

About Gin

Gin is a neutral spirit flavored with juniper berries and a wide variety of other botanical flavorings. Spices, roots, seeds, flowers, leaves, and fruits can all be used to flavor gin, but juniper must be the main flavor. Gin originated in Holland but can be produced all over the world. Styles of Gin include London Dry, Plymouth, Old Tom, and Genever.

There are two main categories of gin. Compound gin is less expensive and involves blending neutral spirits with flavorings and extracts. Distilled gin is made from a fermented mash in a pot still. The botanical components are added during the second distillation and can be mixed into the distilling mash or placed on a screen above the mash. Distilled gins have a more elegant and distinct flavor.

Types

Genever (or Schiedam gin) is the Dutch and Belgian version and the original style of gin. It was first distilled for medicinal purposes and was the original gin used in many of the classic American cocktails of the 19th century, rivaling Old Tom as the star of the bar. Genever is distilled from malted grain mash in a manner similar to whiskey. It tends to be lower proof (70 to 80 proof) than its English counterparts. Genever is often aged in oak casks for one to three years and comes in two styles. Oude (old) genever is the original style with a straw color; it is relatively sweet and aromatic. Jonge (young) genever has a drier palate and lighter body.

London dry gin is the best-known and most widely produced style of gin in the world today. It's often considered the benchmark that defines gin. This is a juniper-forward, very dry gin. Its flowery and aromatic characteristics are a result of adding the botanicals during the second or third distillation. The vapors from these flavoring agents reach the alcohol as they pass through a specialized still with an attachment called a gin head. London dry gin is often preferred for making martinis and the most versatile for cocktails.

Plymouth Gin is a clear, slightly fruity, full-bodied gin that is very aromatic. This style originated in the port of Plymouth on the English Channel. Only one distillery, Plymouth, Coates & Co., has the right to produce it today, so it is both a style and a brand name. It is typically a good choice for cocktails that include fruits.

Old Tom gin is a sweeter version of London dry gin. Simple syrup distinguishes this older style from its contemporaries and many include notes of citrus. Old Tom was the original gin used for the popular Tom Collins and the gin of choice for much of the 19th century. Not too long ago, Old Tom gin could be found almost exclusively in the U.K. Today it's produced by several U.S. distilleries as well.

Navy Strength gins must be 57 percent alcohol, or 114 proof, the same requirement that the Royal British Navy had for gins beginning in the early 1800s for officers. The reason given back then was: Gunpowder could still be fired if 114 proof gin was accidentally spilled on it.

"New Western Dry" gin (or "New American" gin) are names adopted by the international bartending community to describe a number of modern gins released in the early 2000s. These brands downplay juniper and were so different from the standard gins that there was much debate as to whether they could be classified as gin. Many were produced with modern cocktails and vodka drinkers in mind. They have a great appeal to consumers who are not fond of a heavy pine taste.

McQueen & The Violet Fog Gin

This artisanal gin is made in Jundiaí, Brazil, using a secret blend of 21 botanicals. The nose is full of orchard fruit and fresh grass aromas, with a rich, spicy undercurrent. The palate offers notes of fresh herbs, sharp berries and aromatic spices.

Website: <https://www.mcqueenvioletfog.com/home/>

Distillery: Sovereign Estate Wine ABV: 40% Region: Jundiaí, Brazil

Known Botanicals: Twenty-one different botanicals, including six seldom found in gin, basil, rosemary, fennel seed, calamansi, star anise and açai.

Damrak Gin

Celebrating the legacy of gin in the Netherlands, Damrak Gin takes its name from the Dutch word for "inner harbor." Amsterdam's inner harbor was heavily involved in international trade during the 17th century and many of the botanicals used to make the first gin products most likely passed through Amsterdam. Damrak Gin is made by Dutch spirit producer Lucas Bol's, who discovered a long-lost recipe found at the company's distillery. This gin is made with a neutral spirit and 17 botanicals and distilled 5 times.

Website: <https://www.damrakgin.com/>

Distillery: Bol's Distillery ABV: 41.8% Region: Spain

Known Botanicals: Juniper, Aniseed, Cinnamon, Coriander, honeysuckle, Lemon, Orange

Applewood Gin

Australia's Applewood Distillery—makers of their namesake Applewood Gin—are inspired by the history and culture of Australia's landscape: from the Precambrian rocks all the way up to Australia's first people. Strong notes of eucalyptus and menthol on the nose. Lemon mint, pineapple sage and a nutty.

Website: <https://www.applewooddistillery.com.au/>

Distillery: Applewood Distillery ABV: 43% Region: Australia

Known Botanicals: Juniper, Desert Lime, Lavender, Peppermint Gum, Saltbush, Wattle Seed

Xoriguer Mahón Gin

Xoriguer is a classic gin from Mahon, Menorca, first made for British sailors whom were stationed on the island in the 18th century who were hankering for some gin (happens to all of us every once in a while). Rather than using a grain alcohol, Xoriguer is made from distilled wine and features juniper (obviously) as well as a secret selection of herbs which only the Pons family (the folks behind Xoriguer) could tell you what's included. It is briefly stored in casks before being bottled.

Website: <https://www.xoriguer.co.uk/>

Distillery: Xoriguer ABV: 41% (in U.S., 38% elsewhere) Region: Spain

Known Botanicals: Juniper otherwise undisclosed

Moletto Gin

Moletto Gin is produced using the alcohol from selected mixed grains, and two spirits made from botanical varieties of juniper berries: from Mediterranean maquis – known as the best – and from the Alps. But the gin's originality comes from a botanical feature that distinguishes and characterizes it: the tomato (fruit). Its ingredients also include an exceptionally pure natural element, spring water from the Dolomites, light and well-balanced, which is used to reduce the alcoholic strength. The traditional and artisanal distillation takes place in old copper stills.

Distillery: Moletto Winery ABV: 42.5% Region: Vento Region, Italy

ESP Noho Gin

The Empire Spirits Project's first goal is to help juniper not be so overbearing. Get it to mingle. To meet up with some new ingredients. To harmonize and branch out. Noho is an exotic blend of botanicals from all over the globe is distilled with juniper and infused with copious amounts of saffron. This gin has a heady nose of sweet spice, chamomile, pine and citrus. With its beautiful amber hue, Noho creates cocktails as beautiful to behold as to taste.

Website: <http://www.empirespiritsproject.com/home>

Distillery: Distilled in Yonkers ABV: 42% Region: New York, U.S.A.

Known Botanicals: Juniper, Saffron, Cardamom, Orange