SPARKLING WITH
LIEBHERR

The World's Best Champagne Sommelier Championship in association with Liebherr

DATES:
1 – 3 April 2027, Riga, Latvia

LOCATION:
Hanzas Perons & other venues | Riga, Latvia

#1

WHAT’S THE BIG DEAL?

The inaugural **World's Best Champagne Sommelier Championship (WBCS)** is a groundbreaking, two-day event that crowns the World’s Best Champagne Sommelier - the world’s ultimate Champagne expert!

However, this isn't just another closed-door sommelier *concours*. For the first time on this scale, everyday champagne lovers can step out of the audience to test their own knowledge alongside world-class sommeliers and industry celebrities.

How?

Hosted during the **Riga Wine & Champagne Festival’s signature Bubble Parade**, the WBCS breaks the traditional wine competition mold. While the primary goal is to crown the undisputed Champion - the most knowledgeable and technically skilled Champagne sommelier in the world - the event brings unprecedented twist and accessibility to the format. Much like a mass-participation race following an elite marathon, regular champagne enthusiasts are invited to rub shoulders with the pros and test their Champagne knowledge in a parallel setting.

Initiated by festival founder Aigars Nords alongside industry leaders Raimonds Tomsons (2023 ASI Best Sommelier of the World), Peter Liem (acclaimed author), and Jānis Kaļķis (Latvian Sommelier Association President), the WBCS doubles as a vibrant educational platform. By blending rigorous professional trials with interactive tastings, amateur participation, and high-energy public showcases, the event fosters industry excellence while letting everyone experience the magic of Champagne!

OFFICIAL EVENT NAME:	The World's Best Champagne Sommelier Championship in association with Liebherr
SHORT FORM:	The World’s Best Champagne Sommelier (WBCS)
WINNER'S TITLE:	World's Best Champagne Sommelier

#2

WHO’S IN?

The Championship features two distinct fields: 20 elite professional sommeliers competing for the crown, and 100 champagne enthusiasts joining the action!

The Professional Field (Cap: 20 Competitors)

Reserved for top-tier professional sommeliers worldwide to guarantee a world-class field of play.

APPLICATIONS:	Open November 21, 2026, through January 31, 2027.

SELECTION:	Reviewed and approved by the Championship Jury based on merit, track record, and achievements.
ENTRY FEE:	No fee for qualified candidates based on Jury review.

The Champagne Lover Field (Cap: 100 Enthusiasts)

Open to champagne lovers, writers, bloggers, and passionate fans looking to put their palates to the test!

APPLICATIONS:	Open November 21, 2026, through February 28, 2027.
HOW IT WORKS:	First come, first served - registration closes the moment we hit 100 participants!
ENTRY FEE:	€499. An all-access pass to the Championship tests, tastings, lunches and/or dinners, exceptional champagnes, entry to Bubble Parade, all while rubbing shoulders with world-class Champagne celebrities. (Partial or full waivers available for students, educators, and key Champagne advocates).

#3

WHO PAYS FOR WHAT? | LOGISTICS

We want your focus strictly on the Champagne! Here is how travel, lodging, and dining break down for both fields in Riga (April 1–4, 2027):

The Professional Field

MEALS & DINING:	Fully covered! All official lunches, dinners, and masterclass tastings throughout the Championship days are hosted by the organizers.
ACCOMMODATION:	Competitors cover their own stay, but you'll get access to exclusive reduced event rates at our official partner hotel near the venue. (The Jury reserves the right to fully cover accommodation and/or travel for select stand-out candidates).
TRAVEL:	Participants arrange and cover their own travel (airfare/transit) to and from Riga.

The Champagne Lover Field

TASTINGS & OFFICIAL EVENTS:	All Championship tasting sessions, public showcases, and official competition events are fully included with your entry pass.Please note that other festival dinners are not included.

ACCOMMODATION & TRAVEL:	Participants cover their own travel, ground transport, and hotel.
PARTNER HOTEL RATES:	International participants get full access to our special reduced event rates at the official partner hotel located right near all the action.

#4

BRING ON THE FIGHT! | THE PROGRAMME

Arrivals & Welcome | Thursday, April 1, 2027

Competitors and judges land in Riga for participant briefings and the official Opening Ceremony.

Day 1: Foreplay | Friday, April 2, 2027

To truly rank everyone on the same global scale, Day 1 is practically identical for both Pros and Champagne Lovers! It is a rigorous day of evaluation testing the sheer depth of everyone's expertise across the exact same core modules:

THEORY TEST:	An in-depth exam covering Champagne history, terroir, viticulture, winemaking, regulations, market trends, and key producers. Loads of questions!
WINE LIST OPTIMIZATION:	Real-time error detection and cellar list corrections.
BLIND TASTING & IDENTIFICATION:	Precise analysis of undisclosed champagnes - possibly featuring a surprise Blind Lunch!

The Only Difference? The Pros will also face high-pressure Service Simulations (technical table service and high-stress hospitality tasks), while the Champagne Lovers get to skip the service tasks!

Day 2: Champagne time @ Bubble Parade | Saturday, April 3, 2027

VENUE:	Hanzas Perons (Open to the public during the Bubble Parade and Champagne + Chefs lunch)

While Day 1 tests everyone on the same brutal baseline, Day 2 is where the paths split. It is an interactive, high-energy spectacle where finalists take the stage in front of judges, chefs, and hundreds of cheering fans!

The Professional Finale (Rigorous 2-Part Testing):

Up to 10 Pro finalists will face the ultimate test of skill, grace, and showmanship.

PART 1: CHAMPAGNE + CHEFS GASTRONOMY CHALLENGE:	Live on-stage food-and-wine pairing. Finalists team up with top Riga chefs, select wild-card bottles from stage fridges, and serve live audience tables under surprise scenarios.

PART 2: THE PUBLIC ARENA & INTERACTIVE CHALLENGES:	Integrated into the festival's vibrant atmosphere, candidates face fast-paced, highly watchable tasks—including live audience blind tastings, speed identification, rapid-fire Q&A rounds, and showmanship challenges like the art of sabrage.

The Champagne Lover Finale (The Top 10 Showdown):

The Top 10 Champagne Lover finalists will step into the spotlight for their own specially designed, interactive public challenges! Rather than technical restaurant service, these insightful, fast-paced tasks are all about involving the general public of the Bubble Parade. Expect a thrilling mix of blind tasting battles, audience-participation games, rapid-fire trivia, and possibly even a cameo in the Gastronomy Challenge alongside the Pros!

#5

HOW WILL YOU BE SCORED? | EVALUATION & RANKING

Every answer, every sip, conclusion and stage moment translates into points. Our international jury scores both fields rigorously to forge an official Global Champagne Rank for every participant at the end of the event. Here is what it takes to climb the leaderboard:

The Pros: 5 Pillars to the Crown:

THE BRAINS:	Deep theoretical and technical Champagne knowledge.
THE SENSES:	Elite blind tasting and palate precision.
THE HANDS:	Flawless, high-pressure table service.
THE HEART:	World-class communication and hospitality.
THE SPARK:	On-stage showmanship and the ability to win over the crowd.

The Champagne Lovers: 3 Pillars:

THE BRAINS:	Theoretical knowledge (testing alongside the pros!).
THE SENSES:	Elite blind tasting and palate precision.
THE SPARK:	Passion, flair, and showmanship for the Top 10 finalists. Zero service tasks here just Champagne love!

#6

CHAMPIONSHIP JURY

Aigars Nords | Founder, Riga Wine & Champagne (Latvia)

Peter Liem | Champagne Writer & Educator, ChampagneGuide.net (France/USA)

Raimonds Tomsons | 2023 ASI Best Sommelier of the World (Latvia)

Jānis Kaļķis | President, Latvian Sommelier Association

Andreas Larsson | 2007 ASI Best Sommelier of the World (Sweden) (TBC)

[To be announced] | Invited Grower / Champagne House Owner

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HOW ABOUT THE GLORY & PRIZES? | AWARDS

The Championship culminates in the Award Ceremony live on the Bubble Parade stage, leading straight into the ultimate Champagne Gala!

Global WBCS Rank for Everyone! No one leaves empty-handed. Every single participant - Pro or Champagne Lover - walks away with an official medal and a certificate detailing their official Global Champagne Sommelier Rank!

The Professional Field

WORLD'S BEST CHAMPAGNE SOMMELIER (1ST PLACE):	€5,000* cash prize, the official Champion trophy, and the ultimate global title for outstanding precision and professionalism.
TWO EXCELLENCE AWARDS (2ND & 3RD PLACE):	€2,500* cash prize each, celebrating finalists who display exceptional mastery and immense future promise.
AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD:	€1,500* cash prize for the finalist who captures the crowd's hearts with natural charm, stage presence, and hospitality charisma.

*Prior to any tax deductions

The Champagne Lover Field

CHAMPION LOVER (1ST PLACE):	A special Jeroboam of Champagne + Champion trophy.
2ND & 3RD PLACE:	A special Magnum of Champagne each.

TOP 100 RECOGNITION:	Every amateur participant receives a commemorative participation medal and official certificate confirming their global rank among the Top 100 Champagne lovers in the world!

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PROJECT ORGANIZATION & PARTNERS

PROJECT OWNER:	SIA Nords Event Communications (Riga Wine & Champagne Festival)
CONTENT PARTNERS:	Aigars Nords, Peter Liem, Raimonds Tomsons, Jānis Kaļķis
INTERNATIONAL ADVISORS:	Peter Liem
FUNDING & STRATEGIC PARTNERS:	The World Championship of Champagne Sommeliers is made possible through the generous support of:

Title Sponsor: Liebherr Appliances

Main Sponsor: Riga Wine & Champagne (SIA Nords Event Communications)

Private Supporters: Participating Champagne Houses and distributors of champagne, life-style brands

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TIMELINE 2026–2027

November 21, 2026: Official announcement of the event at the Baltic Wine & Drinks Awards (Riga Wine & Champagne Fall Session).

November 2026 – January 2027: Official applications

January - February 2027: Final Participant roster announced.

February – March 2027: Public introductions and profiles of participating sommeliers.

April 1–3, 2027: The World's Best Champagne Sommelier Championship in Riga.

TITLE SPONSOR: LIEBHERR

PROJECT OWNER: NECom®

PART OF: RIGA WINE & CHAMPAGNE

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