

Meet SA's 2023 Patrón Perfectionists Cocktail Competition finalists

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Meet South Africa's 2023 Patrón Perfectionists Cocktail Competition finalists, who are a step closer to experiencing the home of Patrón Hacienda in Mexico...

The Patrón Perfectionists Cocktail Competition SA Finalists have been announced. The top six mixologists now prepare to go head-to-head in the pursuit of being crowned as the ultimate cocktail perfectionist in the country.

The SA finale, which takes place in Cape Town on 28 November 2022, is expected to shake and stir the level of mixology artistry as the six finalists showcase why their Patrón-infused cocktails should represent Mzansi globally. "South Africa is a fusion of colourful blends of culture, and it is always exciting to see how the participants interpret these into their cocktail masterpiece," explains Cameron Hawkins, Sub-Saharan Africa Brand Ambassador for Bacardi in South Africa.

The national culmination of the competition will see the top six pour their hearts and skills into two challenges that will test their understanding and creativity in crafting a great and unique tequila cocktail. "The finale will allow the top six to explore different ingredients, as well as share their mixology learnings - uniting the SA mixology community," enthuses Hawkins.

As part of the first leg of the competition, entrants were challenged to demonstrate their skills and expertise by creating a cocktail inspired by their hometown. The hometown hero cocktail required them to blend Patrón Silver tequila with their culture by using ingredients from a prescribed list. The entries were judged on appeal, appearance, inspiration, and originality. Six submissions impressed our judging panel and received the Patrón tequila status nod.

Meet our South Africa Patrón Family Perfectionists:



Jason Thomas

Jason Thomas (Jeffrey's Bay, Eastern Cape)

- **Bar:** The Mexican Bay
- **Hometown hero cocktail and inspiration:** Tierra (which means earth) - "I've always had a very healthy respect for natural produce; we so dearly underestimate what comes from the ground and grows from the earth itself. It was easy once I found what I wanted to do and where I was getting my inspiration. I wanted to show respect for the fantastic people who provided us with these great products and those that craft this versatile tequila that allows us to create perfection – Patrón."
- **Recipe:** 50ml Patrón silver, 60ml tomato and ginger water, 25ml aloe Vera syrup, 7.5ml lime
- **Garnish:** with black select salt and coriander coral/tweal
- **Method:** Shaken and double strained



Richie Nahkala

Richie Nahkala (Ballito, KZN)

- **Bar:** Alchemy Ballito
- **Hometown hero cocktail and inspiration:** Humble Beginnings "Patrón as a brand evokes elegance and class, history and authenticity. This is a concept that resonates with me as a professional, and it's the essence that I have attempted to capture in my cocktail. My journey as a bartender began in a small village pub in Sarratt, England and has landed me in South Africa doing what I love most – creating cocktails. My cocktail pays homage to my humble beginnings in the pub industry, much like the humble beginnings of avage in the fields of the families of whom Patrón is so proud."
- **Recipe:** 30ml Patrón Silver, 15ml Bombay Sapphire, 15ml Martini Bianco, 15ml "Mushy Pea" Shrub, 2 Drops of Saline
- **Garnish:** With a sprig of sage
- **Method:** Add all ingredients into a stirring glass and stir over ice until chilled, then strain into a chilled Nick and Nora glass before garnishing with a sprig of aromatic sage. The shrub is a Sugarsnap Pea and Mint shrub made with Apple Cider Vinegar and White Sugar.



Sabrina Traubner

Sabrina Traubner (Cape Town, Western Cape)

- **Bar:** European Bartender School Cape Town
- **Hometown hero cocktail and inspiration:** Green Rocket “Sparletta Creme Soda is a cotton candy vanilla soft drink, that every local has connected with a fond memory. It's often referred to as the 'Green Ambulance' and is enjoyed during the day after a lekker jol. For some, it is more than just a magical hangover cure. This neon green mixer has become a South African staple – its shocking colour and playful taste are enjoyed by all - as a 'Creme Soda Float' for kids or a 'Green Mamba' for grown folks. Creme Soda sparks up a carefree, innocent time of one's life. It reminds you of how simple and bright everything was when you were younger. Then eventually, as you grow older, your outlook on life shifts. Its green colour inspires those who dare to try something out-of-the-ordinary. Try the Green Rocket that has been perfectly crafted with Patrón Silver – a versatile tequila great for any cocktail. It's an elevated Patron Creme Soda Float with a South African twist.”
- **Recipe:** 40ml Patrón Silver, top: other / coconut cream, top: liqueurs and other / Creme de cacao (white), 20ml juices and purees/lime juice, top: spiced cream soda
- **Garnish:** Charred pineapple dust
- **Method:** Build the Patrón Silver Tequila and Fresh Lime Juice in a highball glass add cubed ice and top with the Spiced Cream Soda leaving a space for the coconut cream and white cacao liqueur foam



Sash Hale

Sash Hale (Chartwell, Gauteng)

- **Bar:** City Lodge
- **Hometown hero cocktail and inspiration:** The Shrub “My hometown inspiration comes from the sustainability lessons taught to me by my mother, and the natural process of how Patrón agaves are produced. We were taught not to waste. Use what we picked and replant what we can.”
- **Recipe:** 50ml Patrón Silver Tequila, 25ml Spekboom Rosso Vinegar Shrub, 1 pinch Celery Salt, 2 Dash Bitters, 20ml Aquafaba
- **Garnish:** Rosemary Sprig
- **Method:** Wet and dry shake all ingredients and strain into a fridge-chilled terracotta pot



Charne van Heerden

Charne van Heerden (Cape Town, Western Cape)

- **Bar:** The House of Machines
- **Hometown hero cocktail and inspiration:** Reminiscence “Life is a journey filled with memories that shape who you are today. They help remind us where we come from and our potential to go further. I grew up in a small town where koeksisters are a norm – a treat enjoyed with friends and family, on the road, or at home. Every bite of its sweet caramel and coconut flavours takes me one step closer to my hometown and sparks nostalgia for some of the best times of my life growing up. Similar to the feeling one gets when sipping on any Patrón infused cocktail. Like churros, koeksisters can be made in many versions bringing culture to the maker’s home. They are a sinful dessert, well worth any time of the day, best enjoyed with a cup of tea, reminiscing about what treasures life has brought you. Paired with zesty and cooked agave notes of Patron Silver, this cocktail is bound to open up a new chapter and create new memories.”
- **Recipe:** 60/50ml Patron silver, 30ml rooibos infused koeksister cordial, 20ml dry vermouth, 15ml verjuice
- **Garnish:** None
- **Method:** Rolled



Brent Davids

Brent Davids (Johannesburg, Gauteng)

- **Bar:** Marble
- **Hometown hero cocktail and inspiration:** Only Us - We are all we got. "Sitting in the kitchen with my mom making soup for dinner and naive me thinking, where's the meat? I didn't fully appreciate soup, let alone what was happening there. As much as I wasn't the biggest fan of soup, butternut soup always touched my soul positively. So much so that it worked its way up into my romantic relationships where my partner and I would conjure up some butternut soup to share, mostly because it's simple and easy but also because it tastes so good. These wholesome memories of being brought together by food inspired the idea of using butternut to elevate 'Only Us'. The butternut helps unlock the fresh grassy notes of Patron and honey-like sweetness from the Agave. Sipping on this brings memories of love and life through a drink, hopefully, shared with those closest to you.”
- **Recipe:** 35ml Patron Silver, 50ml Butternut Consumé, 15ml Lillet Blanc
- **Garnish:** Fresh Rosemary
- **Method:** Shaken and fine Strained into Brio Coupe

“Every year comes with a different mix of talent, all fuelled by the thirst for knowledge. This excites us. As a brand, we continue to perfect ourselves through this journey. A journey that allows us to learn about the different cultural nuances of our global Patrón consumers – imparted by our Perfectionists,” concludes Hawkins.

The South African winner will join 19 other national winners and wild card entrants at the much-coveted global finals experience in March 2023, taking place in Hacienda Patrón, Mexico. The finalists will undergo a series of challenges that will test their bartender skillset and thereafter, the 2023 global Patrón Perfectionist will be crowned.

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