



2026 Rules, Regulations & Guidelines

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and principles on the MONIN CUP 2026 to create a worldwide standard. All the necessary information about the final competition, competitor requirements, judges, and rules surrounding the event is detailed here.

General Information

1. Thematic

Competitors submitting 2026 MONIN Cup will have to comply with the following thematic for their cocktail creation:

TIMELESS TWISTS

A Bartending Competition Bridging Past and Future

Look to the past for inspiration—revive forgotten flavours, honour time-tested techniques, and explore the stories behind iconic serves. Then, channel your creativity into reimagining them for today and tomorrow. Whether you're infusing a local tradition with a modern spin or transforming a classic recipe, your challenge is to create a drink that captures the soul of the past—while pushing boundaries and incorporating modern tools and skills.

Innovation can take many forms. It could mean using contemporary ingredients, exploring new presentation methods, and new techniques... The key is to modernize in a way that feels authentic, creative, and exciting.

Respect tradition, but don't be afraid to rework it. The future belongs to those who dare to twist the familiar into something fresh, forward-thinking, and unforgettable.

2. Calendar & Selection process

- January to October 2026: **Regional Rounds** (Regions: Europe, Africa, Middle East, Asia Pacific, Greater China, North America, Southern America, India, and satellites)
- December 8th and 9th, 2026: **International Finale** in France (Paris)

SEMI-FINALES	<i>Finalists selected at semi-finales to attend Internationale Finale*</i>
EUROPE	7
MIDDLE EAST	4
AFRICA	2
ASIA PACIFIC	3
GREATER CHINA	2
NORTH AMERICA	3
SOUTHERN AMERICA	2
INDIA AND SATELLITES	2
TOTAL *	24

(*) The principle of **one representative competitor per country must be respected**, so the number of competitors taking part in the finale may be lower, or the repartition per area might be slightly modified if necessary.

If you are unable to meet these deadlines or attend the dates of the competition, please inform your Monin representative or contact immediately.

Candidates

1. Competitor selection process

For each competitor to take part in the competition, all the following criteria must be met:

- Competitors should be either working bartenders or students from bar schools.
- Participants must be 27 or younger at the time of the final (**born in 1999 or later**)
- Competitors must follow the exact recipe they submitted for the regional rounds.
- On the day of the competition, all competitors will need to bring their own tools and may bring their own glasses¹.
- On the day of the competition, all competitors will have to bring their own tools and glasses and follow the exact recipe they submitted. Changes to the recipe could result in points being deducted or disqualification from the competition.
- All competitors attending the semi-finales and Internationale Finale must be comfortable speaking and presenting their drinks in English. From the semi-final, all tests and the competition process will be held **in English**.

2. Competitor Code of Conduct

The organizing committee requires that all competitors be honest in their behavior and respect the rights, opinions, and culture of fellow competitors and all others involved in the competition.

A competitor is an ambassador not only for the bar/school they are representing, but also for the bartender craft. A competitor's interactions with the public and other professionals greatly reflect on the global bartender community. Please respect this responsibility.

¹ If partnerships with glassware brands have been secured by the local organization, glasses can also be provided on-site.

The Nationals and semi-Finales

1. General Guidelines

All competitors are expected to be committed to pursuing drink excellence and are encouraged to share information and knowledge with one another to improve the craft of bartending.

By entering this competition, each competitor agrees to give MONIN the full right to use all cocktail and drink recipes created and presented during all stages of the competition for use in any and all publications.

MONIN wishes to take, reproduce, and use photos or videos of the event for promotional purposes in link with the event. As part of the competitor's participation in this event, MONIN asks that they read and certify the provided model release agreement and return it fully signed and completed before the competition starts.

The winner of each country or region earns the chance to represent their region at the semi-final event by showcasing the same cocktail they submitted during registration. It's crucial to stick to the theme throughout the competition stages to ensure consistency and a fair playing field.

Consistency in theme interpretation guarantees a smooth transition from local to global stages, allowing participants to showcase their cocktail expertise on an international scale.

If this is not respected, we will not be able to welcome a competitor whose recipe is not aligned with these rules & regulations.

2. Competition Format and Timings

Competitors will have 10 minutes in the pre-stage area to prepare their garnishes, finalize their ingredients, and ensure that all aspects of their drink are ready for presentation (garnishes can be prepared beforehand). Bar tools and glassware needed for the presentation will also need to be checked.

Once the competition begins, competitors will have 3 minutes to set up their station.

After the countdown, they will have 10 minutes to prepare and present their cocktail, explaining its inspiration and connection to the competition's theme. Four identical servings of the cocktail will be prepared, three for the judges and one for photography or display.

Finally, competitors will have 2 minutes to clean up their station and return all equipment and ingredients to their original places.

The order in which competitors will present their drinks will be announced on the day of the competition.

3. Judges

Selecting Judges

The organizing committee (i.e., MONIN) shall recruit judges for each category requiring a judgment. Judges can include MONIN staff or representatives, an industry professional from the bar scene, chefs, an industry influencer, F&B managers, etc...

Judges code of conduct

All selected judges must:

- Be committed to cocktail excellence and promotion of the bartender profession. Judge each drink on its own merit and not against other drinks.
- Refuse to judge in case of a conflict of interest. If a judge is deemed biased in any way towards a competitor or is perceived by others to have a conflict of interest with one or more competitors, the judge may be disqualified from judging.
- Behave ethically, honestly, and with integrity. Respect fellow judges, competitors, volunteers, and staff at all times.

- Appreciate and be sensitive to culturally different opinions and customs.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality. Do not misuse privileged information in areas sensitive to fellow judges, competitors, volunteers, or staff that might cause harm or embarrassment.
- Abstain from talking to each other unless all the judges have finished filling in the scoring sheet.

4. Rules & Regulations

General Considerations

When the recipe is submitted, the organizing committee will specify which ingredients can be provided and which must be brought by the competitor. Some ingredients may not be available at the competition location, so make sure they are taken into consideration. We also encourage participants to consider seasonal differences when choosing their ingredients. The semi-final event may be held several months after the national event, leading to supply difficulties.

Competitors will need to bring all their own glassware or serving vessels, making sure there is enough for the 4 drinks.

Participants are advised to bring their own equipment to prepare their drink and garnish (e.g., Jigger, shaker, etc.). It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure their equipment and mise en place are complete within the 3-minute preparation time. Garnishes will be prepared separately.

Recipe and ingredient requirements

To qualify, each final drink must include a minimum of 10 ml of any MONIN product, including Monin Syrups or Monin Fruit Purées. Competitors may use multiple MONIN products if desired.

Preparations made using the MONIN fusion technique do not qualify toward the 10 ml minimum. These may be used, but only in addition to the required amount of unaltered MONIN product.

Competitors may incorporate any edible ingredients from brands that do not compete with MONIN's existing portfolio, specifically syrups, purées, or liqueurs. There are no limits on the number or quantity of ingredients used, provided all components are safe for consumption.

Homemade ingredients are permitted, but they must satisfy the following criteria:

- It can be an infusion, bitter, juice, fat wash, etc...
- Homemade syrups, cordials, or similar products must be based on MONIN products. For instance, "Pineapple and curry syrup" should be a blend of MONIN Pineapple syrup and curry powder.
- If using a homemade syrup, cordial, or comparable product, an unadulterated MONIN product must also be included in the recipe.
- Homemade syrups are forbidden if an identical flavor exists in the MONIN range.
- All homemade components must be thoroughly explained, including the recipe, and submitted on the registration form before the application deadline.
- It must be prepared in advance of your arrival at the competition venue, as the organizers cannot guarantee the necessary conditions for on-site preparation (equipment, timing, utensils, etc.).

Please note that the homemade products will be tested by the organizing team before they are added to the final preparation of the cocktail to ensure they have not been altered.

Garnishes can be edible or not, as long as they are consistent with the drink or the competition's theme.

Judging Criteria

Judging will consider:

- The candidate's presentation: Personal presentation and ability to communicate in English.
- Cleanliness: Having an organised, clean, and efficient way of working, maintaining a clean work area, avoiding spillages.
- Technical skills: The competitor's skill and proper use of bartending techniques. The competition requires the cocktail to have been prepared on the spot when it is presented to the jury; a complete pre-batch will be penalised in the scoring.
- Drink evaluation: The appearance and presentation, the aroma, taste, balance, originality, and how it links to the theme of the competition.

Penalties shall apply for exceeding the time limit.

5. Competitors

Competitors should be in the preparation room 30 minutes prior to his/her scheduled time slot. Any competitor who is not on stage at the start of their 3-minute preparation time may be disqualified.

The organizing committee reserves the right to reject any participant, recipe, or recipe name if considered unacceptable or in breach of the rules.

6. Results gathering & announcements

Once all competitors have presented their drinks, the scoring committee will compile the scores and determine each competitor's ranking. The committee will double-check all the results to avoid any mistakes.

The International Finale

General Considerations

The MONIN Cup Internationale Finale will take place in Paris on the 8th and 9th of December 2026. The final stage of the competition will focus on individual creativity. Each finalist will be expected to work and present a cocktail that reflects their personal style, vision, and identity as a bartender. This last round will be designed to highlight originality, concept development, and the ability to deliver a distinctive and expressive serve.

The format of this finale stage is currently being developed. All relevant details will be communicated to local teams and semi-finalists ahead of the event to ensure smooth preparation and alignment.

Rewards

Semi-final participants will receive prize packages and a cash award in recognition of their performance.

At the international finale, winners will receive €5,000 for first place, €3,000 for second, and €2,000 for third.

Following the finale, the three finalists will become official representatives of the competition and may be invited to collaborate with MONIN on select promotional activities in the following year.