

GinMonger Presents

THE GIN REPORT



The ten best Gins for 2008

GinMonger's ten best Gins for 2008

Here you have it, the ten best Gins for 2008.....

With the rise of the high-end boutique gins, there has never been a wider variety of great gins to choose from. So rather than have you go find and taste all of these, sometimes hard to find spirits, we are going to help you. GinMonger has tasted many of the best gins and here are ten of our favorites.


Within the top ten, there are a wide variety of gins ranging from the popular English Classics (Bombay Sapphire, Tanqueray 10 and Plymouth Gin), to the Eccentric Scottish Contender (Hendrick's), to the Sexy new comers (Bulldog).


Rather than just provide you with a list of brand names, we have added some information regarding each gin, its origin, tasting notes and the producer. Our goal is not just to tell you what gins we like best, but rather, to inform and educate you on the differences and subtleties of each brand so you can come to your own conclusion. For example, some gins differentiate themselves by their blend of botanicals (Citadelle uses 19 of them, Bulldog uses exotic botanicals such as Dragon Eye, Poppy and Lotus Leaves and Juniper Green uses only organic botanicals). Others by their distillation process (DH Krahn feels their Still gives them an edge with its ability to still the spirit in a single pass, while others feel triple and quadruple distilling is preferred). As you will see "everyone's truth is their own" and there are many paths that can be taken to arrive at a great gin.


Below are the top ten, listed in Alphabetical Order, with the distillation notes summarized from each of the producer's content. While we gave no preference to order, we found it fitting that Bombay Sapphire is first name on the list. Bombay Sapphire has been instrumental in leading the charge to making gin fashionable again, with its cutting edge promotions and advertising to its classic blue bottle.


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Bombay Sapphire		
	Producer	Bombay Spirits Company
	Country	England
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Almonds, Lemons, Licorice root, Juniper Berries, Orris Root, Angelica, Coriander, Cassia Bark, Cubeb Berries, and African Grains of Paradise
	Tasting Notes	Balanced, Smooth and Gentle: No one botanical overpowers the other. There is a balance of citrus, earthiness, and peppery flavors from the various botanicals.
	Distillation	Unlike some lower quality gins that boil the botanicals in with the spirit, the Bombay Sapphire spirit is distilled alone. This clear, natural grain spirit is triple distilled and heated up until it turns into a Vapor. The Vapor then passes through a copper basket with the ten chosen botanicals, allowing each delicate flavor and aroma to be fully absorbed into the spirit. The Vapor is then slowly condensed, turned back into the liquid and received into a spirit safe as Bombay Sapphire. At this point the Bombay Sapphire is blended with pure water from Lake Vyrnwy (a lake in Wales) and bottled.


Bulldog		
	Producer	Bulldog Gin
	Country	England
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Dragon Eye, Poppy, Lotus Leaves, Lemon, Almond, Cassia, Licorice, Angelica, Coriander, Juniper Berries
	Tasting Notes	Exotic and Aggressive: Aromatic and pleasing on the palate. Very clean and dry with juniper and a crisp citrus finish
	Distillation	Bulldog Gin is handcrafted in London and quadruple distilled, using traditional copper pot stills. The gin is passed through a condenser and liquefied to produce the natural and unmistakable essence of this ultra-premium spirit. Infused with the taste and aromas of its exotic botanicals (Natural Poppy, Dragon Eye, Lotus Leaves), Bulldog is ultra-refined, and doesn't bite like those harsh, old gins.

Citadelle		
	Producer	Cognac Ferrand
	Country	France
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Juniper Berries, Coriander, Orange Peel, Cardamom, Licorice, Cubeb Pepper, Savory, Fennel, Iris, Cinnamon, Violets, Almonds, Cassia, Angélica, Grains of Paradise, Cumin, Nutmeg, Lemon Rind, and Star Anise
	Tasting Notes	Subtle and Smooth: Citadelle gin offers a subtle bouquet, with aromas of juniper and citrus. It is elegant, soft, and smooth on the palate.
	Distillation	Citadelle Gin is the only gin in the world made with 19 different botanicals, giving the gin a unique, complex, well-balanced flavor. It is triple-distilled from wheat and spring water. Before being steeped in neutral alcohol, the botanicals are carefully selected and then placed in a special bag. This infusion is then distilled to capture each separate aroma, so that the intermingled, complex flavors can develop independently.

DH Krahn		
	Producer	DH Krahn
	Country	United States
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Juniper Berries, Coriander Seed, Orange, Lemon, Grapefruit and Ginger
	Tasting Notes	Fresh, Clean and Mild: DH Krahn provides sweet, mild botanical aromas and subtle light notes of citrus and juniper. The taste is crisp, light and smooth.
	Distillation	It is the still on which DH Krahn is produced that sets it apart from other gins. DH Krahn uses a custom made Stupfler System Alambic Still, recognized as the highest quality among stills. This direct fired, all copper Alambic is capable of producing spirits which, directly from the still and only after a single pass of distilling, possess the mouthfeel and quality of a spirit aged 3-5 years. This single distillation process is unique among the world's gins. By avoiding multiple distillations in favor of a single pass, the master distiller preserves the delicate aromas and essential oils of the botanicals. Once Macerated and then distilled the batches rest in steel barrels for at least three months to develop the smooth mellowness that further distinguishes DH Krahn.


Hendrick's Gin		
	Producer	William Grant & Sons Ltd
	Country	Scotland
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Juniper Berries, coriander, citrus peel, angelica root, orris root. Infusions of Rose Petals and Cucumber
	Tasting Notes	Smooth, Elegant, and Flavorful: Hendrick's Gin displays a delicate aroma of citrus, rose, sweet spices and delicate herbs. The finish is mild with a balance of cucumber, juniper and rose petals.
	Distillation	Hendrick's gin is produced by one of only four Carter-Head Stills in the world. It was built in 19th century London and has been restored to its original condition. Instead of crudely boiling its ingredients, the Carter-Head "bathes" them in vapors. This makes an enormous difference in flavor and is especially critical when dealing with the peculiar orchestra of botanicals that makes Hendrick's Gin so extraordinary. The gallery of botanicals are instilled during distillation, and then the two infusions are added. First is Bulgarian Rose, which is extracted by gently pressing essential oils from the petals. Next comes the coup de grace — Cucumber, the essence of which is obtained by mashing the fresh fruit, then mixing the pulp with cold water. This initiates a slow infusion process that extracts the essential subtle flavors, which are then painstakingly infused into the spirit, one small batch at a time


Juniper Green Organic Gin		
	Producer	The Organic Spirit Company
	Country	England
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Organic Juniper Berries, Organic Coriander, Organic Angelica Root, Organic Savory
	Tasting Notes	Clean and Refreshing: Juniper Green has the aroma of a classic London dry gin with the scent of dry spices and juniper. The taste is one of balanced botanicals and a refreshing finish.
	Distillation	Juniper Green Organic Gin is distilled at Thames Distillery in Central London. Thames is now the only Gin Distillery which both distills and bottles gin in London. The distinguishing feature of Juniper Green Gin is not as much the distillation process, as it is the organic nature of the ingredients. Organic grain creates fine alcohol naturally because it has a better biological cell structure than grain grown with chemical fertilizers. No chemical fungicides are used to assist in the storage of Organic Grain resulting in natural microorganisms which aid full and deep fermentation. As a result Juniper Green has a smooth clean spirit which is the perfect foundation for the world's first Organic Gin. Juniper Green is a 100% organic gin, all the ingredients are USDA certified organic, British Soil Association Certificate, and CCOF certified. It is made with demineralised water and organic grain spirits.

Magellan Gin		
	Producer	Angeac Distillery
	Country	France
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Juniper Berries, Clove, Cassia, Iris, Orange Peel, Coriander, Cinnamon, Licorice, Grains of Paradise, Nutmeg, Cardomom
	Tasting Notes	Smooth and Pure: Magellan gin has a light, floral bouquet laced with the aromas of citrus and spice. The palate is smooth and balanced with a wonderful array flavors providing a crisp, cool finish.
	Distillation	Magellan is distilled four times in small batches using fresh, exotic botanicals from around the globe. The process begins with the fermentation of Capet, a rich wheat grain from the Beauce Valley, and crisp spring water drawn from the Gensac spring in the Cognac region. The water is naturally filtered through grande champagne limestone and then naturally demineralized for the appropriate soft, crisp and smooth taste. The wheat and water mash is then triple distilled by hand, sequentially, yielding a smooth, clean neutral spirit prepared for only the finest botanicals and meticulous production methods ahead. Each of the botanicals is picked at the peak of ripeness and immediately sun dried. After triple distillation, the head of the small artisanal copper pot still is opened. The juniper berries and fresh botanicals, wrapped in a special cloth, are added to the neutral spirit and redistilled a fourth time. The fresh distillation process truly captures the intricate and complex flavors of the fresh botanicals. It is during this fourth distillation, that Magellan's secret ingredient, the Iris, gives Magellan it's crisp, refreshing taste and bestows Magellan with the spirit of the blue sky and deep blue sea. It is then bottled in a clear glass so you can admire the unique spirit inspired by Magellan's travels.

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Martin Miller's Gin		
	Producer	Millers
	Country	England
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Juniper Berries, Orange Peel, Lemon Peel, Coriander, Licorice, Cinnamon, Cassia, Nutmeg, Angelica Root, and Orris Root
	Tasting Notes	Elegant and Flavorful: Martin Millers Gin has a citrus and floral aroma. The taste is smooth with flavors of juniper, citrus, and spice. The finish is clean and soft.
	Distillation	Martin Miller's Gin is batch distilled in the heart of England's black country. Quality materials, skilled distillers and great attention to detail are all the unseen factors that contribute to our famous aroma and taste. Prior to bottling the gin is taken on a 3,000 mile trip to Iceland and back to blend the gin with the purest water Icelandic spring water. Iceland offers the purest, softest water on earth, giving Martin Miller the perfect canvas to show off the beautiful botanical flavors found in the spirit.

Plymouth Gin		
	Producer	Black Friars Distillery
	Country	England
	Style	English Dry
	Botanicals	Juniper Berries, Lemon Peel, Orange Peel, Orris Root, Angelica Root, Cardamom Pods, and Coriander Seeds
	Tasting Notes	Full body, Depth of Flavor: A great depth of flavor, with a wonderfully fresh juniper, lemony bite with deeper earthy notes. Slight sweetness with no single botanical dominating the overall flavor.
	Distillation	The History of Plymouth Gin makes it unique. Plymouth Gin is only distilled at the Black Friar's Distillery in Plymouth, England since 1793, making it the oldest working distillery in England. The other famous English gins no longer distill in their original sites; indeed most are made in multi-purpose distilleries, which also distil other spirits and even other gin brands. Plymouth Gin is the only legally protected style of gin in the world, guaranteeing the quality and consistency of every bottle. Other gins can be (and are) made anywhere. The shape and size of the still affects the flavor of the gin. Plymouth's single and unique copper still dates from 1855 and helps produce an extraordinarily concentrated gin. The Composition of Plymouth Gin is 41.2% Alcohol and 58.8% water. 41.2% alcohol is the perfect strength to fix the essential oils in the botanicals. Too low and flavors are lost - too high and the alcohol dominates. The water comes from Dartmoor National Park and like the water in most scotches runs through peat over granite and is thus exceptionally soft and pure.

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Tanqueray No.TEN		
	Producer	Charles Tanqueray, Diageo
	Country	England
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Juniper Berries, Grapefruit, Orange, Lemon, Lime, Chamomile
	Tasting Notes	Crisp, Light and Refreshing: Tanqueray No. 10 has a bouquet full of citrus, herbs and spice, with great depth of flavors, specifically grapefruit, orange, and lime. The finish is very smooth.
Distillation	<p>Tanqueray No. TEN is the only gin in the world distilled with handpicked, whole-fruit fresh botanicals. It is produced exclusively in a special small batch still aptly dubbed "Tiny Ten," which is specifically designed to provide for the exquisite depth and character of the resulting spirit. The small still is best able to capture the essences of the fresh fruit and botanicals and maintain the balance of ingredients necessary to create depth and character of the resulting spirit. The small batch distillation product is crafted with hand-picked whole fruit botanicals and is distilled four times.</p> <p>The final distillation takes place in the historic No. 4 still, commissioned by Charles Tanqueray himself. The heart and a further quantity of neutral spirit are redistilled with extra fresh citrus fruits, and more traditional matured botanicals, as well as chamomile flowers, which bring a particular smoothness to the finished spirit. In order to ensure that the true citrus character of Tanqueray No.TEN makes it to the bottle, the product run from this fourth distillation is only taken when at its most intense and characterful. It is this painstaking and highly selective process, along with the unique use of fresh botanicals and four distillations, which gives Tanqueray No.TEN its exquisitely smooth, fresh and perfectly balanced taste.</p>	

Junípero Gin		
	Producer	Anchor Distilling Company
	Country	United States
	Style	London Dry Gin
	Botanicals	Junípero contains Juniper Berries and 11 other botanicals. Anchor Distilling has elected to make the exact list of botanical ingredients a secret.
	Tasting Notes	Strong, Clean and Dry: Junípero Gin is complex and spicy with flavors of juniper and citrus. This finish is smooth and clean.
Distillation	Junípero Gin is made by hand in the classic "distilled dry gin" tradition, utilizing more than a dozen botanicals in their natural state, in a small copper pot at the Anchor Distilling Company's little distillery on Potrero Hill in San Francisco	