

## Official Rules for TOTCF's The Pour of Couture Presented By Johnnie Walker

### Eligibility

**Bartenders:** The Competition is open only to individuals who (a) are legal residents of the continental US States. The competition is void in Hawaii and Alaska. (b) are of legal drinking age in their country of residence as of the date of entry, (c) are professional bartenders, and (d) have a passport valid through September 2026 (approximately 6 months past the prize winning trip to be scheduled for Spring 2026)

**Exclusions:** Individuals who are full-time or part-time employees of TOTCF, Diageo and associated agencies or a distributor at the time of entry, as well as the immediate family (spouse, parents, children) and household members of those employees, are not eligible to enter.

### Stage 1: Online Entries

**How to Enter:** Visit <https://talesofthecocktail.org/get-involved/pour-of-couture/> (the "Website") and follow the instructions on that page. You will be required to submit your entry that will include entries for two challenges. Challenge #1: Showcase Serve and Challenge #2: Couture Inspired Cocktail recipe that meets the requirements described below. Together, the entries [recipe/photo/video/etc] constitute your "Entry." Entries must be received by October 23, 2025, and there is a limit of one (1) Entry per person.

#### **Challenge #1: Johnnie Walker Vault The Couture Blend Vault Showcase Serve**

##### **Challenge 1 Parameters**

- **Couture as Inspiration for the Guest Experience**
  - A truly couture-inspired service doesn't just meet current expectations; it sets new benchmarks and shapes the future of luxury experiences. How do you bring the element of "couture" into the serve?
- **Sensory Engagement**
  - Your serve must be multi-sensorial, creating a feast for the senses and creating a holistic and memorable impression
- **The WOW Factor**
  - What are the engaging presentational elements to enhance the consumer experience? Is it an exquisite garnish? The chosen glassware and tools? Perhaps an amuse bouche to tantalize the palate?
  - The overall presentation should convey a sense of luxury, boldness, and innovation.

##### **Challenge 1 Requirements**

- Johnnie Walker Vault The Couture Blend bottle must be prominently featured in the serve.
- Must be scalable for multiple serves for in-person judging
- If chosen as a top 3 Finalist, you must be able to faithfully recreate your serve at the final event in Miami. This implies practicality in terms of ingredients, tools, and execution steps.
- You must specify a name for your recipe. The name may not include any copyrighted or trademarked material or any retailer's name, except the name of the Sponsor Brand.

##### **Challenge 1 Restrictions**

- Johnnie Walker Vault The Couture Blend serve **MUST NOT** be served as a cocktail
- Any/All fire elements are prohibited

- Use of or references to tobacco is prohibited
- Use of or reference to banned/illegal substances are prohibited

### **Challenge #2: Johnnie Walker Blue Label Couture Cocktail**

#### **Challenge 2 Parameters**

- **Couture Element**
  - To truly embody the spirit of couture, your cocktail must feature at least one custom element—like an infused spirit, hand-crafted garnish, or unique syrup—to elevate it beyond a standard drink and showcase personalized artistry
- **Blending Artistry**
  - Drawing inspiration from various cultural realms such as music, art, fashion or food, envision your cocktail as a couture designer would. Your cocktail should harmoniously blend more than one cultural reference
- **Cocktail Storytelling**
  - Your couture cocktail should reveal a journey in layers, where flavors gracefully unfold to showcase the depth, richness and refinement of Johnnie Walker Blue Label
  - Texture is paramount, whether velvety, ethereal, or effervescent. Every choice must be deliberate

#### **Challenge 2 Requirements**

- **Johnnie Walker Blue Label as the Cornerstone:** Each cocktail must utilize a measure of 1.5oz (45ml) of Johnnie Walker Blue Label as its base spirit.
- **Must be scalable for multiple serves:** Finalists must be able to faithfully recreate their Johnnie Walker Cocktail for multiple judges. This implies practicality in terms of ingredients, tools, and execution steps.
- Ingredients must be safe for human consumption and easily replicable.

#### **Challenge 2 Restrictions**

- “Split Base” drinks are discouraged
- Any/All fire elements are prohibited
- Use of or references to tobacco is prohibited
- Use of or reference to banned/illegal substances are prohibited

### **For Both Entries**

#### **Names**

- You must specify a name for your entries. The names may not include any copyrighted or trademarked material or any retailer’s name, except that you may use the Johnnie Walker Vault The Couture Blend or Johnnie Walker Blue Label in the name.
- Recipes must be an original creation and not have been used in previous media, competitions, or other publications.

#### **Photo Requirements:**

Your photo must meet the following requirements:

- The photo must be saved in a JPG or PNG file format.
- The photo cannot be larger than 20 MB.
- Cannot contain trademarked, copyrighted or intellectual property of third parties.

- Photos must be an original creation and not have been used in previous media, competitions, or other publications.
- Your photo or videos should be a “raw capture” and no filters, software programs or the like should be deployed to enhance the prepared item
- Your photo may not: (a) be targeted to people under twenty-one (21) years old; (b) feature anyone who is under twenty-five (25) years old; (c) encourage, condone, promote, or glamorize under-age, excessive, or irresponsible consumption of alcohol products, drunk driving, or any behavior considered to be anti-social, illegal, or immoral or suggest that the consumption of beverage alcohol will lead to social or sexual success; (d) violate anyone else’s rights, including their copyrights, trademark rights, or rights of privacy or publicity; or (e) reflect poorly on TOTCF or Diageo. In addition, your Entry must comply with the Code of Responsible Practices for Beverage Alcohol Advertising and Marketing of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, Inc.

**Video Requirements:** Your video must meet the following requirements:

- The video file cannot exceed 100 MB
- The video can be shot on your smartphone or other device.
- Videos cannot contain trademarked, copyrighted or intellectual property of third-parties.
- Videos must be an original creation and not have been used in previous media, competitions or other publications.
- Your video may not: (a) be targeted to people under twenty-one (21) years old; (b) feature anyone who is under twenty-five (25) years old; (c) encourage, condone, promote, or glamorize under-age, excessive, or irresponsible consumption of alcohol products, drunk driving, or any behavior considered to be anti-social, illegal, or immoral or suggest that the consumption of beverage alcohol will lead to social or sexual success; (d) violate anyone else’s rights, including their copyrights, trademark rights, or rights of privacy or publicity; or (e) reflect poorly on TOTCF, or Diageo. In addition, your Entry must comply with the Code of Responsible Practices for Beverage Alcohol Advertising and Marketing of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, Inc.

**Judging:** Judges will review each entry and score it based on the following criteria. The judges will select entries for who will be chosen for In-Person judging and present their serves live in front of two judges at their bar.

**Judging Criteria:**

- Challenge #1: Couture as inspiration: 30 points, Sensory Engagement: 25 points, The Wow Factor: 25 points, Execution and Flow: 20 Points
- Challenge #2: Couture Element: 30 points, Blending Artistry: 25, Cocktail Storytelling: 25 points, Taste and Balance: 20 points

The combined score of both Challenges will determine the bartenders who advance to the next, live round of the Competition. Entries will be evaluated on a rolling basis.

**Notification of In-Person Judging:** TOTCF will notify all Semi-Finalists via email by October 24, 2025, and invite them to participate in the live-judging phase.

## Stage #2: Individual Live Judging (In-Person)

**Individual / Live Judging Phase will take place between October 25 - November 19th.** Bartenders will be contacted to schedule their in person presentations for live judging at their bar.

TOTCF will select the date/time of the live judging for each advancing bartender and bartender will be available to participate in the live judging. In the event the bartender is unavailable to participate in the live judging during the date/time selected by TOTC, then TOTCF reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify the bartender from the Competition.

The duration of the live judging will be no more than 1 hour, and the live judging will be a private event, however judges, representatives of Tales of the Cocktail and Johnnie Walker may be permitted to photograph or record presentations.

### Live Judging Code of Conduct

All parties, including judges and competitors will be treated with respect; all items must be prepared items without 3<sup>rd</sup> party assistance; competitors may not attempt to bribe/coerce judges or engage in no cheating or deceptive practices. Further, the judges will not reveal the scores to the bartenders at the conclusion of the live judging.

**Competition Details:** During the Individual Live Judging Phase bartenders will present their Showcase Serve and Couture Cocktail in front of two judges who will score the presentations and must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Challenge Parameters for each challenge as outlined in submission guidelines
- Challenge requirements and restrictions for each challenge as outlined in the submission guidelines
- Must present 2x serves of Showcase Serve and 2x serves of the Couture Cocktail
- Bartender is responsible for providing all ingredients

**Judging:** The challenges will be judged according to the same criteria outlined in the online judging phase

**Advancement to Finals:** At the end of the Individual Live Judging Phase, the scores of all bartenders who presented their serves will be tallied and the top 3 scoring bartenders will qualify to advance to the Live Finale in Miami on December 4th.

## Stage #3 Miami Finale

The Live Finale will take place in Miami on December 4th, 2025

- Bartenders who are selected to compete in the Finale in Miami must be available to travel between December 3-5th.
- If a bartender who has been selected as a top 3 finalist is unable to travel to Miami during this date range their spot in the finals will be released and the bartender with the next highest score will advance to the finale.

**Finale Competition Details:** During the Miami Finale, bartenders will present their Showcase Serve and Couture Cocktail in front of three judges who will score the presentations and must adhere to the following guidelines:

- All three Finalists will have the same opportunity to prepare both items under the same conditions as well as the same opportunity to present their creations to the judging panel.
- Challenge Parameters for each challenge as outlined in submission guidelines
- Challenge requirements and restrictions for each challenge as outlined in the submission guidelines
- Finalists will be presenting their Showcase Serve and Couture Cocktails in front of three (3) judges and must present 3x serves of Showcase Serve and 3x serves of the Couture Cocktail
- Judging Criteria will remain unchangedL
  - Challenge #1: Couture as inspiration: 30 points, Sensory Engagement: 25 points, The Wow Factor: 25 points, Execution and Flow: 20 Points
  - Challenge #2: Couture Element: 30 points, Blending Artistry: 25, Cocktail Storytelling: 25 points, Taste and Balance: 20 points
- Finalists will be asked to participate in showcasing their serves during the cocktail hour of Brand Sponsored Influencer Dinner on the evening of December 4th
- Finalists will be responsible for providing all bespoke/homemade ingredients or specialty items for their challenge serves. They should be prepared to provide quantities for competition serves (3 judges) and cocktail hour serves. Total number of cocktail hour serves will be communicated when headcount has been confirmed.
- Announcement of the winner will take place on the evening of December 4th during an announcement party.

**Travel to Miami:** Each Finalist will receive: (a) round-trip coach class airfare for one (1) person from an airport close to the Finalist's home to Miami; (b) hotel accommodations for 2 nights; (c) ground transportation in Miami; (d) stipends for ground transportation to/from home airport and meal stipend.

Each Finalist may be required to complete and return a declaration of eligibility, a liability/publicity release, a current W-9, and an authorization to conduct a background check. TOTCF reserves the right (in its sole discretion) to disqualify a Finalist if the individual does not sign the necessary forms within five (5) days of the date notification is sent. If a Semi-Finalist returns these documents on time, and in TOTCF's sole discretion, passes the background check, they will be invited to participate in the Finale.

### Stage #3 Prize Trip

**Trip to Scotland:** The Winning Bartender and a Guest will receive: (a) round-trip coach class airfare from an airport close to the Winner's home to Scotland; (b) hotel accommodations for a minimum of 3 nights; (c) ground transportation in Scotland; and (d) an exclusive one-on-one session with Johnnie Walker Master Blender, Dr. Emma Walker. Together, they will craft an exclusive blend, and take home a personal bottle for the bartender's collection. The Guest must be 21 years of age or older.

The approximate retail value of the trip is \$8,500. The actual value of the trip will vary depending on various factors, including the date of booking, the point of departure, and the dates of travel. Please see the Prize Details Section below for additional details. Finalists will be responsible for passport, visa if needed, vaccines, luggage, tax, meals, and the cost of other incidental expenses.

## General Terms

**Supplies:** For all stages, participants will be responsible for all expenses that are not explicitly stated as provided by Tales of the Cocktail Foundation in these rules.

**Agreement to Terms and Conditions:** By participating in this Competition, participants indicate their unconditional agreement to these Official Rules, the [TOTCF Code of Conduct](#), the [Diageo Marketing Code](#) and TOTCF's decisions, which are final and binding. Moreover, by participating, they represent that they are complying with any policies their employer may have regarding participation in competitions of this nature. Participants cannot win a prize unless they comply with all requirements set forth herein. TOTCF reserves the right to change these Official Rules at any time, without prior notice. Any changes will be posted on the Website.

**Background Check:** TOTCF reserves the right (at any point and in its sole discretion) to disqualify any individual if, based on the results of the background check – or on an individual's other actions or statements – TOTCF concludes that the individual will not be a good representative for the TOTCF or Diageo brands. Any actions of the competitor outside of accordance with the [TOTCF Code of Conduct](#) will result in disqualification from the program.

**Rights to Entries:** By entering, participants irrevocably: (a) grant TOTCF, Diageo and Johnnie Walker and each of their agents, licensees, and assigns (collectively, the "Rights Holders") the unconditional and non-exclusive right and permission to copyright, reproduce, encode, store, copy, transmit, publish, post, broadcast, display, publicly perform, adapt, modify, create derivative works of, exhibit, and otherwise use their Entry as-is or as-edited in any media throughout the world for any purpose, without limitation, and without additional review, compensation, or approval from the competitor or any other party for five (5) years from the date they submitted the Entry; (b) waive any rights of copyrights, trademark rights, privacy rights, and any other legal or moral rights that may preclude the Rights Holders' use of the Entry, as outlined above, or require any further permission for the Rights Holders to use the Entry; and (c) agree not to instigate, support, maintain, or authorize any action, claim, or lawsuit against the Rights Holders on the grounds that any use of the Entry, or any derivative works, infringes any of their rights as creator of the Entry, including, without limitation, copyrights, trademark rights, and moral rights.

**Publicity:** Except where prohibited, by participating in the Competition, participants agree that the Rights Holders and any media attending events related to the Competition may use their name, likeness, voice, opinions, photographs, videos, recipes, event-related audio-visual footage, biographical information, state of residence, and/or any other record of their participation in the Competition for promotional purposes in any press releases, advertisements, television, radio, film, documentary, internet, social media, or in any other publication or media without further payment or consideration and to license the right to use such intellectual property to others. Participants may be required to sign additional releases regarding publicity.

**Prize Details:** Participants are responsible for paying any taxes, including income taxes and any and all other costs and expenses not listed in the Official Rules. Participants may be required to provide a Social Security Number for tax reporting purposes. Any prize details not specified above will be determined by TOTCF, at its sole discretion. The actual value of the trips will vary depending on various factors, including the date of booking, the point of departure, and dates of travel. A prize may not be transferred and must be accepted as awarded. Participants may not request cash or a substitute prize; however, TOTCF reserves the right to substitute a prize (or component thereof) with another prize (or component

thereof) of equal or greater value if the prize is not available for any reason, as determined by TOTCF, in its sole discretion. Participants must travel on the dates specified by TOTCF. Once travel documents are issued, travel arrangements cannot be changed. If participants cannot travel on the dates specified by TOTCF, they will not be permitted to compete in the next stage of the Competition. Participants are responsible for securing passports, visas, and any other documents necessary for international travel. If the Competition is canceled, no prizes may be awarded.

Miami Finale travel must be taken by the winner alone so as to participate in the Finale Competition; while the Scotland trip is for the winner and a guest who must be 21 years or older. The Scotland trip may be subject to blackout/holiday dates, advanced notice requirements and a travel deadline which do not apply to the Miami trip. The guest must sign a release to participate in the prize travel. The winner (and guest) must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner during the trip, including when interacting with Dr. Emma Walker

**General Conditions:** In the event that the operation, security, or administration of the Competition is impaired in any way, TOTCF may, in its sole discretion, either: (a) cancel or suspend the Competition to address the impairment and then resume the Competition; or (b) award the prizes according to the criteria set forth above from among the eligible entries received up to the time of the impairment. TOTCF reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify and seek damages from any individual who tampers with the operation of the Competition, violates these Official Rules or the TOTCF Code of Conduct, or acts in a disruptive or unsportsmanlike manner. TOTCF's failure to enforce any term of these Terms and Conditions shall not constitute a waiver of that provision. Proof of sending any communication to TOTCF by mail shall not be deemed proof of receipt of that communication by TOTCF. The Competition is subject to federal, state, and local laws and regulations and is void where prohibited. Participants agree that, while participating in the contest and in their private lives, they will (a) not commit an offense involving moral turpitude; (b) not engage in activities that may create any public scandal, disrepute, widespread contempt, or public ridicule; (c) not harass, embarrass, offend, insult, or denigrate individuals or groups; (d) not damage the person or property of others; (e) that they will treat all other contestants, judges, and related competition personnel with respect; and (f) that they will drink responsibly. Travel and cash prizes will be taxable to participants, and they should expect to receive a Form 1099.

**Release and Limitations of Liability:** By participating in the Competition, participants hereby release and hold harmless TOTCF, Diageo and Johnnie Walker, and each of their respective parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, and each of their respective officers, directors, employees, and agents (the "Released Parties") from and against any claim or cause of action arising out of participation in the Competition or receipt or use of any prize, including, but not limited to: (a) unauthorized human intervention in the Competition; (b) technical errors; (c) printing errors; (d) lost, late, postage-due, misdirected, or undeliverable mail; (e) errors in the administration of the Competition or the processing of Entries; (f) injury or damage to participants and their property and/or (g) injury or damage they cause to other persons or property. Participants further agree to defend, indemnify, release, and hold the Released Parties harmless from any claims related to their participation, including damage to other persons and property, and from any claims that their use of their Entry (as contemplated in these Rules) violates or infringes upon the rights of any third party. Participants waive the right to claim any damages whatsoever, including, but not limited to, punitive, consequential, direct, or indirect damages.

**Disputes:** All disputes arising out of or related to these rules, the Competition, or any other matter shall be resolved through binding arbitration filed and heard in New Orleans, Louisiana, pursuant to American

Arbitration Association Rules using a single arbitrator. Each contestant waives any rights to challenge this forum and venue or the application of Louisiana law. Should this arbitration agreement be held non-enforceable or in order to enforce an arbitration award, each contestant irrevocably submits and consents to the jurisdiction and venue of the courts located in Orleans Parish, Louisiana, and waives any objection that such forum is inconvenient. All issues and questions concerning the construction, validity, interpretation, and enforceability of these Terms and Conditions, participant's rights and obligations, or the rights and obligations of TOTCF in connection with the Competition, shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of Louisiana, without giving effect to any choice of law or conflict of law rules (whether of Louisiana or any other jurisdiction), which would cause the application of the laws of any jurisdiction other than Louisiana. Each contestant agrees that any claim or dispute related to the Competition shall be conducted only on an individual basis and not in a class, collective, or representative action or as a named or unnamed member in a class, collective, consolidated, or private attorney general action.

**Event Organizer:** The Competition is brought to you by Tales of the Cocktail Foundation, % Taylor & Willis CPAs, 3500 N Causeway Blvd, Suite 1145, Metairie, LA 70002.

Diageo Americas, Inc. is not sponsoring the Competition and is not responsible for the administration of the Competition or the awarding of the prizes.