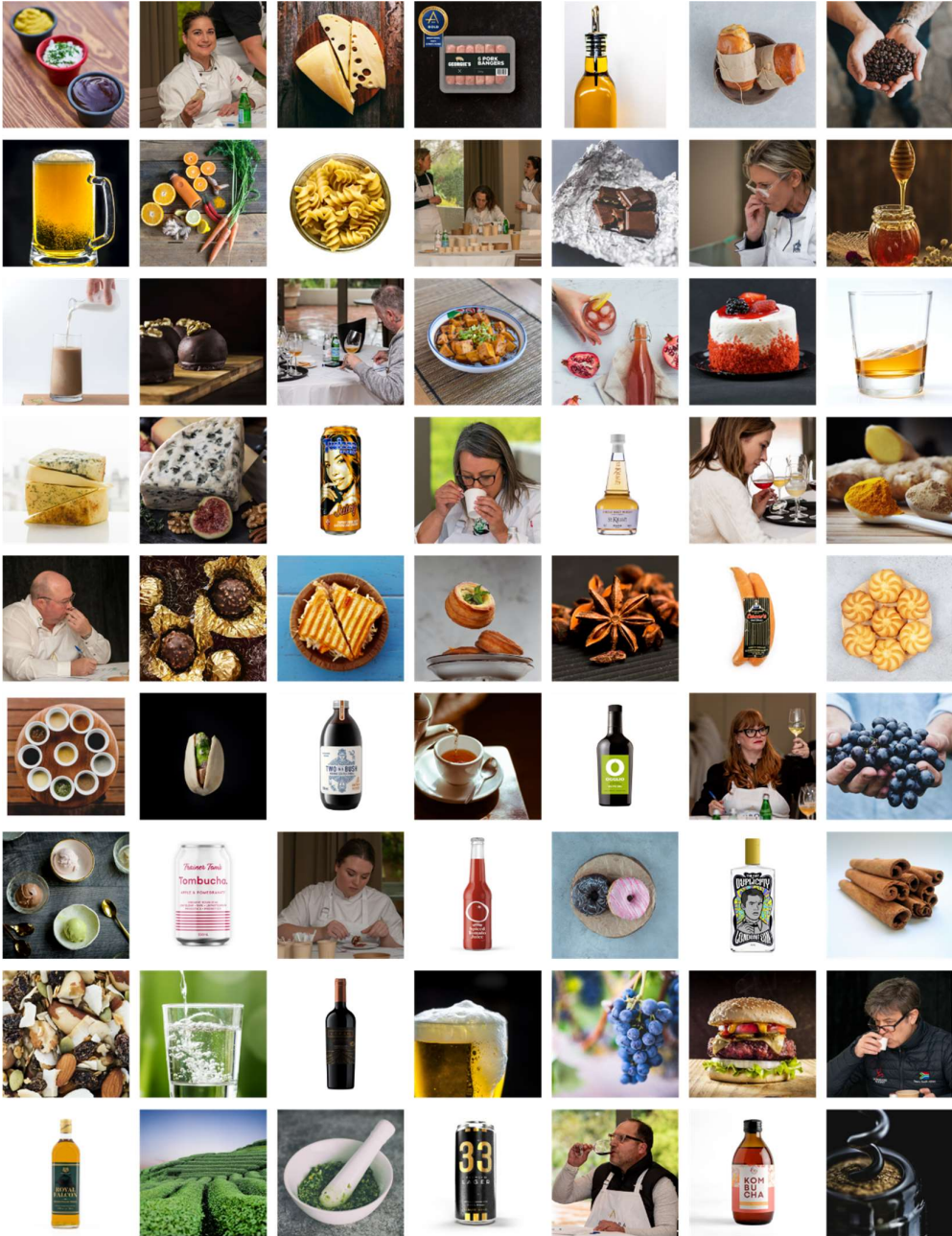


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AURORA

INTERNATIONAL TASTE CHALLENGE

GUIDE TO ENTERING AND PARTICIPATING IN THE 2025 AITC





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About this event

The Aurora International Taste Challenge (AITC) was established to recognise and award food and drink excellence internationally while helping consumers purchase award-winning, expertly rated products with confidence. In 2025, the AITC will again be held in South Africa to celebrate and honour universal food quality.

While many consumers are brand loyal, most would pick another product if they were provided with fair ratings on alternative products. Some people may be willing to invest in more expensive or wise choices. The awards that are conferred during this event would significantly enhance their perception of these products.

The AITC will award merit and trophy awards to exceptional products available worldwide. We are proud to be setting new industry standards.

What are the advantages of being awarded?

- An award shows that your product was evaluated and awarded by independent third-party chefs, sommeliers and food experts, supporting your claims of superior quality.
- Awards are a symbol of quality to use in marketing – Artwork can be downloaded for free.
- You will receive an award certificate. If the same product is marketed under different brand names, you can receive extra certificates for those at no extra cost.
- 3 Year international non-exclusive licence to use the award.





- An award will serve as content for social media and PR campaigns.
- An award will highlight the brand's prestige and standing.
- An award could just give you that extra edge you needed, making a buying decision so much easier.

What are the awards that can be achieved?

Superior products will be granted Silver, Gold and Double Gold awards to recognise products with excellent taste. Trophy awards are very rarely awarded. These producers will be able to display this award artwork on the product itself, in digital and print media for a period of three years from when the awards are granted, as long as the quality of the product does not change from that of the original sample, and dependent on the terms of a non-exclusive licence agreement.

Trophy awards will also be conferred on products that are truly exceptional, and top of their class.



Stickers may be purchased from the organisers and may not be printed by any other party. Only Silver, Gold and Double Gold stickers will be printed by the AITC.

There will be only one print run, and extra stickers will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

The sticker artwork may however be incorporated in packaging, as long as the artwork is not used on its own to represent a free-standing sticker.

Examples of sticker artwork.





Representation of what the individual stickers will look like:



When printing the stickers, there is a very high standard involved, with the printing, paper and foiling.

Basic steps towards entering and achieving an award:

- Register online and thereby create an account.
- Read all about the entry process below and enter your products online.
- Make payment for your entries.
- Send your samples at the appropriate time for the judges to receive them in time.
- Judging process
- Results are released

Key Dates

- Registration and entries open - 25 March 2025
- Early bird close - 23 May 2025 (After this the Regular entry fee applies)
- Final Close for International entries – 20 June 2025
- Final Close for Local entries – 4 July 2025
- Final Close for Olive and Olive Oil
- The cut-off date to pay entries - 11 July 2025 - Entries that are not paid at this final date might be cancelled.

- First delivery option (2 days): Delivery of samples to the venue outside Stellenbosch, South Africa - 21 and 22 July 2025 (Monday and Tuesday).
- Second delivery option (45-day delivery window – from 2 June to 18 July 2025) - to DHL Paarl, and Stellenbosch, South Africa, for samples arriving from afar.
- Third delivery option (window of many months), any time before the sample tasting, until 18 July 2025, for samples sent early, to make sure they arrive on time.
- Results released on 30 July 2025, accept Olive and Olive oil results, released on 200 August 2025.

Early bird entry fee - R1510 excluding VAT (approximately USD95 or EUR90 depending on the exchange rate)

Regular entry fee - R1895 excluding VAT (approximately USD120 or EUR110 depending on the exchange rate)





Registration

- Registration is done online at <https://rtd.aurorachallenge.com/index.php?section=register&go=entrant>
- The event is open to food and drinks producers, but if the entrant is not the producer, consent must be obtained from the manufacturer to enter their products, and must include an agreement to abide by the rules of the event.
- It is the responsibility of the person entering the awards, to be available by email at all times to receive emails during the process, from registration, entering, delivery and when the results are released.
- To avoid missing any emails, or correspondence, it is the responsibility of entrants to add the domain "aurorachallenge.com" to the safe sender's list, to avoid missing any correspondence. In Outlook, go to the "Home" Tab, and in the "Delete" group, select the arrow next to "Junk". Select "Junk Email Options". In the "Junk Email Options" dialogue box, go to the "Safe Senders" tab. Select Add. Add the domain aurorachallenge.com and click "OK". The domain will then appear on the safe sender's list. Select "OK".

Entering your product



What are the product categories?

Non-alcoholic drinks evaluated will include many categories, including:

- Water – both Flavoured and Unflavoured
- Drinks to be prepared (concentrate, powder etc.)
- Kombucha
- Kefir Water
- All kinds of non-alcoholic drinks

Alcoholic drink categories evaluated will include among many others:

- Beer
- Cider
- Mead





- Wine
 - Spirits
 - Liqueurs
 - Wine and Spirit Coolers
 - Jello Shots
 - Any type of ready to drink product, including CBD infused products.
-
- Food products:
 - Table Olives
 - Olive Oil (extra virgin olive oil) - unflavoured and flavoured
 - Other types of oil - unflavoured and flavoured
 - Coffee
 - Tea
 - Meat products
 - Dairy products
 - Sauces, dressing and condiments incl balsamic vinegar and soy sauce
 - Convenience Food
 - Baked Goods (both premixed for preparation and baked) and confectionary
 - Snacks
 - Breakfast cereal
 - Pasta
 - Chocolate
 - Confectionary
 - Preserves, Spreads, Honey and Syrups
 - Salt, herbs, spices, Dukkah and mixtures

There are numerous subcategories, but entrants are welcome to create their own, to showcase their own unique products.

Before you enter your products, please read through these questions and answers, and gather the necessary details about each entry.

What constitutes one entry? Can I enter more than one flavour per entry?

One entry comprises one variation of a product, for example, banana flavour, and strawberry flavour versions would be two different entries. If there are flavour, taste or chemical differences between products, they would constitute separate entries. When in doubt: One flavour = one entry.

If the same product that is chemically, and taste-wise identical, comes in different forms of packaging (for example glass and plastic refills) or in different sizes (250 ml, 500 ml etc.), they only have to be entered once in whichever size presented. We will provide additional personalised certificates for all the packaging sizes if necessary, but the certificate is normally made out to the product, and not the particular packaging format.





If the same product (that is chemically and flavour-wise identical), is available under different brand names, the product may only be entered once, and we will provide additional personalised certificates to all the brand names if the product is awarded.

The same product cannot be entered twice. For example, Coffee that is available in different formats, for example, pods, beans and ground coffee may only be entered once, and if awarded, we will provide additional certificates to represent all formats.

- The same product may not be entered by different parties or people.
- A product may only be entered into one category per year.
- Products that contain CBD and THC may enter, and if it is not stated in the category entered, please mention it after the name of the product.
- Please include the flavour or any other distinguishing details of your products after the name of your product, for us to be able to identify every product afterwards.
- Products that are entered must be sensorially and chemically identical to commercial products they represent in every practical way.
- Companies may enter as many products as they want.
- You are welcome to choose your own category or contact us.
- The organisers may change the category of the product to a category more suitable for judging at their own discretion.

Photo of product - pack shot

When you enter, you are asked to upload photos of the products that can later be used on social media to promote the winners. It is highly advised to upload an image to make use of the opportunity, but it is not compulsory.

The photo/graphic should have the following characteristics.

- Square image with a product in the centre with a white or see-through background.
- The product featured should be the exact product entered.
- The photo must feature the product alone without any decoration, accompaniments, or text.
- Besides the product in its own packaging, the photo should not show any other company or product logos.
- Photos that do not adhere to these criteria might not be used.
- The image should measure 1080 x 1080 pixels or more.





Preparation of products before judging

Products that have to be prepared will be prepared using basic kitchen essentials like milk, egg, flour, olive oil, cooking oil, salt and pepper, and will be served with no more than one other base ingredient like lettuce, tofu and pasta.

Registration FAQs

I cannot find the account we registered.

Every year, the details of companies change, or we need additional information. We, therefore, require all companies to register afresh every year. If you have registered for the year, please see the question below.

I forgot my username or password. What can I do?

When you register, you receive an email with your username and password. Please search for this email, and if necessary look in your spam folder.

To avoid missing any emails, or correspondence, it is the responsibility of entrants to add the domain "aurorachallenge.com" to the safe sender's list, to avoid missing any correspondence. In Outlook, go to the "Home" Tab, and in the "Delete" group, select the arrow next to "Junk". Select "Junk Email Options". In the "Junk Email Options" dialogue box, go to the "Safe Senders" tab. Select Add. Add the domain aurorachallenge.com and click "OK". The domain will then appear on the safe sender's list. Select "OK".

If you cannot find your login details, please contact us.





Will you have a show for people/companies to attend?

The Aurora International Taste Challenge is not a trade show or public event. Only the organisers and judges are present.

There will be no prize-giving ceremony or trade / public tasting afterwards.

Paying for entries:

Once entries have been completed, the entrant may print the invoice for the entry fees online, after logging into their account.

Payment will be done in South African Rand (ZAR), and overseas payments can easily be made using several different methods (including EUR and USD options).

There are several ways to pay:

- EFT payments to bank. Only for local payments in ZAR
- Payfast online payment – Some credit cards, including American Express, not accepted.
- PayPal - All credit cards, including American Express, accepted in USD and EUR.

Foreign currency invoices may only be paid by non-South African companies and individuals.

Once you have paid your entry fee, there are no follow-up fees unless you want to order stickers.

You are responsible for all costs associated with delivering the samples.

Entries that are not fully paid by the cut-off date may be disqualified. Samples of disqualified products will not be judged or returned.

No refund of entry fees will be done once entries have closed. If the entry is withdrawn, or if the sample does not arrive in time, no refund will be given. It is the responsibility of the entrant to manage entries and delivery, to make sure the correct samples arrive on time, and only samples that all samples that have to be judged are delivered on time.

Sending and delivery of samples:

What are the dates and entry fees?

Registration and entries open - 25 March 2025

Early bird close - 23 May 2025 (After this the Regular entry fee applies)

Final Close for International entries – 20 June 2025

Final Close for Local entries – 4 July 2025





The cut-off date to pay entries - 11 July 2025 - Entries that are not paid at this final date might be cancelled.

- First delivery option (2-day delivery window): General Sample delivery: 21 and 22 July 2025 to tasting venue just outside Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- Second delivery option (45-day delivery window – from 2 June to 18 July 2025) - to DHL Paarl, and Stellenbosch, South Africa, for samples arriving from afar.
- Third delivery option (window of many months), any time before the sample tasting, until 18 July 2025, to Stellenbosch, for samples sent early, to make sure they arrive on time.

Results released on 30 July 2025, except Olive and Olive oil results, released on 20 August 2025.

Early bird entry fee - R1510 excluding VAT (approximately USD95 or EUR90 depending on the exchange rate).

Regular entry fee - R1895 excluding VAT (approximately USD95 or EUR110 depending on the exchange rate).

Stickers will be available to be used with winning products at R470.00 excluding VAT (approximately USD30 or EUR27 depending on the exchange rate).

Will samples that need to be refrigerated, kept frozen or kept cool be appropriately received and stored?

Our system is set up to respect the cold chain when we receive samples. All sampling receiving procedures are geared to allow for cool room temperature, refrigeration or freezing storage conditions as needed.

We will ensure products are handled with the utmost respect and delicacy to maximise quality until the product is evaluated.

Do you have a preferred sender?

We have two preferred suppliers, namely [DHL](#) and [Jet8](#). DHL covers the whole world, while [Jet8](#) specialises in countries like **Japan, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Canada**.

You may use any courier you choose, but DHL and JET8 are our preferred partners, especially for samples that come from overseas. They have intimate knowledge of local conditions, and when there are problems, we have a direct line of communication with them, whereas other couriers may not jump to the task. It is up to you.

When making use of **DHL**, please contact Marijke Douglas by email at <mailto:Marijke.Douglas@dhl.com> or phone her on +27 (0)21 872 4717 for more details.





When using **JET8**, please contact Momo Arai by email at event@jet8cargo.com

Where and when do the samples need to arrive

There are three delivery options:

- First Option (2-day window – 21 and 22 July 2025) - for samples located close to the event in Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- Second delivery option (45-day delivery window – from 2 June to 18 July 2025) - to DHL Paarl, and Stellenbosch, South Africa, for samples arriving from afar.
- Third delivery option (window of many months), any time before the sample tasting, until 18 July 2025, for samples sent early, to make sure they arrive on time.

First Option (2-day window) - for samples located close to the event

Samples must be delivered between 09:00 and 16:00 on 21 and 22 July 2025.

Participants may use any courier, but please ensure that samples are delivered to:

The Aurora International Taste Challenge
C/o Michelle Grimbeek
The Conference Centre
Klein Joostenberg
R304 Muldersvlei
Koelenhof Road
Stellenbosch
South Africa
Map reference: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/d8FqZcKnd1CETfg76>

The person receiving the samples:

Michelle Grimbeek
Email: michelle@tppromotions.co.za
Mobile: +27 (0)82 773 0738

GPS coordinates: - 33 82' 66 21 S / 18 79" 55 15 W

Samples must be delivered between 9:00 and 16:00 on the two days allocated (21 and 22 July 2025).

Second Delivery option:

Second delivery option (45-day delivery window – from 2 June to 18 July 2025) - to DHL Paarl, and Stellenbosch, South Africa, for samples arriving from afar.

When sending samples that need to remain at a constant temperature during the cold chain, discuss the appropriate packaging and shipping option with DHL to ensure the products do not arrive over a weekend when no cold chain facilities are available.





Please send samples to:

DHL Paarl
35 Zandwyk Park
Old Paarl Road
Paarl
South Africa
For the attention of The Aurora International Taste Challenge
Tank Town Promotions (Pty) Ltd
Customs Reg # 21782915
VAT # 4160278406
C/o Marijke Douglas
Map reference: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/YnurDXHgMTbrapEu9>

DHL will consolidate the samples to make sure they are delivered on time.

Products from outside South Africa need the necessary time to clear customs. Also, add the wording: "Samples of no commercial value - for attention The Aurora International Taste Challenge C/o Marijke Douglas".

Please allow at least two weeks for samples to clear the port authority.

Third delivery option (any time as long as it arrives in time – even if it arrives before 18 July 2025)

Send the samples to:

Tank Town Promotions (Pty) Ltd
Customs Reg # 21782915
VAT # 4160278406
9 Forest Road
Welgevonden
Stellenbosch
7600
South Africa
Map reference: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/G2zMtUZ7GYyNTHec9>

C/o Louis Nel
Mobile: +27 (0)82 775 87 26

Courier please phone ahead for a PIN

International spirits/wine/liqueurs and alcoholic beverage samples that are sent by courier, should have every package and way bill marked as, "NOT FOR RESALE. SAMPLES ONLY".

The transport cost of samples, as well as import duty and customs costs, are for the entrant's account. The alcohol level of the samples has to be indicated on the commercial invoice, especially if the product is something that would normally have alcohol (like alcohol-free beer or gin) because it is used to determine the tariff codes. The event organisers will not be responsible for any costs





related to receiving the samples. Shipments must be shipped DDP, and the shipping documents must be made out to the following consignee:

Tank Town Promotions (Pty) Ltd

Customs Reg # 21782915

VAT # 4160278406

9 Forest Road

Welgevonden

Stellenbosch

7600

South Africa

Co. Louis Nel

Mobile: +27 (0)82 775 87 26

Your courier company will have to take care of every aspect of the journey, including the time the samples may be at the port authority. The AITC does not intervene or facilitate any aspects of transport, except receiving the samples at the designated locations.

We have two preferred suppliers, namely [DHL](#) and [Jet8](#). DHL covers the whole world, while [Jet8](#) specialises in countries like **Japan, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Canada**.

For DHL, please contact Marijke Douglas at DHL by email at <mailto:Marijke.Douglas@dhl.com> or contact her at +27 (0)21 872 4717 for more details.

When making use of **JET8**, please contact Momo Arai by email at event@jet8cargo.com

You do not need to be registered by a certain body, like the FDA, for example. You will need a commercial invoice with realistic values for the products. For samples with a volume of above 12 litres, special arrangements have to be made.

To make sure alcoholic samples arrive in time, the samples can be sent way ahead of time, earlier than that indicated for other samples. Always indicate the alcohol percentage with alcoholic products, and even products that do not contain alcohol, like alcohol-free gin, that might be confused with alcoholic gin.

Can we send our samples very early to make sure they arrive in time?

Yes, if you would like to send your samples at any time as long as it arrives in time – even if it arrives early, this is the address:

Tank Town Promotions (Pty) Ltd

Customs Reg # 21782915

VAT # 4160278406

9 Forest Road

Welgevonden

Stellenbosch





7600
South Africa

Co. Louis Nel
Mobile: +27 (0)82 775 87 26

International spirits/wine/liqueurs and alcoholic beverage samples that are sent by courier, should have every package and way bill marked as, "NOT FOR RESALE. SAMPLES ONLY".

Your courier company will have to take care of every aspect of the journey, including the time the samples may be at the port authority. The AITC does not intervene or facilitate any aspects of transport, except receiving the samples at the designated locations.

The transport cost of samples, as well as import duty and customs costs, are for the entrant's account. The alcohol level of the samples has to be indicated on the commercial invoice, especially if the product is something that would normally have alcohol (like alcohol-free beer or gin) because it is used to determine the tariff codes. The event organisers will not be responsible for any costs related to receiving the samples. Shipments must be shipped DDP, and the shipping documents must be made out to the following consignee:

Tank Town Promotions (Pty) Ltd

Customs Reg # 21782915
VAT # 4160278406
9 Forest Road
Welgevonden
Stellenbosch
7600
South Africa

Co. Louis Nel
Mobile: +27 (0)82 775 87 26

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Please contact Marijke Douglas at **DHL** by email at Marijke.Douglas@dhl.com or contact her at +27 (0)21 872 4717 for more details.

When making use of **JET8**, please contact Momo Arai by email at event@jet8cargo.com

You do not need to be registered by a certain body, like the FDA, for example. You will need a commercial invoice with realistic values for the products. For samples with a volume of above 12 litres, special arrangements have to be made.

To make sure alcoholic samples arrive in time, the samples can be sent way ahead of time, earlier than that indicated for other samples. Always indicate the alcohol percentage with alcoholic





products, and even products that do not contain alcohol, like alcohol-free gin, that might be confused with alcoholic gin.

General delivery instructions

Products that are sent that have to maintain the cold chain, need to be packed accordingly, and overnight services can be used.

Late entries might not be accepted.

It is the responsibility of the entrant to work closely with their courier or postal service to know which products are allowed over borders, and which need special permission or certificates. Honey, for example, is only allowed if radiated.

Only samples that are within their Sell-by/Best Before/ Use by date will be judged, and will otherwise be disqualified.

Products that arrive that have damage to their packaging, or that pose the faintest threat of being spoilt, will be disqualified without exception. Robust products, like for example canned goods that have a few dents, will be allowed.

Packaging material involved with the shipping of samples will not be returned.

Entries that arrive too late to be judged, or entries that are cancelled for any reason, will not be returned.

Is there a specific procedure involved in sending alcohol to South Africa?

International spirits/wine/liqueurs and alcoholic beverage samples that are sent by courier, should have every package and way bill marked as, "NOT FOR RESALE. SAMPLES ONLY".

Provide a copy of Commercial invoice via e-mail to your courier company: **4 July 2025**.

Latest deadline for arrival in South Africa for Port Health & Customs clearance: **7 July 2025**

The transport cost of samples, as well as import duty and customs costs, are for the entrant's account. The alcohol level of the samples has to be indicated on the commercial invoice, especially if the product is something that would normally have alcohol (like alcohol-free beer or gin) because it is used to determine the tariff codes. The event organisers will not be responsible for any costs related to receiving the samples. Shipments must be shipped DDP, and the shipping documents must be made out to the following consignee:

Tank Town Promotions (Pty) Ltd
Customs Reg # 21782915
VAT # 4160278406
9 Forest Road





Welgevonden
Stellenbosch
7600
South Africa

Your courier company will have to take care of every aspect of the journey, including the time the samples may be at the port authority. The AITC does not intervene or facilitate any aspects of transport, except receiving the samples at the designated locations.

We have two preferred suppliers, namely [DHL](#) and [Jet8](#). DHL covers the whole world, while [Jet8](#) specialises in countries like **Japan, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Canada**.

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To make sure alcoholic samples arrive in time, the samples can be sent way ahead of time, earlier than that indicated for other samples. Always indicate the alcohol percentage with alcoholic products, and even products that do not contain alcohol, like alcohol-free gin, that might be confused with alcoholic gin.

How is customs duty and value-added-tax get calculated when sending samples?

There are both import duty (customs and excise tariff) and value-added tax (VAT) of 15% on the value of the samples, based on what somebody would pay if they bought the samples in a store.

VAT is presently levied at the standard rate of 15%. To calculate VAT on imported goods, the Added Tax Value (ATV) needs to be determined first. This is done as follows : (Customs Rand Value (ZAR - On date of exchange) + 10% thereof + (any non-rebated duties levied on the goods) = [ATV] x 15% (VAT payable) The customs duty/import duty varies on different products, and it is normally between 10-25%. For a list of the different import duty levels, please visit [this page](#)

All samples should be sent, with import duty, VAT, courier, and all other costs already paid. There may be an additional cost involved for inspections by the authorities, which cannot be predicted.

The import duty will be on the value of the product, which should be stated as something realistic. This should be the value of the product if it was bought in South Africa, minus VAT. Customs do not accept a zero value or something that is obviously too low. If customs ask for a price list from the producer, the value of the samples should make sense.



You can send samples at any time before the event, for them to arrive in time to:

Tank Town Promotions (Pty) Ltd
Customs Reg # 21782915
VAT # 4160278406
9 Forest Road
Welgevonden
Stellenbosch
7600
South Africa

The import duty may vary from country to country, so it would be best to make sure about these sums with your courier company.

The 10% mark-up on the customs value in this calculation is applicable when goods are imported from a country outside the Customs Union. For goods from any of the BLNS countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia or Swaziland), the 10% will not be added to the calculation.

Please allow at least two weeks for samples to be cleared by the Port Health Authority and Customs. Please make sure of couriers who will be able to handle the paperwork required to make this process smooth, and who will be able to provide additional paperwork if necessary.

Example of VAT and duty calculation:

A bottle of olive oil sells for ZAR115.00 (including 15% VAT) in South Africa.

Without VAT, the value of each bottle is ZAR100.00.

The duty on the ZAR100.00 bottle of olive oil is 10%, i.e. ZAR10.00.

The VAT is worked out as follows:

Customs Rand Value (On date of exchange) + 10% thereof + (any non-rebated duties levied on the goods)

= [ATV] x 15% (VAT payable)

= ZAR100.00 + 10% + duty(10%) x 15.%

=ZAR100.00 + ZAR10.00 + ZAR10.00(duty) x 15%

=VAT on ZAR120.00 =ZAR18.00



The duty + VAT = ZAR10.00 + VAT ZAR18.00 = ZAR28.00.

For the local currency, the South African Rand, the abbreviations are both "R" and "ZAR", for example R100.00 or ZAR100.00

Please double-check all calculations with people who are qualified to do this. This event does not take any responsibility for any errors in calculations shown here, or anywhere else. These are mere examples, and final calculations must be made by qualified people.

What documents do I have to send from overseas?

For every country, this is different, so it is best to liaise with your courier company regarding this to make sure you are covered.

Normally, the paperwork needed is not that complicated, but we know of the following two instances where extra paperwork is needed:

- For dairy products, you need a veterinary certificate and an import permit.
- Honey needs to be radiated, and you need an import certificate.

It is, however, best to consult your courier/transport company to make sure.

We have two preferred suppliers, namely [DHL](#) and [Jet8](#). DHL covers the whole world, while [Jet8](#) specialises in countries like **Japan, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Canada**.

Please contact Marijke Douglas at DHL by email at Marijke.Douglas@dhl.com or contact her at +27 (0)21 872 4717 for more details.

When making use of **JET8**, please contact Momo Arai by email at event@jet8cargo.com

Provide a copy of Commercial invoice via e-mail to your courier company: **4 July 2025**.

Latest deadline for arrival in South Africa for Port Health & Customs clearance: **7 July 2025**

DOCUMENT REQUIREMENT:

Detailed Commercial invoice for customs clearance with a reasonable value declared for customs clearance. A template for easy reference is attached, with clear indication of Importer of Record and Delivery address. The Delivery address will be the address information for your shipping air way bill.

CASE MARKINGS:

For easy identification of exhibits, all packages must be marked as follows:

The Aurora International Taste Challenge





Name of Exhibitor: _____

Gross / Net Weight: _____

Dimensions: _____

Number of Cartons: _____

Cold storage required at destination: YES / NO

International samples that are sent by courier, should have every package and way bill marked as, "NOT FOR RESALE. SAMPLES ONLY".

The transport cost of samples, as well as import duty and customs costs, are for the entrant's account. The alcohol level of the samples has to be indicated on the commercial invoice, especially if the product is something that would normally have alcohol (like alcohol-free beer or gin) because it is used to determine the tariff codes. The event organisers will not be responsible for any costs related to receiving the samples. Shipments must be shipped DDP, and the shipping documents must be made out to the following consignee:

Tank Town Promotions (Pty) Ltd
Customs Reg # 21782915
VAT # 4160278406
9 Forest Road
Welgevonden
Stellenbosch
7600
South Africa

We have to stress how important the courier company is to transporting your samples. They can be the difference between success, and failure to arrive.

Do taxes and customs fees only relate to imports?

Only samples sent from outside of South Africa will accrue taxes, clearance and customs fees.

Is there a reduced-price option through DHL?

Because DHL consolidates deliveries, the prices will be reduced. Make sure you arrange with Marijke at Marijke.Douglas@dhl.com or phone her on +27 (0)21 872 4717 to get the necessary details.

Overnight deliveries and deliveries from outside of South Africa will be at normal DHL rates.

Can I send samples in dry ice?





Couriers are very wary about dry ice because the expanding CO2 can cause an explosion due to the pressure build up. We have had local samples arrive in dry ice, but it is generally not an option.

The samples needed for the different categories will be as follows:

Baked Goods and Confectionary

- For all baked goods and confectionary, a minimum of 2 separate containers/packets containing samples, with a minimum combined weight of 400 grams is needed.
- Please respect the cold chain at all times when sending samples.

Beer, Cider and Mead

- Each entry requires a minimum of two samples, with a minimum total combined volume of 400ml.
- These samples need to be in their final bottled/packaged format, and no tank samples are allowed. No kegs are allowed.

Charcuterie and Meat products

For dried and cured meats, the following samples are needed:

- A minimum of two separate containers/packets with a minimum combined weight of 240 grams.

For all other meat samples:

- A minimum of two containers comprising a minimum combined weight of 400 grams is needed.

Please respect the cold chain at all times when sending samples.

Chocolate and Confectionary

- For all individual chocolates and confectionary that are all the same types, a minimum of two separate containers/packets containing confectionary, with a minimum combined weight of 400 grams/ml is needed.
- For boxed chocolates, a minimum of 3 boxes is needed.
- Please ensure that samples will not melt when sending them.
- Samples will be put in the fridge after receiving them.

Coffee

For pre-ground coffee or beans:

- A minimum of two containers totalling a minimum combined weight of 400 gram is needed per entry.

For pods:

- Ten capsules per entry.





Condiments and sauces, including balsamic vinegar and soya sauce

- A minimum of two separate containers/packets with a minimum combined weight of 180 grams/ml.
- Multipacks may not be entered as samples.

Convenience Foods

- For all convenience food, a minimum of two separate containers/packets containing samples, with a minimum combined weight of 400 grams/ml, is needed.
- Please respect the cold chain at all times when sending samples.

Dairy products

- For milk, a minimum of two separate containers, with a minimum combined volume of 1 litre, is needed.
- For all other dairy products, a minimum of two separate containers/packets with a combined weight of 400 grams/ml is needed.
- Entrants may, at their own discretion, supply one whole cheese with a minimum weight of 750 grams instead of two packets.
- Multipacks may not be entered as samples.
- Please respect the cold chain at all times when sending samples.

Drinks

- Each entry requires a minimum of two samples, totalling a minimum combined volume of 400 ml. These samples need to be in their final bottled or packaged format.
- For drinks that need to be prepared (need to have water, milk etc added), a minimum of two containers, with a minimum combined volume of 400ml is needed.
- A product may only be entered once, even if it is available under a different brand name.
- Multipacks may not be entered as samples.
- Please respect the cold chain at all times when sending samples.

Meat and Charcuterie products

For dried and cured meats, the following samples are needed:

- A minimum of two separate containers/packets with a minimum combined weight of 240 grams.

For all other meat samples:

- A minimum of three containers comprising a minimum combined weight of 500 grams is needed.

Please respect the cold chain at all times when sending samples.

Olive Oil (Extra Virgin) and Olives

Table olives:

- A minimum of two containers, totalling a minimum combined weight of 400 grams, is needed for olives.





Olive oil:

- A minimum of two containers, totalling a minimum combined volume of 400 ml, is needed.

Other types of oil (not extra virgin olive oil)

- A minimum of two containers, totalling a minimum combined volume of 400ml, is needed.

Salt, spices, herbs, pepper, Dukkah and mixtures of dry ingredients.

- For all salt, spices, herbs, pepper, Dukkah and mixtures of dry ingredients, a minimum of 2 separate containers/packets with a minimum combined weight of 150 grams/ml is needed.
- Multipacks may not be entered as samples.

Pasta

- A minimum of two packets/containers with a minimum combined weight of 400 grams or more are needed per entry.

Preserves, Honey and Syrup

- For all condiments and sauces, a minimum of two separate containers/packets with a minimum combined weight of 400 grams/ml is needed.
- Multipacks must not be entered as samples.

Snacks and cereal

- For all snacks and cereal, a minimum of two separate containers/packets containing samples, with a minimum combined weight of 400 grams/ml, is needed.
- Multipacks must not be entered as samples.

Spirits, Liqueurs and Wine

- For products in 500/750ml bottles, a sample has to comprise two bottles/containers per entry. For products in containers smaller than 500ml, a sample has to comprise a minimum of three units with a minimum combined volume of 750ml.
- Samples need to be in their final bottled or packaged format.
- No tank samples are allowed.

Tea

- A minimum of two containers, totalling a minimum combined weight of 400 grams, is needed.

Wine, Spirits and Liqueurs

- For products in 500/750ml bottles, a sample has to comprise two bottles/containers per entry. For products in containers smaller than 500ml, a sample has to comprise a minimum of two units with a minimum combined volume of 400ml.
- Samples need to be in their final bottled or packaged format.
- No tank samples are allowed.

Judging of products





Who will be the judges?

We make use of the finest experts with intensive international experience to evaluate the products. The judges consist of chefs, sommeliers and product-specific experts with intimate knowledge of quality.

How are the products evaluated?

During judging, products are always evaluated double-blind, meaning that the tasters have no idea of who produced the products, or the name of the products, except the type of product evaluated, and the needs and expectations that the product is supposed to fulfil.

The judges each make up their own minds as to the quality of the product, without conferring with each other to reach a consensus. The judges' score is not subject to their own taste, instead, they evaluate products from the viewpoint of consumers who loves products in that category.

Beverages, sauces and food products will be served at the appropriate temperature.

My product needs to be prepared before being evaluated, will you be able to do it?

Professional chefs, with professional equipment, follow the exact instructions of the person entering. Products are, however, evaluated from the viewpoint of the consumer, and products that are too complicated for the average consumer to prepare will be scored down.

What criteria will be used to judge products?

Products will generally be judged on aroma, flavour, mouth feel and overall impression using a proprietary scoring system. Besides these basic criteria, each category will have more relevant and specific criteria to evaluate every category on its own strengths.

Will the judging process be audited?

The judging process will be audited by an accredited auditing firm to ensure that the judges are not influenced and that the tasting is done blind, and conforms to international standards.

- The decision of the judges is final, and no feedback will be given.
- We will not engage in correspondence involving products that did not win an award or did not do well enough.
- Some of the judges may be producers or sponsors, but none of them will judge the category they entered.
- Results will be released on or before the 30 July 2025, except Olive and Olive oil results, released 20 August 2025. .

Sticker and Award FAQs

Can I use the award artwork for other brands?

The award may only be used for the particular product that was entered, but if the same product (that is organoleptically and chemically identical), is marketed under a different brand name, the





award may be used on that product as well. An additional award certificate will be granted at no extra cost to the other identical products.

Where the quality of the product is dependent on the vintage, a particular batch of ingredients, or any other factors that make the quality of the product batch-dependant, the award may only be used on the particular batch that won the award.

How long can I make use of the artwork?

The award artwork may be used on the specific product that was awarded, subject to a non-exclusive licence agreement, subject to the terms of the non-exclusive license agreement. As long as the award is used, along with the year that the award was achieved, it can be used indefinitely.

Where the quality of the product is dependent on the vintage, a particular batch of ingredients, or any other factors that make the quality of the product batch-dependant, the award may only be used on the particular batch that won the award.

Are there any royalties involved?

No royalties are payable. You are allowed to use the artwork of your corresponding awards for free, and incorporate it in packaging. Stickers, however, may only be printed by the AITC, and bought from the AITC. You are allowed to incorporate the sticker artwork in your packaging at no extra cost.

An electronic certificate will be emailed to the winning participants. Subject to adherence to the terms of the non-exclusive licence agreement, winners will also have a non-exclusive licence to make use of the digital award artwork kit, with various logos and award artwork to use on their product, in email signatures, in digital and in print media for a period of three years from the time the awards are announced (except for products that are vintage dependent, or subject to special circumstances that vary from batch to batch). No physical trophies or awards are presented.

Products that are vintage or batch dependent (for example, wine or olive oil), may only use the award on the vintage and batch that won the award.

Stickers FAQs

Payment can be done in South African Rand (ZAR), EUR or USD depending on the payment method chosen.

There are several ways to pay:

- EFT payment to bank account – Only for local payments in ZAR.
- PayPal - All credit cards, including American Express, accepted in USD and EUR.
- Payfast online payment – Some credit cards, including American Express, not accepted.

Foreign currency invoices may only be paid by non-South African companies and individuals.





When will the stickers be available?

The stickers will be available approximately two weeks after the results have been confirmed.

The stickers will be available for collection at an address in Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa, for the account of the entrant. It is the responsibility of the entrant to arrange payment for the stickers, and arrange for the pick-up of the stickers. The company where the stickers can be picked up can arrange for the stickers to be sent by courier, and you can liaise directly with them.

What is the format of the stickers?

- Stickers come in multiples of 1 000 and 2 000.
- The stickers are 25 mm in diameter.
- The stickers are printed with bright, cold foil.
- The stickers come on rolls that have a 41 mm core diameter, and are wound leading edge left.
- Different core sizes, or winding techniques if needed, must be specified when the final sticker count is confirmed.
- Only Silver, Gold and Double Gold stickers will be printed, and may only be printed by the AITC.

When do I have to order the stickers?

- When you enter your product, you are asked how many stickers you would like to order if that product is awarded.
- After that, you are again on two different occasions asked to confirm the quantity (in case the quantity changes, or if you decide either to order or not to order).
- After the results are released, there is the final cut-off time for sticker confirmation, and the stickers are printed on your request, and you are obliged to pay for the stickers.
- Please ensure you are reachable by email because if you do not change your order, your last order will stand.
- If you do not want stickers, if you are in doubt that you want stickers, or if somebody who determines if your company will order the sticker has perhaps not given the go-ahead, please do not order stickers. Enter "0" – zero during entry, or later when asked to confirm the sticker quantity.
- There will be only one print run, and extra stickers will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Your stickers are printed especially for you at your request, so if you do not want the stickers, please do not order.
- The company where we will leave the stickers to be picked up can arrange transport to anywhere in the world.

May we print our own stickers?

Stickers may only be purchased from the organisers and may not be printed by any other party. When printing stickers, there is a very high standard involved, with the printing, paper and foiling.





Only Silver, Gold and Double Gold stickers will be printed by the AITC. Silver, and Trophy stickers may be incorporated into packaging, and the artwork may be used digitally.

The sticker artwork may however be incorporated in packaging, as long as the artwork is not used on its own to represent a free standing sticker.

Representation of what the individual stickers will look like:



Examples of sticker artwork that may be incorporated in packaging.



Stickers can also be represented in black and white, or in other colours in packaging, as long as the original award is not called into confusion. For example, a silver award cannot be represented with gold colours.

Similar artwork that can be used, with or without the bottom ribbon.



What is the cost associated with the stickers?

- Stickers will be available to be used with winning products at R470.00 excluding VAT (approximately USD30 or EUR27 depending on the exchange rate).





- Only Silver, Gold and Double Gold stickers will be printed, and the stickers may only be printed by the AITC.

Award guidelines

General guidelines

- There are no licensing costs, and the entrants are free to use the award artwork as they see fit for a period of three years.
- Where the quality of the product is dependent on the vintage, a particular batch of ingredients, or any other factors that make the quality of the product batch-dependant, the award may only be used on the particular batch that won the award.
- Stickers may only be printed by the AITC.
- Sticker and award artwork may be incorporated into the labels of products at no extra cost.
- Artwork may only be used in association with the product that won the award, for a period of three years.
- Award artwork may be used on the awarded producer's website, or email signature to show that they won an award, but must be associated with the specific products that won the award.
- Award artwork may not be used in any way where it is implied that other products that did not win awards, won awards.
- If the product changes significantly chemically, or sensorially, the award cannot be used in association with the product any more.

Can we incorporate the award artwork in our label, or on our packaging?

You may definitely incorporate your award in your label, and we will provide you with the vector artwork at no extra cost. The artwork comes in a few different versions, but you are welcome to change the colours to fit in with your label, as long as you do not change the colour of a silver award to gold, or something similar that can be confusing.

Here is an example of the variations of the artwork that can be used.





The individual stickers, however, may only be printed by the AITC. When printing the stickers, there is a very high standard involved, with the printing, paper and foiling. Only Silver, Gold and Double Gold Stickers will be printed.



The sticker artwork may however be incorporated into product packaging at no extra cost.

Category-specific FAQs

Each category will have frequently asked questions specific to the category, such as the number of samples necessary. These answers will be available at the relevant category pages on the website at www.aurorachallenge.com

General FAQs

Is there any discount offered?

Discounts will be given to entries in the form of a reduced fee (the early bird fee) for entries done by 23 May 2025.

Our products are tailored for the local market, how will the taster be able to evaluate them?

Our judges have extensive international taste experience and can judge products from both a local and international standpoint.

General Rules

Category-specific rules and guidelines will be featured on the category page on the website, www.aurorachallenge.com

A product may only be entered once, even if it is available under a different brand name.

Entries will only be accepted in English.

Tank samples will not be accepted as entries into the event.

There is no minimum stock quantity needed to enter a product.

A product that received an award in a previous year's event may be entered again.





Each participant will be responsible for all delivery costs, customs, duties, taxes and insurance. These must be paid by the participant before sending the entry samples, and the participant will be responsible for clearing and the associated costs at customs where applicable.

It is the participant's responsibility to have insurance for samples, as they will be transported at the participant's risk. Tank Town Promotions (Pty) Ltd will not be accountable in any way whatsoever for any loss or damage to the samples before, during, or after the event.

All samples are to be clearly labelled to identify the entries. This information includes the name of the manufacturer, the commercial name of the product, and the particular variant of the product if appropriate.

Because this is an international event, the basic guidelines for classes must be followed, but it is up to the entrant to choose a class that is appropriate relative to their own frame of reference. The judges reserve the right to move the product to a more appropriate class.

All entries must arrive, having maintained the cold chain as appropriate, from the producer to the delivery point, and must be in suitable and hygienic packaging.

The same product, even if under a different brand or name, may only be entered once.

Any products left over after judging become the property of the event.

Only commercially operated importers, producers or distributors that abide by the food laws of the country of origin may enter.

Winners will be asked to supply the event organisers with high-resolution pack shots for use on its website, and in marketing materials. By entering this event, the participant grants The Aurora International Taste Challenge unlimited use of these images.

Be sure to securely wrap entries with bubble wrap or similar material to secure your entries against breakage. Please wrap your final package in a plastic bag and make it leakproof to prevent leakage and damage to other products. Label the samples as fragile.

Specialised packaging material or any other packaging material will not be returned. Specialised packaging material can significantly preserve the final quality and viability of the sample being judged.

If styrofoam peanuts are used for packaging, please secure them in a container that will not cause leakage or spillage of the packaging materials.

International entries must take the necessary precautions to prevent breakage and hold-ups in customs, and are encouraged to use local agents to deliver samples.

If more than one box of samples is delivered, please mark the boxes as "Box 1 of 5", "Box 2 of 5" etc.

After winners are announced, no additional samples are needed.





Products not fit for human consumption, or meant for consumption by animals, may not be entered.

The rules of the event may change at any time and are at the sole discretion of the organisers. The amended rules will be published on the website. If an entrant does not abide by the rules, they must withdraw the relevant entries.

Please be aware that to enter this event, you have to also abide by the website terms, Privacy Policy and General Event terms as set out at www.aurorachallenge.com



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