

LCBO Staff-Conducted In-store Tasting Program (ISTP)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. How much does this delivery option cost?

A1. \$325+ HST.

Q2. What is included in the cost?

- Cost of ISTP staff hours required to prepare for and operate the tasting
- Supplies, such as cups, signage, and napkins
- Charity fee (\$25).

Q3. When are stores notified about Staff-Conducted tastings?

A3. Stores will be notified of their full promotional turn of tastings four weeks in advance of the start of the Promo Period.

Q4. How and when are the LCBO Tasters selected?

A4. Store Managers will select trained staff in advance of the tasting.

Q5. How will staff be trained in advance of the In-Store Tasting Program?

A5. As of April 1, identified staff in all ISTP locations will be Smart Serve trained. Staff selected for Smart Serve training must have completed LCBO Product Knowledge Bronze, Silver, and Gold levels, as well as their Service Knowledge. This advanced training ensures each LCBO Taster will have a solid foundation in all product categories and the skills to sell. To support both the operational and experience requirements, there will be an e-learning package developed and delivered to store staff.

Q6. How will employees be trained in advance of the tastings on the products they are pouring for customers?

A6. LCBO Tasters conducting your in-store tasting will be adequately briefed and prepared for your event. Please complete and submit a [Product Information Sheet](#), which will communicate your specifications to ensure consistency throughout your promotion. SKU-specific Product Information Sheets will be available to all LCBO Tasters through an internal portal page. Thirty minutes will be allocated to research and preparation for the tasting. As this is a new service, we will be monitoring and updating/improving this process as required to best meet your needs. Please check the trade site regularly for updates to this program.

Additionally, LCBO Tasters will conduct a sampling of the featured product(s) for their in-store team members. That way, all store staff will be familiar with your product on the day of your tasting and therefore better equipped to promote it to our customers.

Q7. Is there a limit to the number of tastings that can be applied for/requested?

A7. No, though an application does not ensure approval.

Q8. Is there a change to the approval process?

A8. No. The delivery option selected – “Agent/Demonstrator” or “LCBO Staff Conducted” – will have no impact on the approval process.

Approvals will continue to be driven by the Promotional points. This takes into account related Promotional programming for that period, whether or not the item is NEW, and whether the item is currently listed by the chosen store. For select Vintages locations, priority will be given to Vintage release

products on release Saturdays.

Q9. Are there deadlines for scheduling or making changes?

A9. Deadline dates for trade applications to our ISTP remain the same. If it is necessary to cancel or make changes, agents are required to do so no later than five weeks in advance of the start of the promotional turn for their tasting by contacting the ISTP Administrator at InstoreTastings@LCBO.com.

Q10. For employee-led tastings, is it the agent or the store that is responsible for product availability?

A10. The store has primary responsibility for bringing in the appropriate level of inventory to support tastings. Suggested order quantities in support of the ISTP have been active since November 2017. Agents may confirm product availability with stores in advance of the tasting. We continue to encourage agent partners to rebalance residual inventory as per the agreement with Drinks Ontario.

Q11. Is there a food pairing option?

A11. Food is no longer featured as part of tastings run by LCBO employees.

Q12. For employee-led tastings, what kind of reporting will the LCBO provide?

A12. We are currently in the process of developing the technical capabilities to automate the consolidation and distribution of tasting event results back to the agent/supplier. In the interim, we have a solution that will provide you with a report summary at the close of each period that will include key tasting metrics such as conversion rate, bottles sold, and samples issued.

Q13. Can agents still do their own tastings and select agent demonstrators?

A13. For Fiscal 22-23, AAA & AA class locations will be LCBO Employee led only unless the product is produced in Ontario. If the product is produced in Ontario, an employee who is directly employed by the producer and works at the site of production may act as a demonstrator at any location that is part of the program, including AAA & AA locations.

Additionally, Enhanced Activations which must include a food-pairing option can be operated by an agent or external demonstration company. For more details on what qualifies as an Enhanced tasting event please visit:

<https://www.doingbusinesswithlcbo.com/content/dbwl/en/basepage/home/merchandising-marketing-programs/ExperiencePrograms/InstoreTastingProgram.html>

Q14. Will Enhanced In-Store Tastings and In-Store Special Events be delivered by LCBO staff?

A14. Enhanced Tastings and Special Events programs are managed by LCBO Marketing in coordination with the various business units and will not have an LCBO Staff-Conducted delivery option.