



**SPIRITS SELECTION**

# PRESS KIT

JALISCO, MÉXICO

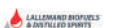
From 7th to 12th September 2025

27<sup>th</sup> Edition

@spiritsselection



spiritsselection.com





SEPTEMBER

**8 to 10**



**2,598**

SPIRITS



FROM

**70**

COUNTRIES



**140**

INTERNATIONAL  
TASTERS



**45**

NATIONALITIES

# Summary

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# PRESENTATION

## About the Spirits Selection by Concours Mondial de Bruxelles

The **Spirits Selection by CMB** is an international competition where **more than 2.800 spirits** are entered by producers to be tasted and evaluated by a panel of experts. Our seasoned judges from across the globe assess the spirits entered. Their sole ambition is to select spirits of irreproachable quality, irrespective of their labels or an appellation's prestige. The competition is one of the foremost international events in its category.



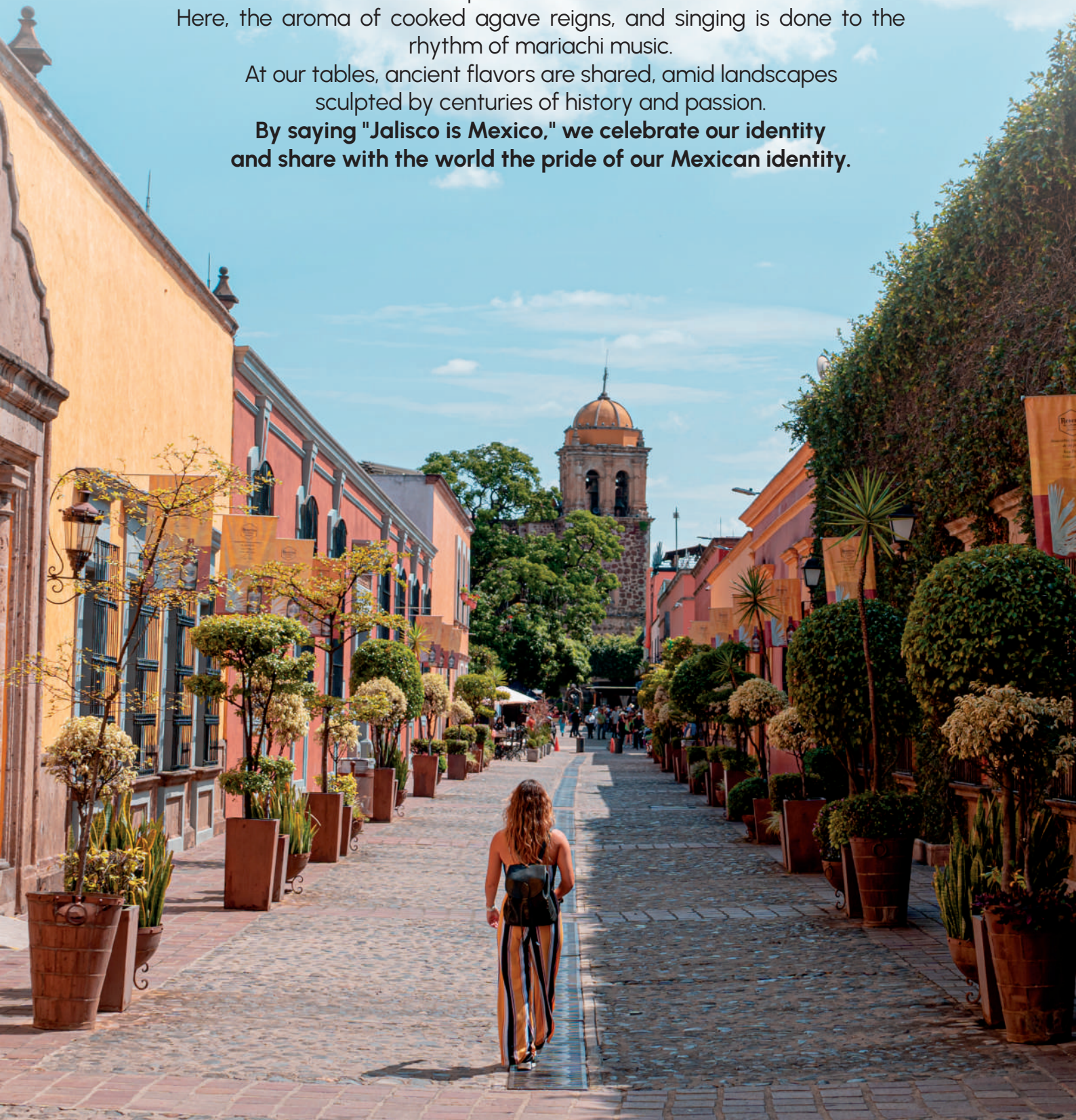
# Jalisco is Mexico

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Jalisco is explored with all five senses.  
Here, the aroma of cooked agave reigns, and singing is done to the  
rhythm of mariachi music.

At our tables, ancient flavors are shared, amid landscapes  
sculpted by centuries of history and passion.

**By saying "Jalisco is Mexico," we celebrate our identity  
and share with the world the pride of our Mexican identity.**



# Host 2025

## Flavor, celebration and tradition

Composed of 125 municipalities, Jalisco is explored through its mountains, beaches, mountain ranges, volcanoes, and valleys. Travelers are drawn to Guadalajara, Puerto Vallarta, or Costalegre, and are captivated by the charm of our Magical Towns.

**Jalisco is a legacy.** Its cultural treasures have been recognized by Unesco as a World Heritage. Among them are the Mariachi, the Agave Landscape and the Old Tequila Factories, the Charrería, the Museo Cabañas, and the Historic Center and Lagos de Moreno Bridge.

# Guadalajara: the cultural capital of the West

Walk through its historic center, admire the Museo Cabañas, now a spectacular cultural center, and be inspired by the art and design displays you find not only in galleries but also in restaurants and shopping centers. Experience the passion for soccer, join a vibrant nightlife, and feast on local flavors that will keep you coming back.





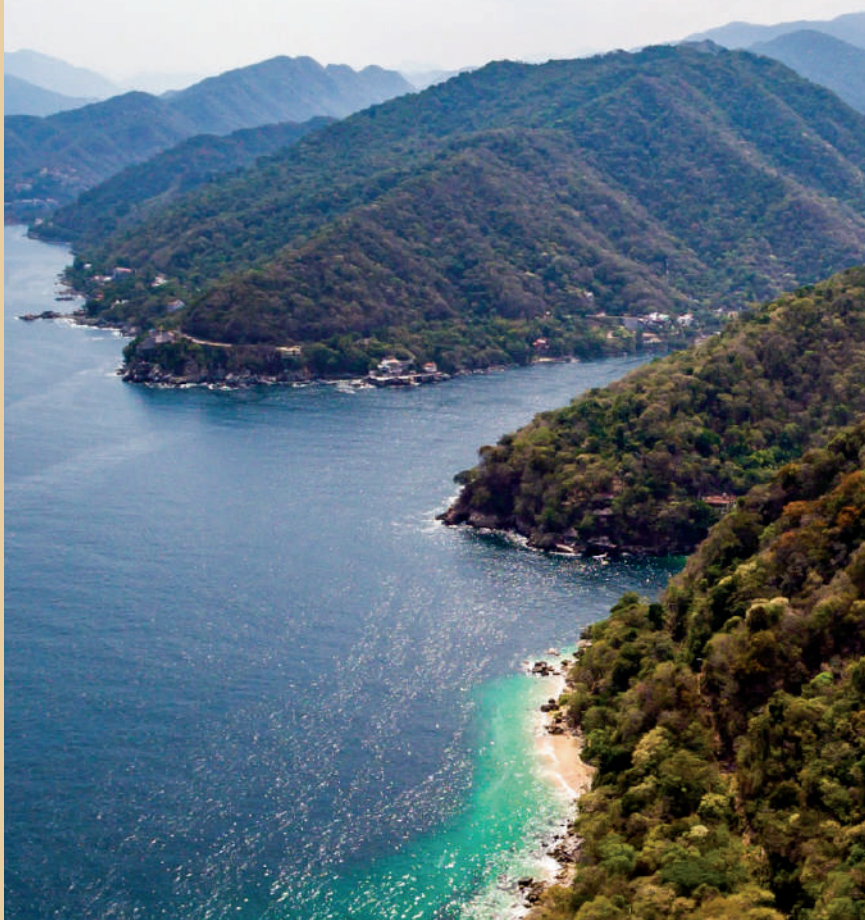
# Costalegre

From Boca de Tomatlán to Barra de Navidad, it is a natural refuge for those seeking to reconnect with the essence of simplicity and enjoy sustainable tourism, where true luxury lies in being in contact with nature.

# Puerto Vallarta

Combines the warmth of the Pacific with a cosmopolitan spirit.

Its pier is perfect for unforgettable sunsets, while its beaches invite relaxation or adventure. Discover its Romantic Zone, explore the surroundings by boat or hike. Enjoy excellent restaurants, galleries, and outdoor art.



# Explore our Magical Towns

Jalisco is a land of living traditions and national symbols. It's no coincidence that it boasts twelve Magical Towns, places that have been recognized for their cultural, historical, and natural wealth.

## Ajijic

Discover its art galleries and murals, visit the Wall of the Dead, walk along its pier, and discover a bohemian atmosphere that has become an inspiration for artists.

## Cocula

The birthplace of mariachi music. Cocula not only resonates with traditional music, it breathes it, honors it, and shares it. Every Sunday there are live mariachi performances in its Main Plaza, and they also have their Mariachi Museum.

## Mascota

Visit its enigmatic Unfinished Temple of the Precious Blood, and at La Taberna, inside the headquarters of the Mexican Council for the Promotion of Raicilla, find your favorite bottle of this Jalisco spirit.

## Mazamitla

Explore the Sierra del Tigre or take a horseback ride to El Salto waterfall. At the Mundo Aventura Ecological Park, you'll find the second-longest suspension bridge in Latin America.

## Lagos de Moreno

Preserves an impeccable colonial legacy. Its Historic Center is a Unesco World Heritage Site. Admire the Museum of Sacred Art and visit its majestic José Rosas Morales Theater.





### **Talpa de Allende**

Talpa is the final destination of the Pilgrim's Route, a journey thousands of people take to visit the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary.

### **Tapalpa**

A natural sanctuary for those seeking to breathe deeply and feel the forest. Its mystical Valley of Enigmas will fascinate you. Go hiking and try the typical chard tamales.

### **Tlaquepaque**

The artisanal soul of Jalisco lives here. In the Regional Ceramics Museum, you'll find unique expressions of Jalisco. On the Andador Independencia, visit the Rodo Padilla and Sergio Bustamante galleries.

### **Temacapulín**

Immense in history, resilience, and spirituality, Temaca —as it is affectionately called— is famous for its hot springs and tranquil atmosphere.

### **Tequila**

Here you can walk among centuries-old distilleries and experience tequila from its roots. To do so, visit the Santiago Apostol Parish and the Juan Beckmann Gallardo Cultural Center.

### **San Sebastián del Oeste**

A colonial gem suspended between mountains. Ideal for trying coffee, hot chocolate, or raicilla and connecting with nature in places like the viewpoint on Cerro de la Bufa or the Haraveri Botanical Garden.

### **Sayula**

A town steeped in literature, history, and sweetness. Learn about the process of making its delicious cajeta at Cajetas Lugo and visit a fine cutlery workshop and the Juan Rulfo Cultural Center.



# Jalisco is Flavor

Our land is also experienced and explored through its flavors. In addition to our three culinary staples with Designation of Origin: Tequila, Raicilla, and the Yahuallica chile, there is so much to discover. From a crispy, freshly baked birote to a refreshing tejuino in the Plaza.

In Guadalajara, don't miss the iconic torta ahogada, carnes en su jugo, and authentic Jalisco-style birria. For dessert, the Jeri callas, also known as crème brûlée tapatio, are a highlight.

If you're looking for a contemporary culinary experience, you'll also find nationally and internationally recognized restaurants in Guadalajara and Puerto Vallarta. Also try the cajeta from Sayula, the seasonal pitayas from Techaluta in Montenegro and Amacueca, the oysters from Tehuamixtle in Costalegre, the fruit punches from Tapalpa, the homemade preserves from Mazamitla, and the guava sweets from Talpa in Allende.

## Living History

- "Jalisco" comes from the Nahuatl word Xallixco, which means "sandy place."
- Guadalajara witnessed the abolition of slavery proclaimed by Miguel Hidalgo in 1810.
- In 1823, it was born as a Free and Sovereign State, and since then, it has not stopped constructing its own narrative.



# Tequila: Mexico's Signature Drink

Tequila represents us to the world and was Mexico's first Designation of Origin (DO) in 1974. Tequila is made from the fermentation and subsequent distillation of sugars from the blue agave Tequilana Weber. Its production and cultivation can only take place in certain areas of Mexico, established by the Declaration of Protection of the Tequila Designation of Origin, which includes the entire state of Jalisco.



## Valles and Los Altos: the two tequila producing regions in Jalisco

Although, according to the Declaration of Protection of the Tequila Designation of Origin, this spirit can be produced in all 125 municipalities of Jalisco, there are two main tequila-producing regions in the state: the Valles region and Los Altos de Jalisco.

You've probably already heard of the former —the Valles region— because most of the municipalities that comprise it are part of the Tequila Route of the Agave Landscape, and it is said that tequila originated in this region. For this reason, it is the best-known; it is also home to the Pueblo Mágico de Tequila, considered the heart of the spirit's production. But the Los Altos region also produces highly valued tequilas, thanks to the characteristics of its climate and soil, which result in unique notes.

Producing municipalities in this region include Atotonilco el Alto, Arandas, and Tepatlán.

Both regions promise a profound journey through the world of tequila, where you will learn more about its culture and history through tasting experiences, distillery visits, museums, educational tours, food pairings, themed accommodations, and more.





## Origins of Tequila

Records of the agave's origin date back several millennia. It is said that during pre-Columbian times, the inhabitants of the region of Mexico now known as the Agave Landscape honored the agave for the great benefits it provided. The indigenous inhabitants used the marvelous agave plant in various ways: from the agave leaves, they obtained fiber for making textiles that provided shelter and were also used to make tools; they used the agave thorns as needles; from the fermentation of the honey and juices, they obtained a mystical drink that allowed them to commune with their surroundings; and from the heart or pineapple of the agave, they obtained juices and honey for food.

### The Agave

According to regulations, the only agave variety used to produce tequila is the Tequilana Weber blue variety. These varieties must be grown in the territory protected by the DO and included in a plantation registry overseen by the Tequila Regulatory Council (CRT).

To reach the maximum sugar concentrations and maturity required for tequila production, an agave requires

between five and eight years of care. All cultivation and care of the agave is carried out using traditional methods.

### Tequila Designation of Origin

The Tequila Designation of Origin (DOT) was the first to be issued in Mexico. There are references dating back to 1943 regarding efforts by regional producers to protect the name "tequila" and obtain exclusive use. On October 31st, 1959, one year after Mexico signed the Lisbon Agreement regarding the protection of Designations of Origin, the National Chamber of the Tequila Industry (CNIT) was established. In the 1960s, some countries produced spirits they called "tequila." It was then that a request was submitted to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (SIC) for the issuance of the General Declaration of Protection of the Tequila Designation of Origin. On September 27, 1974, protection was granted and published in the Official Gazette of the Federation. The Tequila Designation of Origin offers consumers a guarantee of authenticity for products bearing this name.

# Tequila Categories

Now let's talk about tequila categories, which fall into two main groups: in the first category, at least 51% of its sugars must come from the blue Tequilana Weber agave, while the remaining 49% can come from other natural sources. On the other hand, there are 100% Agave Tequilas, which are made solely and exclusively from the blue Tequilana Weber agave.



**Regarding tequila classes, there are five:**

**Blanco or silver:** a product obtained directly from distillation, which generally does not undergo barrel aging.

**Joven or gold:** a blend of blanco tequila with a tequila that has been aged.

**Reposado:** subject to a maturation process of at least two months in oak or holm oak barrels.

**Añejo:** matured for at least one year in oak or holm oak barrels.

**Extra añejo:** matured for at least three years in oak or holm oak barrels.

## Experience the Tequila Route of the Agave Landscape

The Agave Landscape, a Unesco World Heritage Site, extends into two areas: the Tequila Valley and the mystical Guachimontones Archaeological Zone. The best way to experience it all? Through a unique journey: the Tequila Route.

### El Arenal

Here, visit the archaeological site of Santa Quiteria and discover Hacienda La Calavera, home to the El Arenal Agavero Landscape Interpretive Museum; explore the Tequila Castle and walk across its glass bridge.

### Amatitán

Birthplace of great tequila houses, such as the legendary Hacienda San José del Refugio, home to Casa Herradura. Stroll through its Main Plaza and visit its Agavero Landscape Museum and the Old Taverns.





### **Tequila**

Heart of the Agave Landscape. In this Pueblo Mágico, tequila isn't just drunk, it's lived. Tour its distilleries, the Santiago Apostol Parish, and the Juan Beckmann Gallardo Cultural Center.

### **Magdalena**

It is the second largest producer of this mineral in the world. Schedule a tour of a mine and visit the Interpretive Museum of the Agave Landscape and Mining.

### **Etzatlán**

In 2019, it broke the Guinness World Record with the world's largest woven pavilion: a raffia creation crafted by artisans. See its Main Plaza and the Franciscan Convent of the Immaculate Conception.

### **San Juanito de Escobedo**

Explore the ruins of the Ex-Hacienda de Providencia, the Old Hacienda de Santa Fe, and the Hacienda de la Gavilana. Don't forget to visit Laguna Colorada and Atitlán Island.

### **Ahualulco de Mercado**

Discover the Bola Stones, spherical volcanic formations unique in the world. Visit the former Hacienda of Santa Cruz de Bárcenas and relax at Hacienda El Carmen.

### **Teuchitlán**

On the banks of the Vega Dam, this town offers unique flavors like frog legs. But its true gem is Guachimontones, one of the most fascinating archaeological sites in the Western world.



# Raicilla, a Cultural Heritage

Raicilla, the second distilled spirit with a Designation of Origin in Jalisco, is a reflection of the cultural identity of the area where it is produced, which also includes a municipality in the neighboring state of Nayarit.

Its artisanal production, passed down from generation to generation, is part of the cultural heritage of the regions where it is produced, both on the coast and in the mountains. Ancestral knowledge is blended with the work of master raicilleros, resulting in a beverage steeped in tradition and complex flavors.

In the mountains of Jalisco, raicilla de la Sierra stands as an ancient jewel that has defied time. It keeps alive the essence of a clandestine distillation tradition that dates back to the 17th century. Meanwhile, on the

coasts of Jalisco, raicilla is revealing itself as a unique expression of the cultural richness that flourished in secret.

## Centuries-old legacy

Raicilla, deeply rooted in the culture of Jalisco, encapsulates in its aromas and flavors a fascinating history that dates back more than 500 years, according to information from the Mexican Council for the Promotion of Raicilla. Its origins are closely tied to the tradition and creativity of the inhabitants of Jalisco and Nayarit, who since time immemorial have taken advantage of the region's natural wealth to create this unique nectar.

## Raicilla de la sierra

Made primarily from Maximiliana Baker, Inaequidens Koch, and Valenciana agaves, raicilla de la sierra is believed to have originated in the mining areas of the state of Jalisco, near the Sierra Occidental, in municipalities such as San Sebastián del Oeste, Mascota, Talpa, among others.

It is said that raicilla production began in the 16th century with the introduction of distillation systems, primarily using the Arabic type in the mountains. Despite prohibitions, it is believed that raicilla may have been produced in small taverns or in homes located in remote areas.

The beverage is distilled from different agave species endemic to Mexico, taking advantage of the richness of the local flora. In this region, the Maximiliana Baker agave predominates.





# Raicilla de la costa

It is made primarily from the *Angustifolia* Haw and *Rhodacantha* agaves. Its production began in the 16th century with the introduction of distillation systems on the northern coast of Jalisco. On the coast, the Philippine-style distillation system was primarily used. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the Spanish attempted to suppress local distillate production. However, mezcal, aguardiente, and raicilla continued to be produced, primarily for sale in mining camps. Production in the coastal area is adapted to a warm and humid environment, which influences the profile and characteristics of raicilla.

## Raicilla Classifications

In addition to its regional classification, raicilla is divided into three categories based on its production process:

**Clásica:** made with modern and traditional methods.

**Artesanal:** made with traditional and artisanal methods.

**Ancestral:** made with ancestral and traditional methods.

Within each category, raicilla is classified into five classes based on its post-distillation treatment:

**Blanca joven or Silver:** no aging process.

**Aged or Glass-Matured:** stabilized in glass containers for more than 12 months.

**Reposada or Gold:** aged in wooden barrels for a period of 2 to 12 months.

**Añeja:** aged in wooden barrels for more than 12 months.

**Extra añeja:** aged in white or green oak barrels for more than 24 months.

And there is an additional class:

**Abocada:** ingredients are added to give it a special flavor.

**Destilado con raicilla:** an alcoholic beverage made from artisanal or traditional raicilla, which undergoes a second distillation, where ingredients are added to add new flavors.

**In Jalisco, raicilla is produced in 16 municipalities:** Atengo, Chiquilistlán, Juchitlán, Tecolotlán, Tenamaxtlán, Puerto Vallarta, Cabo Corrientes, Tomatlán, Atenguillo, Ayutla, Cuautla, Guachinango, Mascota, Mixtlán, San Sebastián del Oeste, and Talpa de Allende. Each region gives raicilla a unique character. The Sierra Occidental mountains offer wild agaves of great complexity, while the Pacific coast lends a fresh, mineral note to the drink. Its Denomination of Origin protects and celebrates the natural, cultural, and artisanal richness that gives it life, delimiting a territory where tradition is expressed in a unique elixir.



# The tastings

## TASTING SESSIONS

The tasting sessions are held over three mornings, behind closed doors. Every care is taken to ensure the best possible conditions: light, strictly controlled humidity levels and air temperature (between 18 and 22°C), observance of a monastic silence in the tasting rooms, impeccable glasses and service.

Before each tasting session, a palate preparation exercise is conducted to harmonize and calibrate marks given by judges.

This year, the National Chamber of the Tequila Industry is joining as a technical partner for the preparation and operation of these sessions.



## THE FLIGHTS

Samples to be tasted are grouped in **consistent flights** based on the characteristics stated by the producer and analysis certificates, after checks ensuring they have been entered in the right category.

The samples are presented to the juries in ascending **order of alcohol content and descending order of residual sugar content**. Each spirit is tasted individually and not comparatively.

Each panel is given a list of 4 to 5 flights which will be tasted in the order set out by the organizers, with a maximum of **35 samples per morning**.

## Blind tastings

All series of spirits proposed for tasting to the international jury are of course **served blind**.

The organization of the Competition guarantees the **total anonymity of the samples**. The filling of glasses is done in the preparation hall out of the judges' sight. The tasters do not know the origin, the price and the possible marks and awards obtained by these samples. Only the category to which each sample belongs is mentioned on the tasting form to be filled in.



## The panel members

Each panel is placed under the authority of a appointed by the organization, who is responsible for the smooth running of the tastings and checks the quality of spirits served and the score sheets and allocation of points.

The chairperson is expected to be attentive and ensure the tastings run smoothly. The chair sets the tempo for the tastings and is responsible for a certain consistency in the way marks are awarded within the panel. **Under no circumstances will the chair influence the tasters' judgment** but will be sure to guide panel members in an unbiased, objective manner. The chair also protects the secrecy of a spirits' identity and will use his/her discretion to order a second tasting of the sample should it be deemed useful.

At the end of a flight, all the information is collected directly by members of staff for a final check before the results are processed.



## The criteria

Competing products are tasted and marked using the tasting sheet developed by the **Spirits Selection** technical management. Selected criteria involve:

- **Appearance:** cleanliness.
- **Nose:** expressiveness, aromatic complexity, authenticity.
- **Palate:** intensity, flavor complexity, texture, persistence & finish quality, authenticity.
- **Overall Impressions:** alcohol Integration, balance, character, typicality.

Marks for each criterion determine the overall weighted score for each sample. A «winzorized» mean of all jury members is then calculated for each sample. This prevents dominance of any one person.



## The spirits sensory guidelines

The huge array of spirits available makes comparative tastings complex. It is impossible for a taster to be fully proficient in every category. With input from panel members, Spirits Selection by CMB have developed a guide - «Spirits Sensory Guidelines» - which describes the specific characteristics of each category and sub-category: typicality, a-typicality and main flaws. The competition holds master classes prior to the event to present and discuss the evolving document. This allows the judges to refine their judging for the categories they are less familiar with.

The competition also awards additional revelation trophies for products scoring the highest marks, which are distinguished for their high quality, innovative character, and which underline the market trends. In addition, the jury awards a trophy for the best "certified organic" spirit.

The sum of all medals awarded to entries scoring the most points cannot exceed 30% of the total of entries in the competition. In the event of an overrun, entries receiving the least points will be eliminated.

In addition, the Concours Mondial de Bruxelles is the first international competition to have implemented a postevent control of medal-winning wines and spirits to guarantee the legitimacy of its results. After the competition, randomly purchased spirits bearing the competition medal are analyzed by an accredited laboratory and tasted in order to compare these samples with the second bottle provided by the producer at the time of registration.

## Excellence and rigor

Compliance with current regulations is guaranteed on the competition's official recognition by the European Union (cf. Official Journal C96/1 dated 23.4.2003).

At the end of the tastings, each entry is awarded a score out of one hundred by applying the computation formula. Only spirits that have achieved the highest scores are eligible for the precious medals:

- **Grand Gold Medal**
- **Gold Medal**
- **Silver Medal**

«Being on the jury, you get a lot of information that you have to digest. The methodology of tasting is also very interesting, and since then I have been organizing more tastings internally with my team. We also notice that some producers consult us for our opinion on recognized independent competitions. In Belgium of course, the Spirits Selection medal has a good reputation among consumers.»

Stephan De Bolle, Director of  
Spirits - Cinoco, Belgium



«The winners of this competition are true standouts because there were no «participation» awards. Everyone's point of view is heard out.»

Robin Robinson, Founder of Robin Robinson LLC, USA



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SELECTION**

### MORE INFORMATION

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