



Milwaukee Irish Fest Photo Contest Rules

Term:

The Edward J. Ward Memorial Photo Contest begins June 15, 2026, and ends July 17, 2026, at 5:00 PM Central Daylight Time. By submitting an entry, each contestant agrees to the rules of the contest.

Who may enter:

The Grand Prize is open to amateur photographers who are 18 years old or older or have signed parental consent. Individuals who are employees of Milwaukee Irish Fest or CelticMKE; volunteers associated with Contests or Photography areas; third-party marketing/filming companies and their immediate families (children, parents, siblings, and spouses); and others living in their households are not eligible for any prize. Milwaukee Irish Fest will determine winners' eligibility in its sole discretion.

What to enter:

Photos must be scenes or subjects taken in Ireland. Some categories of interest include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Natural World:** Animals, plants, and landscapes; geological or climatological features; and scientific processes and endeavors.

2. Travel: Locales, peoples, or activities in Ireland that convey a sense of place.

3. People: Portraits and photos of groups or individuals.

4. The Irish Experience: Events, objects, or activities connecting the Irish people to their history or their cultural heritage; photographs that tell us what it means to be Irish and provide a sense of what it is like to live in this country.

5. Artistic Images: Visuals that use photography as a creative and imaginative platform to express an idea or concept. These images can be manipulated in any method, either through photo editing software or other techniques.

6. Drone/Aerial: Any photograph captured using an unmanned aerial vehicle, commonly known as a drone. Images shot from planes/helicopters are also accepted.

To be eligible, a photograph must have been shot by the entrant since January 1, 2016. The contestant certifies that he/she/they is the sole creator and copyright owner of the submitted photograph.

Cropped photos are eligible. Minor adjustments, including the removal of sensor dust or scratches on scans of negatives, dodging and burning, sharpening, contrast, toning, slight color adjustment, and conversion to grayscale, are acceptable. If the judges determine that a photographer has altered his, her, or their photo beyond normal photojournalism best practices, they reserve the right to disqualify it. Image composites including HDR and stitched panoramas are acceptable. Images generated using artificial intelligence (AI) are not permitted.

For a photo in which a person is recognizable, you must be prepared to provide a model release from the subject or, in the case of a minor, the subject's parent or guardian, to Milwaukee Irish Fest upon request. [A model release is available here.](#)

Similarly, entrants whose photos depict other people's work (such as sculptures, statues, paintings, and other copyrightable works) must be prepared to provide a release from the rights holder to Milwaukee Irish Fest upon request. When photographing the work of others, it must be as an object in its environment and not a full-frame close-up of another person's creation. [An art release is available here.](#)

If the entrant is unable to provide all required releases, Milwaukee Irish Fest in its sole discretion reserves the right to disqualify the submission, seek to secure the required releases, or permit the submission to remain in the contest.

Photos must be taken in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.

Photos that violate or infringe upon another person's rights, including but not limited to copyright, are not eligible.

Photos that contain sexually explicit, nude, obscene, violent, or other objectionable or inappropriate content, as determined by Milwaukee Irish Fest in its sole discretion, are ineligible for this contest.

Ethics

Entrants must disclose the circumstances under which an image was captured as well as any instructions given to a subject.

The welfare of a subject and its environment must be placed ahead of the desire to capture a photograph. Upon entering the contest, entrants certify that subjects were

treated with respect and dignity, and that no people, wildlife, or the environment was harmed in creating a photograph.

If baiting was used to attract wildlife or special equipment such as camera traps and drones were used to capture the photograph, this must be disclosed. Live baiting of wildlife is not permitted.

How to Enter:

Please submit photographs and requested information online through our website at irishfest.com. You may submit up to 3 photographs. In order to be displayed in our online gallery without being stretched or distorted, photographs must be submitted in .jpeg, .jpg, or .gif format, edited for web in sRGB color space, at least 2,000 pixels wide, and no larger than 10 MB. You must complete a separate form for each photo submitted.

We do not accept photographs submitted through the mail and do not accept more than one contestant per e-mail address. High-quality scans of non-digital photographs are acceptable. Digital photographs should be taken at the highest resolution possible.

Milwaukee Irish Fest may collect a photograph's metadata upon entry.

You retain your rights to your photograph; however, by entering the contest, you grant Milwaukee Irish Fest & CelticMKE (and those authorized by them) a royalty-free, world-wide, perpetual, non-exclusive license to publicly display, distribute, reproduce and create derivative works of the entries, in whole or in part, in any media now existing or later developed, for any purpose, including, but not limited to, advertising and promotion of Irishfest and its website, festival, and commercial products (this includes any sales of products utilizing the photograph), including but not limited to Milwaukee

Irish Fest & CelticMKE. Any photograph reproduced will include a photographer credit as feasible. Milwaukee Irish Fest & CelticMKE will not be required to pay any additional consideration or seek any additional approval in connection with such uses.

Use of your personal data:

Participation in the contest requires the collection of your name and email address. By entering this contest, you are consenting to the use of your name and email address for further communications regarding this contest. To access our privacy statement, click [here](#).

Entry deadline:

The contest begins on June 15, 2026. All entries must be received through irishfest.com by 5:00 PM Central Daylight Time on July 17, 2026.

Judging

Photo entries will be judged based on creativity, quality, originality, and overall impact.

Milwaukee Irish Fest will select 9 finalists, a Grand Prize winner along with a 2nd and 3rd place winner. The 9 finalists will be notified of their status and appear on our website by August 1, 2026. *At that time, the public can vote on our website for the Viewers' Choice winner from among the 9 finalists.* The Viewers' Choice winner, Grand Prize winner, and 2nd & 3rd place winners will be revealed on Saturday, August 15, 2026, at Milwaukee Irish Fest. These dates may be subject to change.

The finalists will be contacted via the email address provided during entry. If no response is received after [five] business days, a new finalist(s) will be selected, and the previous finalist(s) will forfeit all rights to the prize.

Please do not contact us about the status of entries or judging.

Prizes:

Five prizes will be awarded, as follows:

Grand Prize: \$75.

2nd Place: \$50.

3rd Place: \$25.

Viewers' Choice: 2 tickets to 2026 Milwaukee Irish Fest

Honorable Mentions: 1 ticket to 2026 Milwaukee Irish Fest

One cash prize per person; winners may receive additional non-cash prizes. Winners need not be present on Saturday, August 15, 2026, at Milwaukee Irish Fest Awards to win or sign a release and license, as well as a declaration of eligibility. Winners will be responsible for paying any fees or taxes associated with the prize. All prizes are awarded “as is” and non-transferable. In case applicable law prohibits Irishfest from awarding a photographer the cash prize and/or any non-cash prize, Irishfest may award the prize in name only.

Online Features:

Milwaukee Irish Fest may select photos for highlighting on its website or display in a publicly accessible contest archive. Such selections will be made at Milwaukee Irish Fest’s sole discretion.

Conditions of Entry:

All entrants agree to hold the Sponsors and their respective regents, directors, officers, employees, emeriti, fellows, interns, research associates, and volunteers (the “Indemnified Parties”) harmless from and against all claims of any nature arising in connection with the entrant's participation in the contest and acceptance or use of a prize. The Indemnified Parties are not liable for any costs, damages, injuries, or other claims incurred because of entrants’ participation in the contest or a winner's acceptance and usage of a prize. The Indemnified Parties are not responsible for incomplete or misdirected entries, technical or network malfunctions or failures, or causes beyond their control. Entrants are solely responsible for their entries. Entrants may not submit materials that introduce any software viruses, worms, or other programs designed to damage software, hardware, or telecommunications equipment or are off-topic, partisan-political, contain advertising, nudity, personal attacks, or expletives, or is otherwise abusive, threatening, unlawful, harassing, discriminatory, libelous, obscene, false, sexually explicit, or that infringe on the rights of any third party.

The contest is void where prohibited or restricted by law. Milwaukee Irish Fest reserves the right to cancel the contest or modify these rules at its discretion. In the event of a dispute regarding the winners, Milwaukee Irish Fest reserves the right to award or not award the prizes in its sole discretion. Milwaukee Irish Fest reserves the right to disqualify any entrant whose entry or conduct appears in any way to inhibit the enjoyment of others, tamper with the competition, violate these rules or other applicable law or regulation, infringe on the rights of third parties, or act in an unsportsmanlike or disruptive manner. **Decisions of Irishfest are final and binding.**

Last updated: June 2026.