

# Rico Austin selected as Top Entrepreneur of the Year in Luxury Spirits by IAOTP

*The International Association of Top Professionals (IAOTP) will honor Rico Austin at their Annual Awards Gala in NYC at the Plaza Hotel*

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, May 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Rico Austin](#), Co-Founder & Managing Partner of BAJARRIBA Tequila and Best-Selling Author, was recently selected as Top Entrepreneur of the Year in Luxury Spirits for 2026 by the International Association of [Top Professionals](#) (IAOTP) for his outstanding leadership, dedication, and commitment to the industry. The International Association of Top Professionals (IAOTP), a leading global professional organization known for its prestigious annual [awards gala](#) and exclusive vetting process, honors only the most accomplished and influential professionals each year.



Being selected as an award recipient within the IAOTP is a prestigious achievement; only a select group of distinguished professionals earn this elite membership each year. Honorees are chosen for their professional excellence, academic accomplishments, leadership capabilities, longevity in their field, meaningful affiliations, and contributions to their communities. All recipients are invited to attend IAOTP's annual awards gala at the end of the year, a celebration dedicated to honoring the achievements of these top professionals.

[www.iaotp.com/award-gala](http://www.iaotp.com/award-gala)

With close to two decades in the industry, Mr. Austin has certainly proven himself in the tequila and spirits world. As a dynamic, results driven leader, Mr. Austin is the Co-Founder & Managing Partner of BAJARRIBA Tequila. Rico Austin took ownership of the brand's direction by forming Tres Cabo Amigos, LLC, and included his co-founders, Michael Hill and Jay Nance. This step

defined the cultural and operational foundation of BAJARRIBA Tequila, guided by craftsmanship, ethical decision-making, and respect for process.

This perspective guided decisions rooted in personal standards and cultural respect, positioning BAJARRIBA with a clear sense of purpose within the global spirit's market.

The 100% Blue Weber Agave tequila comes from the highland's region of Jalisco, Mexico where Juan Eduardo Nunez, a third-generation Tequilero from the famed distillery El Viejito, founded in 1937 and located in the highlands of Atotonilco El Alto, Jalisco, Mexico, works his craft. El Viejito enjoys a legacy of tradition with more than 90 years of experience in the art of extracting the essence of their land and making it the world's favorite drink.



Mr. Austin is known as a modern-day renaissance man who is also an award-winning author, blogger, film actor, former collegiate football player and a tequila connoisseur. The epic, award winning, mystery and adventure novel "MY BAD TEQUILA" has won 7 National Awards in 2011, 6 National Awards in 2012 & 1 International Award in 2012. Rico Austin's story "DOG" took first prize in Short Story at Arizona Authors Association 2021 Literary Contest which was open to all US and International Authors.

Tres Cabo Amigos / Bajarriba Tequila is a proud supporter of many organizations in Baja Mexico that help orphaned and abandoned children with continued education while housing and feeding the less fortunate. They are also committed in helping preserve the environment by using only recycled glass in their manufacturing processes.

Areas of expertise include, but are not limited to product service and management, import/export operations, customer service management, sales and marketing, business administration, strategic thinking, and leadership development.

Before embarking on his professional career path, Mr. Austin earned his Associates of Science in Marketing from Boise State University, followed by a Bachelor of Arts in Global Marketing from the University of Staffordshire. Immediately after that, Mr. Austin earned his BBA in International Business from Grand Canyon University, followed by his Master's degree in International Business from the Thunderbird School of Global Management. In 2016, Mr. Austin

committed to formal tequila education under the mentorship of Julio Bermejo. His dedication resulted in earning a “PhD in Tequila,” establishing him as a leader with technical mastery and cultural respect rather than symbolic association.

Throughout his illustrious career, Mr. Austin has received many awards and accolades and has been recognized worldwide for his accomplishments. He will be honored at IAOTP’s annual awards gala at the iconic Plaza Hotel in New York this December for his selection as Top Entrepreneur of the Year in Luxury Spirits for 2026.

The President of the International Association of Top Professionals (IAOTP), Stephanie Cirami, stated, “Choosing Mr. Austin for this honor was an easy decision for our panel to make. He is inspirational, influential, and a true visionary and thought leader. We cannot wait to meet him and celebrate his accomplishments at this year’s gala.”

Looking back, Mr. Austin attributes his success to perseverance and mentors he had along the way. When not working, he enjoys traveling and spending time with his family. In the future, he looks to expand his business.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.bajarriba.com>

#### About IAOTP

The International Association of Top Professionals (IAOTP) is an international boutique networking organization that selects the world's most distinguished and accomplished professionals across a wide range of industries. These elite professionals are provided opportunities to collaborate, share insights, serve as keynote speakers, and inspire others within their fields. Membership is not open to the general public. Candidates must be personally invited by the President or nominated by an esteemed honorary member following a brief interview.

IAOTP's experts have recognized and credentialed thousands of top-tier professionals worldwide, helping them strengthen their personal brands and expand their influence. The organization prides itself on being a one-of-a-kind boutique network that handpicks only the most exceptional individuals and brings them together on a premier platform designed to foster meaningful connections and professional growth. IAOTP remains one of the most elite and highly respected professional recognition organizations in the world.

For more information on IAOTP, please visit: [www.iaotp.com](http://www.iaotp.com)

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