correct practical functioning of the competition (anonymity of samples, optimal service, elements facilitating proper tasting, etc.).

Technical Secretariat

It is responsible for carrying out all actions necessary for the proper conduct of the competition, implementing its strategic guidelines. In particular, it oversees registrations, invoicing, receipt of samples, organisation of the Jury sessions, and communication with all stakeholders involved.

Technical Secretariat: Anna Portavella Contact: aportavella@barcelonabeerchallenge.com



Jury

As the BBC is committed to the professionalisation of the sector, the competition Jury will consist solely of judges accredited with BJCP certification, and/or with experience and formal training related to beer tasting.

Their primary task is to evaluate the beers entered in accordance with the parameters established in these rules.

No member of the Jury will participate in any evaluation in which they have a commercial connection or interest (in relation to the beers being assessed).

Operation

Preliminary Checks

Once the organisers have verified that participants have strictly complied with the registration, payment, and beer submission deadlines, the beers will be evaluated within the appropriate competition category, according to the details provided by each participant at the time of registration.

Participants are advised to carefully review the style classification of the beers they submit. Each beer must be assigned a style and sub-style corresponding to the categories, which largely align with the standards of the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) or the annexes specified later.

The organisers reserve the right not to accept a beer in the competition if its registered category differs from the way it is usually marketed.



Competition Categories

Initially, 36 categories will be open, largely corresponding to those listed in the new BJCP 2021 regulations, plus some categories open at the organisers' discretion, based on their knowledge of the sector and the brewing landscape. In categories where more than 20 beers are entered, they will be divided into subcategories recognised in the same list and as indicated by participants during registration.

The categories that differ from the BJCP 2021 regulations are:

- 18X. Hazy Pale Ale**
- 18Y. Other Specialty Pale Ale (Milkshake, fruit & other)**
- 20X. Pastry Stout**
- 21B. Specialty IPA (X) Other Specialty IPA (Milkshake, Fruit & Other)**
- 21X. Session IPA**
- 22X. Hazy DIPa**
- 33X. Wood-Aged Beer**
- 33Y. Wood-Aged Imperial Stout**
- Y. Non Alcoholic Beer**

Note: Evaluation is carried out according to the updated BJCP categories, except for ciders and meads, which are not accepted in the competition.

The BBC reserves the right to combine beer categories if circumstances in the competition so require.



Conduct of Evaluations

The evaluation of the beers entered will take place on **27th and 28th February and 1st March 2026**.

Procedure for the evaluations:

- Beers will be presented anonymously to the Jury by staff assigned by the organisers.
- Each beer will be assigned a reference number to allow it to be identified by the organisers at all times.
- Entered beers will be tasted in comparison with other beers of the same style submitted to the competition.
- The serving temperature will be appropriate for proper tasting and evaluation of the beer.
- Samples will be evaluated following the criteria outlined in the BJCP and its annexes, taking into account the characteristics of each style according to its standards.
- The Jury will at all times have suitable means to cleanse the palate between tastings.
- The organisers will collect the completed evaluation sheets and tally the scores.
- The evaluations and scores of each entered beer will be treated as confidential information and safeguarded by the organisers. This information will only be provided to breweries that request the individual results for their beers, in the form of a summary sheet.



Competition System

Each competition category will be governed by different rounds, depending on the number of entries.

In the final phase (Final), individual awards will be granted for each competition category.

In the preliminary phases (Semifinals and Quarterfinals), no awards are given; three beers from each group will be selected to advance to the next round.

Number or registrations	Fases de competición
Until 10	Final
from 11 to 30	Semifinal and Final
more than 30	Quarterfinals, Semifinals and Final

Regardless of the number of rounds, the first time a beer entered is evaluated by a panel of judges, a numerical assessment will be carried out using the corresponding evaluation sheet and following the BJCP scoring system.

These results are binding for awarding medals or for determining whether the beer progresses to the next round, but under no circumstances will points be carried over or added to subsequent rounds.



Awards

The competition includes a series of individual beer awards by category, as well as three overall awards for each participating brewery.

Individual Awards

These will be granted to the three best beers in each category participating in the competition. Within each BBC beer category, the following will be awarded:

- Gold Medal
- Silver Medal
- Bronze Medal

Winners will be decided by the panel of judges assigned to evaluate the corresponding final. The Jury reserves the right to withhold medals if it considers that high-quality standards have not been met.

Platinum Award: A special award called the “Platinum Medal” will be granted to beers that, in the current edition, win a medal for the fifth time, regardless of the type of medals or the editions in which the other four were obtained.





Global Awards:

Best Brewery:



This will be awarded to the brewery that achieves the highest total score from all beers submitted, according to the following scale:

- 2 points for each Bronze Medal won
- 3 points for each Silver Medal won
- 5 points for each Gold Medal won



Rookie Brewery:

An award aimed at recognising and giving visibility to newly established breweries. This award will therefore be granted to the brewery that has launched its beer and/or opened its first facilities from 1st January 2023 onwards, and that achieves the highest total score from its medals, following the same conditions as the Award for Best Brewery described above.

In the event of a tie (in both cases), the ranking will be determined according to the following criteria, in order:

1. Highest number of Gold Medals.
2. Highest number of Silver Medals.
3. Best score achieved by the top beer.
4. Fewest number of beers entered.
5. Draw under the same conditions between the tied breweries.



Innovation award Mr Malt:

Thanks to the collaboration of Mr Malt, which supports brewers in their passion for craft beer, a special award recognising innovation in the brewing process is being presented for the seventh year.

This innovation will be assessed through various aspects, such as the choice of raw materials, brewing process, production, sustainability, and social responsibility, as well as the revival and reinvention of traditional styles. In short, all aspects that contribute innovation and quality to the submitted beer will be valued.

Each participating brewery may select one of its entered beers and explain, in an accompanying text to the registration, the innovation present in that beer.

In a first phase, the Steering Committee will select five finalists, which will then be presented to a Jury with specific expertise in brewing innovation, who will choose a single winner for the award.

Brewing Hope for a Better Future:

The award aims to recognize and celebrate craft breweries that are leading the change towards a more sustainable and inclusive future. Initiatives that demonstrate a genuine commitment to the environment, social responsibility, and innovation in the brewing sector will be valued. We are looking for different aspects of the same goal:

- **Environmental sustainability:** Practices that reduce ecological impact, such as the use of renewable energy, the reuse of by-products, or the reduction of emissions.
 - **Social responsibility:** Initiatives that promote social inclusion, support for the local community, or collaboration with solidarity causes.
 - **Sustainable innovation:** Creative projects that integrate new technologies or methods to improve sustainability in the beer production process.
- Educational and community impact: Actions that promote environmental and social awareness through workshops, activities, or educational campaigns.

This award is free for brewers thanks to the collaboration of Mr Malt, check the regulations [here](#)



Results:

In all cases, the final decision regarding the awarding of prizes will be final and binding. The awards will be presented at a public event, within the framework of InnBrew: The Brewers Convention 2025 and the XIII edition of the Barcelona Beer Festival 2025.

Subsequently, the results of the evaluations for the winning beers will be communicated by email.

Furthermore, the BBC organisers will communicate the competition results and the winning beers through press releases, social media, the BBC website, other digital media (blogs, portals, etc.), and communication agencies hired for this purpose.

The winners will receive:

- A trophy for each award granted.
- A logo (for each awarded beer) that can be used on labels, digital platforms, promotional materials, websites, etc.

The distinctive seal, which will provide information and help promote the awarded beers, will include the year of the BBC edition and cannot be used without this indication. The organisers reserve the right to withdraw the awarded title if this requirement is not met.

Other Aspects of the Regulations:

- The organisers may evaluate the authenticity of the awarded beer(s) by comparing them with samples of the same beer. In the event of serious doubt or evidence of substantial and recognisable differences between these beers, the organisers reserve the right to revoke any awards received. In such cases, the relevant legal authorities responsible for this type of fraud will be informed, the participant will be notified, and they will be expelled from the competition.
- Any leftover beer samples not used during the competition will not be returned to the producer or distributor and may be used for other promotional or training activities carried out by the competition organiser or affiliated companies.
- If the competition is cancelled due to circumstances beyond the organisers' control and arising unexpectedly, the organisers will not be held liable, and no compensation will be provided to participants. Under such circumstances, the organisers reserve the right to cancel the competition and/or change the date, with justification, and stipulate that there will be no compensation or refund of received samples.
- Registration (by completing the form available on the website and paying the corresponding fee) implies the express and unconditional acceptance of these regulations.
- In the event of any disputes with the organisers, the applicable law and jurisdiction will be that of the courts of Barcelona.



Annex: Competition Styles





1.STANDARD AMERICAN BEER

- 1A. American Light Lager
- 1B. American Lager
- 1C. Cream Ale
- 1D. American Wheat Beer

2.INTERNATIONAL LAGER

- 2A. International Pale Lager
- 2B. International Amber Lager
- 2C. International Dark Lager

3.CZECH LAGER

- 3A. Czech Pale Lager
- 3B. Czech Premium Pale Lager
- 3C. Czech Amber Lager
- 3D. Czech Dark Lager

4.PALE MALTY EUROPEAN LAGER

- 4A. Munich Helles
- 4B. Festbier
- 4C. Helles Bock

5.PALE BITTER EUROPEAN BEER

- 5A. German Leichtbier
- 5B. Kölsch
- 5C. German Helles Exportbier
- 5D. German Pils

6.AMBER MALTY EUROPEAN LAGER

- 6A. Märzen
- 6B. Rauchbier
- 6C. Dunkles Bock

7.AMBER BITTER EUROPEAN BEER

- 7A. Vienna Lager
- 7B. Altbier

8.DARK EUROPEAN LAGER

- 8A. Munich Dunkel
- 8B. Schwarzbier

9.STRONG EUROPEAN BEER

- 9A. Doppelbock
- 9B. Eisbock
- 9C. Baltic Porter

10. GERMAN WHEAT BEER

- 10A. Weissbier
- 10B. Dunkles Weissbier
- 10C. Weizenbock

11.BRITISH BITTER

- 11A. Ordinary Bitter
- 11B. Best Bitter
- 11C. Strong Bitter

12.PALE COMMONWEALTH BEER

- 12A. British Golden Ale
- 12B. Australian Sparkling Ale
- 12C. English IPA

13.BROWN BRITISH BEER

- 13A. Dark Mild
- 13B. British Brown Ale
- 13C. English Porter

14.SCOTTISH ALE

- 14A. Scottish Light
- 14B. Scottish Heavy
- 14C. Scottish Export

15. IRISH BEER

- 15A. Irish Red Ale
- 15B. Irish Stout
- 15C. Irish Extra Stout

16. DARK BRITISH BEER

- 16A. Sweet Stout
- 16B. Oatmeal Stout
- 16C. Tropical Stout
- 16D. Foreign Extra Stout



17.STRONG BRITISH ALE

- 17A. English Strong Ale
- 17B. Old Ale
- 17C. Wee Heavy
- 17D. English Barley Wine

18.PALE AMERICAN ALE

- 18A. Blonde Ale
- 18B. American Pale Ale
- 18X. Hazy Pale Ale
- 18Y. Other Specialty Pale Ale (Milkshake, fruit & other)

19.AMBER AND BROWN AMERICAN BEER

- 19A. American Amber Ale
- 19B. California Common
- 19C. American Brown Ale

20.AMERICAN PORTER AND STOUT

- 20A. American Porter
- 20B. American Stout
- 20C. Imperial Stout
- 20X. Pastry Stout

21.IPA

- 21A. American IPA
- 21B. Specialty IPA
 - Specialty IPA (B1): Belgian IPA
 - Specialty IPA (B2): Black IPA
 - Specialty IPA (B3): Brown IPA
 - Specialty IPA (B4): Red IPA
 - Specialty IPA (B5): Rye IPA
 - Specialty IPA (B6): White IPA
 - Specialty IPA (B7): Brut IPA
 - Specialty IPA (B8) Other Specialty IPA (Milkshake, Fruit & Other)
- 21C. Hazy IPA
- 21X. Session IPA

22. STRONG AMERICAN ALE

- 22A. Double IPA
- 22B. American Strong Ale
- 22C. American Barleywine
- 22D. Wheatwine
- 22X. Hazy DIPA

23.EUROPEAN SOUR ALE

- 23A. Berliner Weisse
- 23B. Flanders Red Ale
- 23C. Oud Bruin
- 23D. Lambic
- 23E. Gueuze
- 23F. Fruit Lambic
- 23G. Gose

24.BELGIAN ALE

- 24A. Witbier
- 24B. Belgian Pale Ale
- 24C. Bière de Garde

25.STRONG BELGIAN ALE

- 25A. Belgian Blond Ale
- 25B. Saison
- 25C. Belgian Golden Strong Ale

26. MONASTIC ALE

- 26A. Belgian Single
- 26B. Belgian Dubbel
- 26C. Belgian Tripel
- 26D. Belgian Dark Strong Ale



27.HISTORICAL BEER

Historical Beer (A1): Kellerbier

Historical Beer (A2): Kentucky Common

Historical Beer (A3): Lichtenhainer

Historical Beer (A4): London Brown Ale

Historical Beer (A5) Piwo Grodziskie

Historical Beer (A6): Pre-Prohibition Lager

Historical Beer (A7): Pre-Prohibition Porter

Historical Beer (A8): Roggenbier

Historical Beer (A9): Sahti

28.AMERICAN WILD ALE

28A. Brett Beer

28B. Mixed-Fermentation Sour Beer

28C. Wild Specialty Beer

28D. Straight Sour Beer

29.FRUIT BEER

29A. Fruit Beer

29B. Fruit and Spice Beer

29C. Specialty Fruit Beer

29D. Grape Ale

30.SPICED BEER

30A. Spice, Herb, or Vegetable Beer

30B. Autumn Seasonal Beer

30C. Winter Seasonal Beer

30D. Specialty Spice Beer

31.ALTERNATIVE FERMENTABLES BEER

31A. Alternative Grain Beer

31B. Alternative Sugar Beer

32.SMOKED BEER

32A. Classic Style Smoked Beer

32B. Specialty Smoked Beer

33.WOOD BEER

33X. Wood-Aged Beer

33Y. Wood-Aged Imperial Stout

34.SPECIALTY BEER

34A. Commercial Specialty Beer

34B. Mixed-Style Beer

34C. Experimental Beer

X .LOCAL STYLES

X4. Catharina Sour (Brazilian)

X5. New Zealand Pilsner

Y. Non Alcoholic Beer



More information
info@barcelonabeerchallenge.com
www.barcelonabeerchallenge.com