

PROGRAM



SHAL
INSPIRE FOOD BUSINESS

Canada

The North American
Agri-Food Business
Accelerator

**29 APRIL
01 MAY -
2025**

MORNING SESSIONS

WITH GAIL GASTELU FROM THE TEA HOUSE TIMES



SESSION 1 - 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Flights for Food Service

This is a tasting session highlighting coffee and/or tea for food service (similar concept to beer flights). Flights can create a unique foodie experience when paired with menu courses or as an appetizer pairing or dessert pairing. A surprise tea and/or coffee flight of small samples will be chosen by Inspire Drink and served to attendees who are seated at this session. While you sip, you will also learn something about what you are tasting, it's origin (where it is grown), and how it is best prepared and served or paired with your menu.

SESSION 2 - 11:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Food Service Trends in Coffee

Discover consumer preferences pertaining to coffee as a morning routine, afternoon pick-me-up, part of an evening cocktail, or as a specialty beverage. Discover key facts and figures; what's innovative and trending; learn some tips on coffee preparation and service/styles; and how to attract new customers.

SESSION 3 - 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

Food Service Trends in Tea

Discover consumer preferences pertaining to tea as their drink of choice whether it is part of a blended cocktail, iced refreshment and hydration, or a hot cup of comfort any time. Discover key facts and figures; what's innovative and trending; learn some tips on tea types and best preparation and service/styles; and how to attract new customers.

DAY 1 - TUESDAY

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

WITH JEAN-SÉBASTIEN FROM ALAMBIKA



SESSION 4 – 1:30 PM – 2:00 PM

How Cocktail & Spirit Enthusiasts Can Contribute to the Hospitality Community

The title says it all — but there's more beneath the surface. After over 20 years importing spirits, 15+ years attending Tales of the Cocktail, and hosting The Toplack Sessions for nearly a decade, Andrew Toplack offers personal insights into a rarely discussed but vital topic: How cocktail and spirit enthusiasts can go beyond being great customers to become true allies and contributors to the hospitality industry. This talk explores how passion, knowledge, and community spirit can have a meaningful and lasting impact on bars, distilleries, and the people behind them.

SESSION 5 - 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Absinthe in 2025: The Green Fairy Reimagined

Absinthe has become a staple among the new wave of artisanal distilleries. After hosting the first-ever Canadian Absinthe Festival in Toronto last year, the 2025 edition lands in Montreal—an alternance fitting SIAL's dynamic. Come taste Canadian absinthes and non-alcoholic alternatives, and explore how this legendary spirit can find its place in today's hospitality landscape.

DAY 1 - TUESDAY

MORNING SESSIONS

WITH GAIL GASTELU FROM THE TEA HOUSE TIMES



SESSION 1 - 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Tea/Coffee Flights

This is a tasting session highlighting coffee and/or tea (similar concept to beer flights). A surprise tea or coffee flight of small samples will be chosen by Inspire Drink and served to attendees who are seated at this session. While you taste, you will also learn something about what you are tasting, its origin (where it is grown), and how it is best prepared and served.

SESSION 2 - 11:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Diversity in Beverage Choices

Toronto is known to be culturally diverse. While produce and grocery needs may be quite unique to different ethnicities, beverages such as coffee and tea can fill all needs simply by its preparation or service style and knowing what cultural variations come into play and at what time of day. Discover great diversity and multicultural variations along with business benefits while sipping some samples.

DAY 2 - WEDNESDAY

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

WITH JEAN-SÉBASTIEN FROM ALAMBIKA



SESSION 3 - 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

The Alternalcohol Program: Keys to a Successful Low & No-Alcohol Offer

Non-alcoholic products aren't just a trend—they're reshaping the industry. But how do you make sure your offering makes sense, is profitable, clear for customers, delicious, and easy to manage? How do you present it on a menu? What should you avoid? More importantly, realize that the same person will be a consumer for both alcohol and non alcohol and that both should go hand in hand. Jean-Sébastien Michel, Educacool ambassador in Quebec, created the Alternacool Program and a unique grant to support businesses embracing this shift. He'll share practical insights and actionable takeaways.

SESSION 4 - 1:30 PM - 2:00 PM

Clear Ice for Cocktails – The Theory: More Than Frozen Water

With Daniel Tavares from Nice Ice and Best 50 Bar Mordecai.

In any major city, a cocktail program without clear ice is at a... clear disadvantage. Learn the fundamentals: why it matters, how to cost it, whether to make it yourself or buy it, and how to implement it smartly into your beverage operations.

SESSION 5 - 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Clear Ice – The Practice: Hands-On with Raw Ice

This hands-on workshop dives into the art of ice sculpting for cocktails using professional ice picks, brass stamps and plates, Japanese saws, custom tongs, and other surprises. Learn to cut, handle, and shape clear ice like a pro.

Limited to 15 participants (spectators welcome!)

DAY 2 - WEDNESDAY

MORNING SESSIONS

WITH GAIL GASTELU FROM THE TEA HOUSE TIMES



SESSION 1 - 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Tea/Coffee Alternatives Flights

This is a tasting session highlighting alternatives to coffee or tea (similar concept to beer flights). A surprise flight of small samples will be chosen by Inspire Drink and served to attendees who are seated at this session. For example, you might receive herbal tea or another unique beverage. While you taste, you will also learn something about what you are tasting, it's origin (where it is grown), and how it is best prepared and served.

SESSION 2 - 11:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Flavor Trends for Beverages

Some flavors cross over seamlessly between coffee and tea and cocktails too. From sweet to spicy, fruity to savory, we will discover and taste what's trending!

DAY 3 - THURSDAY

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

WITH JEAN-SÉBASTIEN FROM ALAMBIKA



SESSION 3 - 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

Cocktail Finishing Touches: The Latest Trends to Elevate Your Drink

You have a nose, eyes and tongue? This one is for you! Spanish-style fruit spheres? Tuscan craft hand-distilled bitter orange or wild carrot essential oil in a spray? Glow-in-the-dark pigments for nightclubs drinks? Colorful, stable espumas in under 2 minutes? Rim dusts that tingle like a mild electric buzz? An Espresso Martini you can make blindfolded with one hand in under a minute—and still crush it? Yes, we cover all of that. Come play at the edge of creativity. You will all get an espresso martini with a unique touch in the end!

SESSION 4 - 1:30 PM - 2:00 PM

Wrap-Up Aperitif: Celebrate Your SIAL Discoveries

It's a tradition now, Join us to toast the end of an exciting week at SIAL with a great cocktail or mocktail. A casual moment to connect, share discoveries, relax your sore feet and raise a glass to what's next.

DAY 3 - THURSDAY