

FACES

of San Diego

CENTRAL SAN DIEGO EDITION
SEPTEMBER 2026

LIZ EDWARDS

FOUNDER,
SAN DIEGO
SPIRITS FESTIVAL

17 YEARS OF
COCKTAILS,
CULTURE &
COASTAL STYLE



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FACES PROFILE

LIZ EDWARDS

RAISING THE BAR IN SAN DIEGO

THE VISIONARY BEHIND THE SAN DIEGO SPIRITS FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 17 YEARS OF COCKTAILS, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY.

For nearly two decades, Liz Edwards has been bringing a distinctly San Diego flavor to the world of premium spirits, cocktails and experiential events.

As founder and director of the San Diego Spirits Festival, Edwards has transformed an idea launched in 2009 into one of the region's signature lifestyle celebrations—bringing together spirits brands, mixologists, restaurants, entertainers, industry professionals and cocktail enthusiasts for an unforgettable weekend.

In September, the festival returns for its 17th year, once again taking over the spectacular Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in La Jolla.

But behind the cocktails, coastal views and entertainment is the story of an entrepreneur who has continually reinvented both herself and the event she created.



“

What I love most about what I do is creating an unforgettable space where the world of spirits comes alive, bringing together innovative brands, talented mixologists and passionate enthusiasts to celebrate, connect and discover something new each year.

— Liz Edwards

BUILDING SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Edwards created the San Diego Spirits Festival with a vision that went beyond simply hosting a tasting event.

She wanted to create an experience.

The festival was designed to bring together the people who make the spirits industry exciting—innovative brands, talented bartenders and mixologists, restaurateurs, culinary professionals and consumers eager to discover something new.

That philosophy continues to shape the festival today.

The 2026 celebration combines premium spirits and craft cocktails with food, art, live music and entertainment, all set against one of Southern California's most dramatic coastal backdrops.

COCKTAILS MEET CULTURE

The festival's move to the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in La Jolla created a natural marriage between two worlds: creativity and cocktails.

Guests move throughout the museum's indoor and outdoor spaces while discovering spirits ranging from whiskey, bourbon and tequila to rum, gin and vodka, along with emerging ready-to-drink products and new brands.

The result is part tasting event, part cultural experience and part celebration of the San Diego lifestyle.

For Edwards, continuing to evolve is essential. Her approach has included consulting with industry leaders, watching emerging consumer trends and visiting other festivals around the country for inspiration. The objective isn't simply to repeat what worked the year before. It's to make the next festival better.

AN ENTREPRENEUR WITH AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Born in Australia, Edwards has called the La Jolla community home for more than three decades. She and her husband, Alan, have five children and three grandchildren, and together they share a love of sailing and international travel.

That sense of adventure extends well beyond business. Edwards has completed 16 marathons, along with numerous 5Ks and 10Ks, reflecting the same persistence and determination that have helped her grow the San Diego Spirits Festival.

Her advice to other entrepreneurs reflects that experience: **Build something you're passionate about, and don't be afraid to reinvent yourself along the way.**

Success, she believes, comes from persistence, hard work and surrounding yourself with people who inspire you.



17TH ANNUAL
SAN DIEGO SPIRITS FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 26–27, 2026

SATURDAY
2:30 – 6:30 PM

SUNDAY
1:00 – 5:00 PM

MUSEUM OF
CONTEMPORARY ART
SAN DIEGO

700 PROSPECT STREET
LA JOLLA, CA 92037

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