



## 2023 NCRLA Chef Showdown

*Presented by Got To Be NC Agriculture*

### **Rules for Competing Bartenders + Distillers**

The North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association Chef Showdown is North Carolina's premier culinary and bartending competition open to all professional chefs and bartenders currently working in North Carolina; and distilleries based in North Carolina.

The 2023 NCRLA Chef Showdown finale will take place Monday August 14, from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m., at The Pavilion at Angus Barn in Raleigh, NC.

Leading up to the Grand Finale, there will be two regional rounds of competition. Please read this rulebook in its entirety, as it lays out what to expect through all rounds of the competition.

1. About NCRLA
2. General Competition Rules and Procedures
3. Regional Round Rules and Procedures
4. Grand Finale Rules and Procedures

Questions? Call or email Heidi Billotto, NCRLA Chef Showdown host and co-organizer, at 704-502-4439 [heidibillotto@gmail.com](mailto:heidibillotto@gmail.com) OR Inez Nicholson, NCRLA co-organizer and NCRLA Communications and Events Coordinator, at 803-269-3804 or [inicholson@ncrla.org](mailto:inicholson@ncrla.org).



## **1. About the North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association**

The North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association is the uniting force of the North Carolina hospitality industry. The Association brings together restaurant and lodging establishments and partners who support our hospitality community. NCRLA impacts legislation and policies, cultivates relationships, and provides valuable resources to help members run their businesses.

## **2. General Competition Rules and Procedures**

- North Carolina distilleries and bartenders may apply to compete through an online application process at [www.NCChefShowdown.com](http://www.NCChefShowdown.com). Applications must be completed in their entirety.
- Applications will be accepted through April 17, 2023. NCRLA may extend the application period if necessary.
- Past bartenders who have won the grand titles may not apply again until they are two years removed from their awards, even if they have changed venues/employers. Distilleries must wait a year from their win before applying again.
- Submission of participant application gives NCRLA the right to use each applicant's name, likeness, and background details as provided above for any promotional materials related to this event, including but not limited to use online, printed materials, video, social media, press releases, and advertisements. This information will also be shared with event sponsors.
- All participants agree to be photographed or taped for marketing or promotional purposes during the competition events.
- Competing bartenders and distillers certify that they meet all eligibility requirements, and that participation is not in violation of any employment or other agreement.



- NCRLA requests high-resolution versions of logos for marketing and promotional use, and requests that the contestants and their employers commit to promote the 2023 NCRLA Chef Showdown using both external and internal marketing channels.
- All participants will be asked to sign liability waivers at each venue. Every effort has been made to make all phases of this competition safe events; however, competitors waive all liability claims that may arise from participation in this event, including injury.
- NCRLA reserves the right to reassign dates or replace contestants should it become necessary (i.e. a contestant must dropout, becomes ill, or is in violation of any competition rules, etc.). An employer may not replace a contestant.
- NCRLA will not be liable for cancellation or postponement in the event of acts of God or unforeseen national or regional events that are out of the control of organizers.
- Safety and sanitation protocols should always remain a priority. Please use processes in the competition bar that you would in your own bar or place of business when serving the public.
- Each distillery will partner with a North Carolina bartender who will create two craft cocktails featuring at least one of the distillery's spirits combined with as many locally sourced ingredients as possible. Competitors must also create one mocktail.
- Bartenders and distilleries must apply as a team. Either the bartender or the distillery may initiate the application.
- The top six scoring teams will be invited to compete at the 2023 NCRLA Chef Showdown finale on Aug. 14, 2023.
- When applying, bartenders and distillers must agree to be available the day of their specific regional round as well as the finale event on Monday, Aug. 14, 2023, at The Pavilion at Angus Barn in Raleigh.
- All participating bartenders must be 21 years of age or older.



- Bartenders must be professional bartenders currently working in the state of North Carolina.

### **3. Regional Round Competition Rules and Procedures**

- There will be two regional rounds for competing mixologists and distilleries. One for teams from Eastern NC, and another for teams from Western NC.
  - July 10: Eastern NC
  - July 31: Western NC
- Bartenders are responsible for bringing their own ingredients, tools, glassware, and other specialty items required to create their competition cocktails and mocktail.
- Scoring at the regional round will be based on the best use of Got to be NC North Carolina ingredients, execution, creativity, originality, presentation, and overall taste, and the best use of the specific spirit(s).
- In addition to sourcing from local farms, bartenders and distillers will be introduced to competition sponsors who would be delighted to provide North Carolina product for use in cocktails and mocktails. Use of these suppliers is not required, nor will it be judged any differently than any other North Carolina products.
- Electrical equipment, such as sous vide machines, popcorn machines, mixers, blenders, electric coil or solid burners or induction burners are allowed.
- At the regional round of competition, bartenders will present to a panel of professional judges.
- Bartenders must prepare two different cocktails, and one mocktail at their specified regional round, preparing one cocktail and one mocktail for each judge and an additional serving of each to be used for photos.



- Bartenders and distillers will present every 30 minutes throughout the day. Once teams have been selected in the regional rounds, they will be assigned a specific presentation time.
- A dishwasher on staff at the host venue will be on hand and available to competitors.
- Competitors are solely responsible for cleaning their workstations and keeping up with all of their belongings.
- Competitors may bring one assistant to help prep prior to the presentation to judges.
- For each regional round of competition, competitors are asked to arrive at the host venue one hour prior to their presentation time, unless another time frame is agreed upon by the competitors and NCRLA Chef Showdown organizers.
- Competitors must submit the name and description of their cocktail and list of ingredients prior to their competition date and sent to Heidi Billotto ([heidibillotto@gmail.com](mailto:heidibillotto@gmail.com)). Adjustments may be made to the ingredient list as needed prior to judging.
- No reimbursements for product, travel, lodging, labor, or any other expenses accrued for participation will be offered by the NCRLA for the regional rounds.
- Detailed parking information and load in and load out instructions will be shared with competitors prior to the regional round and grand finale.
- The regional rounds of competition are not open to the public. Bartenders and distillers may bring guests to observe the presentation, take photographs, promote on social media, etc., however these guests may not share the cocktail or mocktail photos publicly until the final round of regional competition is over on July 31. This is to ensure fairness to all teams.
- Participating competitors and their guests must leave the venue once their presentation is complete.



#### 4. Grand Finale Rules and Procedures

- Bartenders who move on to the finale must recreate the regional round cocktail and mocktail selected by the judges, but may make seasonal changes.
- NCRLA will provide each distillery/bartender pairing with an individual bar, non-slip floor mats, plastic serving ware, ice, and cocktail napkins.
- The ice provided by the venue is not specialty ice.
- Based on the vote of the judges, one bartender will be named 2023 NCRLA Bartender of the Year, and the corresponding distillery will be named the 2023 NCRLA Distillery of the Year. All competing distillery and bartender teams will also be in the running for the People's Choice award.
- All winners will be announced the evening of Aug 14, 2023. Contestants must be present to win.
- Bartenders and distillers must check in at the venue, The Pavilion at the Angus Barn, at the assigned time.
- Distilleries and bartenders are encouraged to decorate their bar, however, the use of large signage and banners must be approved in advance by NCRLA Chef Showdown organizers.
- All participants must be ready for photos and announcements at a specified time, at which time they may not leave the building until the completion of the event.
- Each bartender will be allowed one assistant to help create and serve ~300 sample-sized portions of your cocktail to event guests.
- Each participating distillery/bartender team will receive a \$200 stipend for product used for the finale.
- To receive reimbursement for goods, participating distilleries and bartenders will be sent a NCRLA reimbursement form, which is required to be returned to NCRLA **with receipts**



**of purchased product** attached by September 4. Pre-payment is not available.

Reimbursements will be mailed no later than September 13.

- Reimbursement is NOT AVAILABLE for travel, lodging, labor, or any other expenses accrued for participation in the NCRLA Chef Showdown, however NCRLA will do its very best to work with area hotels to provide lodging for bartenders and distillery representatives traveling from more than 60 miles away, at the very best discounted rates available. NCRLA will get information to all participants for whom this applies as soon as we have it in hand.
- Tickets for the 2023 NCRLA Chef Showdown Aug. 14 finale may be purchased online at [www.NCChefShowdown.com](http://www.NCChefShowdown.com). There are no discounted rates available.
- Participating bartenders, bar assistants, and the distillery representatives are not required to purchase a ticket for the event, and each will receive one plus-one ticket to the 2023 NCRLA Chef Showdown finale.