



Contest rules

2nd Edition of the Young Bartender Cocktail & Coffee Contest

Rotterdam The Netherlands
3 February – 6 February 2026
Albeda Horecacollege





Introduction

Dear participants, cocktail, coffee enthusiasts and mentors,

Welcome to the **Young Bartender Cocktail & Coffee Contest 2026**,

the ultimate student

Cocktail competition where creativity, skill, and fun come together! This event is specially designed for students who have a passion for mixology and coffee want to showcase their talents. Whether you're a novice bartender or have a passion for barista,

This is your chance to shine and compete for the title of **best student bartender 2026**

During the Young Bartender Cocktail & Coffee Contest, students will take on the challenge of creating the most surprising and flavorful cocktails and coffee. This event not only provides a platform for your skills but also offers the opportunity to learn from experienced professionals, discover new techniques, and expand your network in the world of bartender and barista.

Our competition is divided into several exciting categories, including Cocktail Mystery box,

Coffee Odd One Out, Dice Challenge, Black & White Coffees, Signature Coffee Cocktail each drink will be judged by a panel of renowned experts who will evaluate based on taste, presentation, originality, and technical execution.

We encourage all participants to let their creativity flow and showcase their unique style. This competition is not just about winning; it's a celebration of the art of cocktail and coffee making and the diversity of flavors that our students bring to the table.

We wish all participants the best of luck and fun during the Young Bartender Cocktail & Coffee Contest 2026. May the best bartender and barista win!

Best regards,

Ferdi Munts: Mentor

Rubie Pothoven: Student, General Manager

Issam Adra: Student, Competition Manager





About the contest

Young Bartender Cocktail & coffee Contest 2026: Event Overview

We are thrilled to welcome bartending talents from across Europe to the Young Bartender Cocktail & Coffee Contest 2026! Below is a breakdown of the key event dates and activities to help you prepare for an exciting few days in Rotterdam.

February 3, 2026: Arrival and Welcome

This is the arrival day for both international and Dutch schools. It's important that all participants attend the welcome talk in the evening, where you'll be introduced to the contest, meet fellow participants, and receive essential information about the competition. This is a perfect opportunity to get acquainted with the judges, organizers, and your competitors, as well as to set the tone for the exciting days ahead.

February 4, 2026: Day 1 of the Competition

The first competition day will feature a carousel of three challenges, designed to test a range of barista skills. Participants will rotate through:

Coffee Odd One Out: Participants are presented with different coffees and must identify the one that stands out from the others.

Dice Challenge – Black & White Coffees: Two dice are rolled to determine which coffees must be prepared: One dice selects a black coffee. The other dice selects a white coffee.

Signature Coffee Cocktail: Participants create an original coffee-based cocktail using sponsored products and one ingredient from their home country. Pre-prepared ingredients are not allowed. **Only one personal ingredient is permitted.**





February 5, 2026: Day 2 of the Competition

On Day 2, the focus will be on the Cocktail Mystery Box Challenge, where participants will create a cocktail from surprise ingredients. This test of creativity and improvisation will showcase the best of your bartending abilities.

In the evening, all participants are invited to the grand gala, where we will celebrate the achievements of the competitors and announce the award winners. The prize ceremony will recognize the standout performances from the competition, and the evening will be filled with celebration, networking, and fun. Don't miss this chance to shine!.

February 6, 2026: Departure Day

After an incredible few days of competition and celebration February 6, is the departure day for international participants. This is your time to reflect on the experience, say goodbye to your fellow competitors and leave Rotterdam with new skills, friendships, and memories.

Stay tuned for more details as the event approaches, and don't forget to check our website: www.albeda.nl/youngbartenders & Instagram updates.

We can't wait to see you in february for an unforgettable experience!





Contest Category: Day one

Rules and Regulations for Day 1: Participants will rotate through a series of three different challenges, each designed to test specific skills in coffee craftsmanship. This day assesses the participants precision, knowledge and creativity in various aspects of coffee preparation, including brewing techniques, latte art, flavor profiling, and the creation of innovative coffee-based cocktails.

Coffee Odd One Out: This challenge is all about taste and concentration. Participants are presented with several coffees, one of which is slightly different from the others. The difference may be in origin, roast, or flavor profile. The task is to carefully taste and identify the coffee that is the “odd one out. It will be brewed filter coffee.

Dice Challenge Black & White Coffees

The dice challenge adds a playful and surprising element to the competition.

With two dice, the coffees to be prepared are determined:

The first die selects a black coffee.

The second die selects a white coffee.

Requirements: Each participant must prepare 2 black coffees and 2 white coffees.

Latte art is allowed, but not required.

Possible coffees

Black Coffees

1. Espresso
2. Americano
3. Ristretto
4. Lungo
5. Long Black
6. Doppio

White Coffees

1. Cappuccino
2. Flat White
3. Cortado leche y leche
4. Cortado
5. Espresso Macchiato
6. Latte Macchiato

Participants demonstrate their ability to prepare both traditional black coffees and milk-based recipes with technical accuracy and consistency.





Signature Coffee Cocktail: This challenge focuses on creativity and personality. Participants design their own coffee cocktail, combining sponsored products with exactly one ingredient from their home country. It's not only about flavor, but also about storytelling: what makes this your signature drink? Participants are expected to explain the inspiration behind their cocktail, the significance of the chosen ingredient, and how the drink represents their identity. Flavor, presentation and creativity come together to create a signature beverage that goes beyond the ordinary. The Coffee cocktail must be prepared entirely on the spot, showcasing authenticity and craftsmanship. **strictly prohibited to use pre made ingredients.**

Room 1 and 2: Create your own Coffee Cocktail

- Task: Participants create a unique Coffee Cocktail.
- Time Limits:
 - o 20 minutes to backstage mise en place and prepare to concept
 - o 5 minutes for bar mise en place.
 - o 10 minutes to present to the judges.
- Rules:
 - o You need to make two identical cocktails
 - o Your own glass are allowed



Contest Category: Day two

Rules and Regulations for Day 2: Mystery Box Challenge Participants will have the opportunity to showcase their creativity and skills by creating a cocktail using ingredients from a mystery box. This challenge tests the participants' ingenuity and ability to craft something unique.

Mystery Box

Each participant will receive a mystery box containing a selection of four ingredients, which must be used to create a cocktail. use at least two of the four ingredients.

Additional Resources

There will be tables provided with obligated glassware, mixers, distillates, fruits, and various products to create your own ingredients. These resources will be available to all participants for the cocktail creation process.

Cocktail Requirement

Participants must prepare four identical cocktails in total, ensuring consistency in both presentation and taste. **Own ingredients or glasswork are not allowed.**

Recipe Development:

Participants have 1 hour to develop and prepare their cocktail.

After developing the cocktail, recipes must be submitted to the judges. No changes can be made to the recipes after submission.

Time Limits On Stage:

- o Bar mise and place: 5 minutes
- o Story telling: 2,5 minutes to tell your story of the cocktail to the judges
- o Cocktail presentation: 10 minutes to make the cocktail.
- o Cleaning of the bar: 5 minutes

Judging Criteria:

- o The judges will evaluate the cocktails based on taste, presentation, creativity, and technical execution.





General Rules

Preparation and Execution

1. Tools and Materials:

- o Participants are allowed to bring additional tools and materials to enhance their presentation. Examples include smoking devices, bubble machines, liquid nitrogen (vom), dry ice, etc. You also need your own equipment, shakers, strainers, barspoons, you know what you will need!. **Own glasses are not allowed**

Conduct and Professionalism

• Maintaining a Clean Workspace:

- o Participants must ensure that their work area is kept clean and organized at all times. This reflects professionalism and respect for the competition environment.

• Respect for Ingredients:

- o The maximum amount of alcoholic drink per cocktail must not exceed 100ml.
- o Handle all ingredients with care and respect. Proper treatment of ingredients is essential for maintaining the quality and integrity of the cocktails. **Is not allowed to alter sponsored likeur, Rum or others.**

• Respect towards Judges:

- o Show utmost respect to the judges at all times. This includes attentively listening to feedback, following their instructions, and maintaining a professional demeanor.

• Respect towards the Organization:

- o Participants must show respect to the event organizers and staff, adhering to the rules and guidelines set forth for the competition.





- Sustainability

- o Participants are encouraged to be mindful of sustainability throughout the competition. This includes minimizing waste, using eco-friendly materials where possible, and being conscious of ingredient sourcing. Judges will also consider the sustainability of your cocktail creation and the techniques used. Think creatively about how you can incorporate sustainable practices into your presentation and preparation.

Creativity and Originality

- Being Creative and Original:

- o Participants are encouraged to demonstrate creativity and originality in their cocktail creations and presentations. Innovative approaches and unique ideas will be highly valued.

Independence

- No Contact with Teachers:

- o Participants must work independently and are strictly prohibited from contacting teachers or receiving any external assistance during the competition. Rely on your own knowledge and skills.

By adhering to these rules, participants will ensure a fair, respectful, and professionally conducted competition, showcasing their talents and creativity in the best possible light.