

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN FOR THE 2022 INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS PRESENTED BY BAR & RESTAURANT EXPO**

**LAS VEGAS** - The Industry Excellence Awards, presented by Bar & Restaurant Expo, recognize, celebrate, and support the individuals who make the independent bar and restaurant industry great.

The new awards are part of the evolution of Bar & Restaurant Expo and honor leaders and teams for their talent, integrity and commitment to equality, sustainability, community, and culture across the industry.

[Nominations](#) are open through January 31, 2022, and winners will be announced at the [2022 Bar & Restaurant Expo](#) on March 21-23, 2022, at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

The Industry Excellence Awards launches this year with ten categories. The categories are:

***Bartender of the Year:*** A bartender of exemplary performance, skill, and dedication, both behind the bar and beyond it. This person has worked tirelessly to improve their bar program, their bar culture, and the industry at large, serving as a positive example for other beverage professionals.

***Chef of the Year:*** A chef who has dedicated themselves to culinary excellence, as well as sustainable, ethical practices and inclusive culture. This individual sets high personal and professional standards for food professionals across the industry, behind the pass and beyond it.

***Operator of the Year:*** A bar/restaurant owner dedicated to exemplary hospitality, creative entrepreneurship, ethical business practices and the betterment of the industry at large. This person serves as a role model, paving the way for a better future for F&B.

***Community Leadership Award:*** This award is open to anyone in F&B who has demonstrated outstanding contributions and dedication to bettering their local community, and by extension, the F&B community at large.

***Innovator of the Year:*** This award is open to anyone in F&B who tirelessly moves the industry forward, pushing existing boundaries and establishing new foundations for the industry to build upon that are both equitable and sustainable.

***Cocktail Bar of the Year:*** A cocktail bar that consistently demonstrates exceptional hospitality, creativity, training, culture and service. The Cocktail Bar of the Year has a unique identity and has established itself as a leader within the category.

***Sports Bar of the Year:*** A place that embodies the spirit of the category, including excellence across design, F&B offerings, training, events and community engagement. The Sports Bar of the Year has a unique brand identity and has established itself as a leader within the category.

***Restaurant of the Year:*** A restaurant that consistently demonstrates exceptional hospitality, creativity, culture and service. This venue boasts a unique atmosphere, thoughtful F&B offerings, and a training program. The Restaurant of the Year has established itself as a leader in the community and has made a significant impact within the industry.

***LGBTQ Venue of the Year:*** This bar or restaurant consistently delivers exceptional hospitality, creativity and service, while championing the LGBTQ community. The LGBTQ Venue of the year fully epitomizes what it means to be an LGBTQ Venue and has a demonstrated history of supporting the queer community.

***Most Original Concept:*** A new or rebranded bar or restaurant that breaks the mold of convention, creating an exciting, new standard likely to make a significant impact in years to come. (Must have launched or re-branded in 2021)

Eligible venues can either be stand-alone concepts or operate within a hotel/resort property within the United States.

All submissions will go through a two-step judging process. The Bar & Restaurant team will select three semi-finalists for each category, for a total of thirty semi-finalists. The thirty semi-finalists will be presented to an anonymous judging panel comprised of previous years' winners and selected participants. The judging panel will select final winners for each category.

All thirty semi-finalists will receive 2 Expo + Party Passes to attend the 2022 Bar & Restaurant Expo, plus coverage on the Expo's website, social media, newsletters and more. In addition, the 10 winners will be given a beautiful custom award, additional media coverage, and a VIP Ticket to attend the Expo in 2023. Winners are also eligible to become part of the judging panel moving forward. To nominate someone for the Industry Excellence Awards, presented by Bar & Restaurant Expo, visit <https://bit.ly/3mZgj1g>.

For more information on the 2022 Bar & Restaurant Expo, visit [barandrestaurantexpo.com](http://barandrestaurantexpo.com).

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### **About Bar & Restaurant Expo**

Bar & Restaurant Expo, formerly known as Nightclub & Bar Show, has continued to evolve to mirror the fast-paced, trend-setting nature of the hospitality industry. The event has been providing the specific tools that bar and restaurant owners, operators, and managers need to grow their businesses, compete,

and succeed in this hyper-competitive and dynamic industry. The Bar & Restaurant Group is a division of the Questex Hospitality Group which also produces VIBE Conference, World Tea Conference & Expo, and daily content on [barandrestaurant.com](http://barandrestaurant.com). Follow Bar & Restaurant on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for all the latest industry news and trends.

### **About Questex**

**Questex helps people live better and longer.** Questex brings people together in the markets that help people **live better**: travel, hospitality and wellness; the industries that help people **live longer**: life science and healthcare; and the technologies that enable and fuel these **new experiences**. We live in **the experience economy** – connecting our ecosystem through live events, surrounded by data insights and digital communities. We deliver experience and real results. **It happens here.**

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