

**RULES
FOR CONDUCTING A COMPETITION FOR SPIRIT DRINKS
Rakia & Spirits Fest Sofia 2025**

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Art. 1. Competition for spirits "Balkan Spirit" is organized by Rakia & Spirits Fest Sofia and the Union of Oenologists in Bulgaria, with the support of UFT Plovdiv.

Art.2. The competition is based on organoleptic analysis and evaluation of grape brandies, fruit brandies, wine brandies, whiskey, gin, vermouth and other spirits, respectively prepared and intended for sale homogeneous batches - in finished commercial form.

Art.3. The competition aims to provide a forum for international recognition of participating manufacturers. Decent competition, unbiased assessments by experts and public awareness are seen as powerful means of promoting and recognizing the high quality of award-winning spirits.

Art.4. **The announcement of the results and the awarding will take place on 06rd of December 2025 during Rakia & Spirits Fest Sofia 2025.**

Art.5. These rules have been drawn up in accordance with the requirements of the International Organization of Viticulture and Enology (OIV), as set out in the OIV Standard for International Competitions for Wine and Spirits of Grapes and Wine, published by Resolution 332A / 2009.

Art.6. The preparation and holding of the competition is carried out by the Organizing Committee, Technical Commission, composed of:

Associate Professor Prof. Nikolay Stoyanov - member of the tasting committee of the Concours Mondial de Brussels - Spirits Selection.

Stanimir Stoyanov - Chairman of the Union of Oenologists in Bulgaria, organizer of Enoforum Bulgaria (the largest oenological seminar in Bulgaria). Member of the tasting committees of Concours Mondial de Bruxelles, International Wine Contest Bucharest, Vinaria, Enoforum Czech Republic, etc.

Ivailo Zheglov - WSET Level 2 Award in Spirits

The members of the Technical Commission have been selected in order to exclude conflicts of interest with the companies participating in the Competition.

Art.7. The Organizing Committee ensures the storage of the received samples in a safe place and the absolute anonymity of the samples submitted to the tasting commissions, as well as the confidentiality of the results until the end of the Competition.

Art.8. The evaluation of the samples is performed by tasting commissions, which include established Bulgarian and international specialists with proven skills - oenologists, sommelier, traders.

Art.9. The Chairman of the Organizing Committee: manages the overall preparation for the normal holding of the tastings; coordinates and controls the activity of the Technical and Tasting Commissions; takes part in determining the prizes in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Regulations; resolves all issues not settled by the Regulations.

Art.10. The Technical Commission shall consist of at least 3 members. The Technical Commission: processes the data from the applications for participation in the Competition; accepts and ensures the storage of the samples under appropriate conditions until the day of the tastings; encodes each sample, ensuring its anonymity; arranges the samples in separate categories and series; determines the order for submission of the samples to the tasters, according to the established rules for tasting presented by the producer; prepares a schedule for the tastings; provides conditions for normal and rhythmic work during the meetings of each tasting commission; controls the correspondence between the composition of the samples and the data from the table and the application - declaration according to a sample.

Art.11. The technical commission processes the results of the tastings; presents the final results of the tastings to the Chairman of the Organizing Committee; keep the results of the tastings secret until their public announcement;

Art.12. Technical assistants may be involved in the preparation and conduct of the Competition.

II. CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

Art.13. Brandies and other spirits of Bulgarian or foreign origin can participate in the Competition, provided that they are produced in accordance with the requirements of the Wine

and Spirits Act or EU rules and comply with the International Code of Oenological Practices of the OIV. All spirit drinks must be intended for sale and have a homogeneous batch of at least 500 liters.

Art.14. The competition samples are presented in a completed commercial form. Competitive samples compete for prizes in one of the following categories:

1. Wine distilled spirit

1.1. Brandy

1.2. Brandy (wine and/or grape)

2. Fruit distilled spirits (fruit brandy) incl. fruit jelly drink

3. Distilled drink from grape pomace

4. Anise spirits

5. Gin incl. distilled gin

6. Vodka, incl. flavored vodka

7. Whiskey

8. Rom

9. Liqueur

10. Other spirits

* If there are less than 3 samples of the corresponding category, it is merged with (10) category

Article 15. (1) For participation in the Competition, **by 15th of November 2025, manufacturers and importers must send to email expoteamltd@gmail.com**

application-declaration for participation is according to a model in which the samples are described, and pay a **sample fee of EUR 30, which is determined by the organizers on the account: of Expo Team Ltd. in Unicredit Bulbank IBAN BG55UNCR70001522737963, BIC: UNCRBGSF**

ported to the venue of the competition by and at the expense of the manufacturer.

Art.17. Upon acceptance, the samples are accompanied by a summary table according to a sample in which the category of alcoholic beverage, age, geographical indication, actual alcohol content, sugars (for sweetened beverages) are recorded.

Art.18. Secretariat staff shall confirm acceptance of the samples. **Each sample consists of a total of two (2) bottles with a volume of 500 or 700 ml.**

III. CONDUCTING TASTINGS

Art. 19 (1) After all necessary procedures for acceptance of the samples have been completed and the registration documents and the analysis certificates have been received, the samples shall be entered in the computer database, each with its own unique code depending on the category and the respective subgroup.

(2) Only authorized members of the Organizing Committee shall have access to the computerized system.

(3) The list of coded samples on paper and electronic media shall be kept by the Secretariat until the end of the Competition.

Article 20 The tastings are held in an isolated, quiet, well-lit and ventilated room, where there are no side odors. The access of outsiders who are not engaged in the organization of the tasting is prohibited. If possible, the ambient temperature should be maintained between 18 ° and 22 ° C. During the tastings, smoking, the use of strong perfumes and conversations between the members of the tasting committees are prohibited.

Art.21. An adjoining room, closed to the assessors, is reserved for opening the bottles and erasing all the identification marks of the samples. The bottles are placed in advance in a package covering their shape and guaranteeing the anonymity of the sample.

Art.22. The packaging must ensure the anonymity of the samples during the tasting. Appraisers should not be able to recognize the identity of the samples presented in any way.

Art.23. The cups used are of the type that meets the international standards of the OIV. After use, they are washed, dried and polished.

Art.24. Water, a white sheet, paper napkins and champagne bucket are placed in front of each taster.

Art.25. During the tasting procedures, the sample temperatures were maintained at -18/20 ° C and all beverages of the same type were tasted at the same temperature during the same session.

Art. 26. (1) The evaluation of the samples shall be carried out by tasting commissions. The number of commissions is determined according to the number of received samples for participation in the competition. (2) The organizer shall appoint a Chairman from the composition of each tasting commission.

Art.27. The Chairman of the Organizing Committee: 1. ensures the normal conduct of the tastings; 2. carry out the connection between the Chairmen of the tasting commissions and the Technical Commission; 3. coordinates the work of the Chairmen of the tasting commissions.

Art. 28 (1) The chairmen of the tasting commissions:

1. ensures the normal conduct of the tastings;
2. receives the coded samples (the tasting sheets on paper, if such is used) and distributes them to the tasters, included in the respective tasting commission;
3. participates in the tastings as a taster;
4. monitors the observance of the good tone and the normal conduct of the tasting;
5. Hand over the tasting sheets to a representative of the Technical Commission;
6. has the right to pay attention to a taster, if during the tastings he gives an assessment, which differs by more than seven (7) points on the 100-point system from the assessments of the other tasters. If there is a request from the commission, it puts to a vote by the members of the tasting commission a proposal for re-tasting of the sample, the decision on which is taken by a majority;
8. take a decision depending on the workload of the tasting commission, when to start work and what breaks to take.

Art.29. The tasters:

1. comply with the requirements of these Regulations;
2. Evaluate the samples submitted to them for tasting in good faith, using their acquired experience in the field of organoleptics of beverages;
3. Keep silence during the tasting and refrain from gestures and facial expressions that express the impressions of the tasting, having the right to comment on the tasted sample only after it has been evaluated.
4. Evaluate the test drinks by filling in a tasting list.
5. may request from the Chairman of the respective tasting commission to perform a re-tasting of a sample;
6. may request from the Chairman of the tasting commission interruption of the sitting session for rest;
7. may request individual rest;
8. Each taster, accepting to participate in the jury of the International Competition, agrees with the terms of these Regulations and has no right to question them for interpretation and discussion during the tasting

Art. 30. During the meetings of the tasting commissions the tasters shall not have the right:

1. to leave the tasting room arbitrarily during the meetings of the commission;
2. to enter the premises for preliminary preparation of the samples and processing of the results.
3. to request and receive information for the processing of the results of the tasted samples.
4. to express their own opinion on any sample before the evaluations have been registered in the system or the tasting sheets with the written evaluations have been collected. Once the evaluation of the respective pro is completed

IV. PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF TASTING SAMPLES

Art. 31 (1) The drinks participating in the Competition shall be arranged in categories and in observance of the following principles:

1. from aromatically inactive to aromatically active;
2. from those with lower to higher age;
3. the aromatized drinks shall be tasted as the last series;
4. for each group and subgroup under the preceding paragraph the arrangement shall be made in ascending gradation of the reducing sugars.

(2) The commissions shall taste the drinks by categories, divided into series.

Art. 32. Each sample bottle shall be wrapped in opaque paper on which its code shall be written.

Art. 33. The tasting sample is poured into tasting glasses, which are submitted to the tasting commission for evaluation.

Art. 34. The filling of the tasting cups shall be carried out in the room for preliminary preparation of the samples.

Art. 35. The samples tasted comparatively. Art. 36. Only mineral water is served to refresh the taste of the tasters

V. COMMISSION MEETINGS AND SAMPLE EVALUATION

Art. 37. (1) The tasting commissions shall sit according to a schedule, determined by the Technical Commission.

(2) For one working day one tasting commission shall taste and evaluate not more than 40 samples.

(3) The duration of the meetings shall be determined depending on the number of samples in the series.

Art. 38. At the first meeting before the beginning of the tasting or switching to another category of drinks, an open tasting shall be held for unification of the evaluation criteria.

Art. 39. (1) The samples shall be evaluated according to the 100-point system.

VI. PROCESSING OF THE RESULTS

Art. 40. The results of the tastings are processed by representatives of the Technical Commission.

Art. 41. (1) In determining the evaluation of the samples, an evaluation which differs by more than 7 points from the average tasting evaluation of the commission shall be eliminated.

Art. 42. After excluding the assessments under

art. 41 The arithmetic average tasting evaluation is determined on the basis of the general evaluations of the tasters.

Art. 43. The average tasting score is calculated to the second sign.

Art. 44. During the tastings the tasters receive information about code and average evaluation of the samples.

Art. 45. After the end of the tastings the average tasting evaluations shall be stored in electronic version without possibility for correction of the data.

IX. AWARDING

Art. 46. The following prizes are awarded at the Golden Spirits Competition in descending order:

(1) For all categories under art. 14:

1. Grand Gold medal - incl. and over 95 points

2. Gold medal - from 90.00 to 94.99 points

3. Silver medal - from 85.00 to 89.99

4. Bronze medal - from 80.00 to 84.99 points

5. Recommended - from 77 to 79.99 points

Art. 47. (1) Each sample may receive only one of these awards.

(2) No more than 30% of the samples for each category shall be awarded, excluding the "Recommended" award.

Art. 48. The awarded and eliminated samples (if any) are listed in a protocol signed by the Chairman of the Technical Commission.

Art. 49. The awarded medals are accompanied by certificates issued by the Organizer. Each certificate indicates the identity of the award-winning spirits as well as the identity of its producer. In order to present the prizes to the public, the Organizing Committee publishes fully accurate information about the medals awarded. Details of the awarded beverage samples are provided to the media, and an advertising brochure is prepared and distributed to professionals (e.g. wholesalers and retailers) and consumers.

X. CONTROL

Art. 50. The samples participating in the Competition are subject to control for establishing compliance with the data, indicated in the application-declaration and the tables according to a sample, submitted by the company-manufacturer.

Art. 51. In the course of the Competition, samples shall be submitted for control upon proposal of the respective Tasting Commission and under the conditions of the Regulations.

Art. 52. (1). In case of suspicion of deviations from the announced and declared values and other circumstances, the drinks received may also be subject to control.

XI. FINAL PROVISIONS

Art.53. Producers whose samples have been awarded prizes in the Gold Spirits competition have the right to commercially reflect this fact on the labels of the awarded drinks.

Art.54. The organizers of the competition reserve the exclusive right to print and sell stickers on the medals awarded to a drink that has participated in the competition, indicating the year of awarding the prize.

Art.55. The person who signed the form for participation in the Competition is legally responsible for the information contained therein. The Organizing Committee has the right, after the relevant legal procedures, to confirm the above information in order to verify the authenticity of the awarded drinks placed on the market, compared to the sample participating in the Competition.

Article 56 Participation in the Competition means that the participants accept the terms and conditions set out in this document.