

# Baltic Wine List Awards 2018

## in association with Amber Beverage Group

Baltic  
**WINE LIST**  
AWARDS  
**2018**



## GENERAL RULES of the AWARDS

### BASIC INFO

#### Who's behind the Awards?

The organiser of the *Baltic Wine List Awards* is *Riga Wine & Champagne* festival (SIA Nords Event Communications) in association with the main sponsor *Amber Beverage Group* and the leading Baltic and European wine personalities as Jury members.

#### Our idea?

**#1** *Baltic Restaurant Wine List Awards* has been created to discover and spotlight Baltic restaurants, bars, hotels with good, great and extraordinary wine lists at a time when an appreciation for wine is becoming an integral part of Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian cultures.

**#2** The Awards are designed to improve wine selection and service in the Baltics, to encourage strong and passionate wine lists that complement our restaurants and cuisines, as well as to raise awareness of the impact great wine lists can have on attractiveness and profitability of HoReCa (+ Bar) industry.

**#3** The Awards' mission is to boost the consumption and understanding of good wine to support the striving Baltic wine culture, and accelerate the growth of significance of the art of sommelier in the Baltic restaurants!

#### General Timeline?

**#1** Submission of applications: Dec 8, 2017 – Feb 9, 2018.

#2 Judging process: Feb 9, 2018 – Mar 9, 2018.

#3 The Awards Ceremony – at the conclusion of the first Baltic Wine Forum *Wine + Money* during *Riga Wine & Champagne* on March 9, 2018.

#4 Publication of the Awards in Baltic Outlook, airBaltic's magazine & general publicity

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### Entry Fees?

*Early-bird* fee of €149+VAT per restaurant: Dec 8 – Jan 12, 2018

Regular fee of €199+VAT per restaurant: Jan 12- Feb 8, 2018

*Please note:* the *Baltic Wine List Awards* **entry fee includes one admission** to the first **Baltic Wine Forum *Wine + Money*** on March 9, 2018 featuring some of the best European sommeliers and wine directors sharing their knowledge and stories on building engaging and profitable wine lists.

### How to apply?

**Step 1.** Filling in **on-line application** and uploading documents via [www.rigawinechampagne.lv](http://www.rigawinechampagne.lv)

**Step 2.** Mailing in materials - you must **mail the following documents** to us after you complete the online portion of the application:

#1 The exact copy of your current wine list (or a print-out of your iPad list)

#2 The exact copy of your current food menu (dinner/lunch)

Please address your wine list and food menu to:

SIA Nords Event Communications

Baltic Wine List Awards

Attn: Aigars Nords

Brivibas street 40 – 24, Riga, LV1050, Latvia

**Step 3. Confirmation** - once your application has been paid, processed and complete, we will send a confirmation e-mail.

### Who can apply?

Any restaurant, bar, hotel, café, club with a *good, great or extraordinary* wine list that appeals to wine lovers can apply for the Baltic Wine List Awards. The awards are primarily aimed at Baltic (Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian) restaurants, however, anybody who feels Baltic in heart (St.Petersburgh, Stockholm, Helsinki) is welcome to apply too.

## THE JURY MEMBERS

### Mark Andrew MW, Jury Member

Master of Wine and co-founder of Noble Rot magazine and Noble Rot Restaurant & Bar in London. Noble Rot won Wine List of The Year at 2017 National Restaurant Awards and 2016 Harden's London Restaurant Awards.

**Andreas Larsson, Jury Member**

World Sommelier Champion 2007, Swedish Sommelier Champion 2001 and 2002, Nordic Sommelier Champion 2002, Ruinart European Sommelier of the Year 2004.

**Raimonds Tomsons, Head of Jury**

Europe's Best Sommelier 2017 and World's No.7 Sommelier 2016. CEO of Vincents, one of Baltic's leading restaurants. Raimonds is Board member of the Latvian Association of Sommeliers, Jury member of Latvia's *Wine of the Year* competition.

**Aigars Nords, Jury Member**

The first in the Baltics to acquire WSET Diploma, he set up *Riga Wine & Champagne* festival in 2012. Since then the festival has grown into a grand celebration of fine wine & champagne, and includes Latvia's most anticipated tastings – Top 100 wines of *Wine of the Year* competition, and *Bubble Parade*.

**Kristjan Peäske, Jury Member**

VP of Estonia's Sommelier Association, he started his career as a maître d' at Pädaste Manor on the island of Muhu, worked in 5\* hotels across Estonia and won a number of sommelier competitions (Estonia's best sommelier, Baltic's best sommelier) before opening Leib in 2011 and Umami in 2014.

**Arūnas Starkus, Jury member**

One of the founding fathers of Lithuanian wine scene, Arunas set up Lithuania's Sommelier Association and founded the Sommelier School alongside his duties of running a successful wine importing business *Vyno Klubas*, and organizing *Wine Days* exhibition. Arunas is also studying for *Master of Wine* qualification.

**Please note:** In order to avoid potential conflicts of interest, Raimonds Tomsons will not be judging Latvia's wine lists, Kristjan Peaske will not be judging Estonia's wine lists, and Arūnas Starkus will not be judging Lithuania's wine lists.

**GENERAL CRITERIA**

There are no "right" or "wrong" answers, however, the Jury will consider the following aspects of the submitted wine lists.

**Criteria set 1.** What's inside the list? 50 points out of 100

Is the wine list a stylistic choice in relation to restaurant or rather a «one-list-fits-all» wine list? How suitable are the wine selections for the cuisine and personality of the restaurant? Is there a spread of countries and wine styles from across the world? Is there a focus on wines from a single country? A particular regional focus and strength? In-depth listings of producers? A good mix of vintages - age, maturity, quality, style? Is there a good by-the-glass program? A selection of half-bottles and larger formats?

**Criteria set 2.** How much are they charging? 25 points out of 100

How high are the markups relative to the market and relative to the type of restaurant/wine bar? How affordable are entry price point wines? Does the pricing of the wines encourage spending more? Does the list provides tempting prices further up the list? Are all wines priced with a fixed percentage margins from bottom to top? What kind of markups are there on the famous wine names?

**Criteria set 3.** How is it presented? 20 points out of 100

How clear is the organization and presentation? Is the list accurate and complete? Does every wine in the list has its origin, producer, wine, vintage, price, and format or serving size covered? Is the design and the feel of the wine list in the context of the restaurant? Who are the people behind the wine list and who are on the floor serving wine - how knowledgeable and experienced are they?

**Criteria set 4:** The element of surprise? 5 points out of 100

How original, brave, innovative and one-of-a-kind is the list? Have the owners/sommeliers gone out of their way to secure the wines in the list? Does it offer a selection of smaller, obscure, hard-to-find producers, vintages, styles, varieties?

## **THE AWARDS**

The Baltic Wine List Awards will feature three types of "stars" – created as a collection of wine drops – to award the best wine lists:

- ✓ One Star (70-79 out of 100 points) – a very good wine list in relation to the criteria.
- ✓ Two Stars (80-89 out of 100 points) – an excellent wine list in relation to the criteria.
- ✓ Three Stars (90-100 out of 100 points) – an outstanding wine list in relation to the criteria

## AWARD CERTIFICATES, STICKERS, LOGOs

We encourage the award recipients to display the following Award certificates:



We also encourage you show the Awards' door stickers and stamps on the actual wine lists – please contact us to receive the stickers, electronic logos and stamps:



## SPECIAL AWARD CATEGORIES

Based on the applications received, the Jury deserves the right to award special award categories, for example, but not limited to:

- ✓ *Best Wine List of Latvia/ Lithuania/ Estonia/ Best Baltic Wine List;*
- ✓ *Best Hotel Wine List/ Best Wine Bar List / Best Restaurant Wine List / Best Wine Bar-Shop list, etc.;*
- ✓ *The Most Complete/ Best Value/ Best Presentation/ The Most Surprising List;*
- ✓ *Best Champagne/ Sparkling/ Fortified/ Bordeaux/ Best Old-World List / Best New World List, etc.;*
- ✓ *Best Large/ Medium-size/ Compact Wine list;*
- ✓ *Best by-the-glass list, Best selection of Large format bottles.*

Three brands by *Amber Beverage Group – Frescobaldi, Arinzano, Achaval Ferrer* – have the right to award Special Prizes as suggested by the Jury.

*AirBaltic* deserves the right to award the *Best Bordeaux Wine List* honouring the airline's newly opened direct flights to Bordeaux.

## AWARD CEREMONY + FORUM

The first *Baltic Wine List Awards* will be presented on March 9, 2018 at Biblioteka No.1 Restaurant in Riga, Latvia. The Awards Ceremony will be at the conclusion of the *Baltic Wine Forum Wine + Money* at 16:00.

We strongly encourage attending the Wine Forum from 10:00 to 16:00 – as each participant will have one ticket of admission to the Forum. We are expecting to gather the leading Baltic and European sommeliers with their stories on building engaging and profitable wine lists. Some of the most notable speakers will include Jury members Mark Andrew MW, Andreas Larsson, Raimonds Tomsons. The leading Baltic restaurateurs and sommeliers – participants of the *Baltic Wine List Awards* - will be present too.

## PUBLICITY

### **Baltic Outlook, airBaltic's inflight magazine:**

A complete list of Award winners will be published at *Baltic Outlook*, the official media partner of *Baltic Restaurant Wine List Awards*, in April 2018. The publication will feature profiles of the winners and will act as a guide to gourmet travellers & restaurant audience.

**Mobile friendly Baltic Wine List awards website:**

A completely redesigned [www.rigawinechampagne.lv](http://www.rigawinechampagne.lv) will include a separate site to showcase the award winners as well as provide a database searchable by country, wine strengths, cuisine along with information on wine specialties, pricing information, links to wine lists, etc.

**Social media Profiles:**

Newly created Baltic Wine List Awards Facebook and Instagram accounts (to be launched during 2017/2018) as well as strong support from Riga Wine & Champagne Facebook and Instagram accounts.

**General publicity:**

General publicity & PR via media relations in Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania.

**CHANGES in RULES**

The organisers deserve the right to change the General Rules of the Baltic Wine List Awards at any time. Last revision of the above rules: December 18, 2017