



Scottish Gin

Scottish gin is undergoing a massive revival, fuelled in part by the boom in small craft distilleries and by the arrival of whisky companies into the gin market. Like an enlightened version of the gin craze era, craft gin distilleries are popping up all across the UK as well as globally. However, it's those gin distilleries in our little corner of the world that are making some big waves.

Speyside: Caorunn

Caorunn gin, created at Balmenach distillery in Speyside, is another of the big whisky distillery gins although its reputation has been built on the back of its excellent taste not its provenance. Using small batches of pure grain spirit which are triple distilled for smoothness, the gin is created using the distillery's unique Copper Berry Chamber, which was made in the 1920s. It is infused with five Celtic botanicals (including Coul Blush Apple and Bog Myrtle), six traditional botanicals and Scottish spring water. Caorunn gin is hand crafted by Balmenach's Gin master who personally oversees every step of the process.

Recommended garnish: Sliced red apple.

St Andrews : Eden Mill / Eden Mill Love /Eden Mill Hop

Eden Mill has perhaps one of the most individual stories of the gin companies mentioned here, beginning life as primarily a brewery, it has now progressed to encompass distillation of both gin and whisky. Not afraid to experiment, Eden Mill have produced some very interesting gins; most recently the Golf gin, which incorporated Hickory wood shavings and the Hop gin, created using Hops sourced from their beer production. Eden Mill try to source most of their botanicals locally from places such as St Andrews gardens and they are keen to create seasonal small batch gins, using different botanicals.

Ayrshire: Hendricks

William S Grant & Sons pretty much provided the spark that started the Scottish craft gin ball rolling by introducing Hendricks in 1998. Created in a specially built gin distillery housed within the walls of the Girvan grain distillery, Hendricks uses a unique system combining two different styles of production. First, the gin is distilled using two different methods – pot still and infusion – the two distillates are then combined and finally the cucumber and rose oils are added.

Recommended garnish: Cucumber.

Edinburgh: Edinburgh Gin

Edinburgh gin is another small batch gin distillery that is aiming to put Edinburgh back on the gin producing map. Nestled below the stairs of Rutland Place in the capital, sits their gin distillery. Priding themselves on creating a taste of Edinburgh, the company's myriad gins are as varied as they are excellent. You can book a tour of the distillery itself and even make your own gin should you wish to.

Recommended Garnish: Sprig of Fresh Rosemary.

Islay: The Botanist

Jim McEwan is a legend in whisky circles and now he's trying his hand at gin. Made at Bruichladdich distillery on Islay, the Botanist claims to be made with 22 foraged island botanicals, hand-picked locally, including gorse and wild mint. This is one of the bigger names out there and is vying with Hendricks for shelf space in most Scottish bars.

Recommended garnish: Thyme & Lemon.

Caithness : Rock Rose

Named after one of their rare botanicals the "Rhodiola rosea" which is very difficult to find but grows on the cliffs of Caithness, Rock Rose Gin is one of the fastest selling craft gin in the UK. The Rock Rose is famed



for its confirmed health benefits and was once sought after by the Vikings for its strength and vitality. It seems that this fame has not gone unnoticed, the first batch of the gin sold out in less than 48 hours – an industry record. Britain's most northerly mainland distillery, Rock Rose use an increasingly unique distilling process which infuses 18 botanicals, of which five are grown locally. Perhaps most interestingly, they use both traditional Italian and Bulgarian junipers which are blended together to create a unique juniper taste for their gin. They also make a range of seasonal gins that are well worth checking out.

Recommended garnish: Either a sprig of rosemary or orange peel.

Stirling: Boe

Boë Gin is lovingly created in small batches under the watchful eye of our Master Distiller, where rare handpicked botanicals and spices are infused in the finest neutral grain spirit, liberating the full flavour of triple filtered Boë Gin, creating a high class gin, characteristically citrus with extraordinary balance and smoothness. Boë Gin takes its name from Franz de le Boe; legend has it when Professor Franz was in search of a medicinal tonic, he mixed neutral spirit with juniper berries and created gin.

Recommended garnish: Orange.

Isle of Harris: Harris

Made using nine botanicals including locally-sourced sugar kelp, which gives the gin its wonderful coastal flavour, and produced using their small copper still – affectionately known as 'The Dottach' – this a distinctly interesting gin unlike many you will have tried before. Not only that but it comes in one of the most fantastic spirit bottles we've seen. Designed by the team at Stranger & Stranger, the bottle reflects the rolling waves of the Harris coast and carries deliberate imperfections to reflect the rugged nature of the island itself. So popular they once even had to ration their gin due to having such high demand.

Recommended garnish: pink or red grapefruit.

Glasgow: Garden Shed

An excellent Scottish gin from The Garden Shed Drinks Company, made with a selection of 14 botanicals, including blackberries, dandelion root and lavender. Tasting Note by The Chaps at Master of Malt: Floral juniper with a hint of oiliness behind it. Caraway, lemon, blueberry and a few hints of gentian root.

Recommended garnish: Blackberry or Rosemary.

Non-alcoholic Spirit

Seedlip Garden 108

A herbaceous non-alcoholic spirit from the Seedlip range. Somewhat similar to gin, Seedlip's inventive expressions are based around the distilled non-alcoholic remedies found in *The Art of Distilling* (written in 1651), made using copper stills and careful selections of botanicals, but no alcohol whatsoever! Seedlip Garden 108 is made with hay, pea, rosemary, spearmint, and thyme. Sugar free, allergen free, sweetener free, no artificial flavours. Recommended garnish: Thyme/

Rosemary / Cucumber ribbon.



International Gins

Tanqueray | Tanqueray 10

Tanqueray Gin has a long and fascinating history and is in the top 10 highest selling gins in the world. Charles Tanqueray opened the original distillery in the 1830's in London, before merging with Gordon's and moving to their distillery. The distillery was later destroyed by air raids during WWII and production now takes place in Scotland with the brand being owned by Diageo.

Recommended Garnish: Lime.

Bombay Sapphire

Bombay Sapphire's name derives from gin's popularity during the British Raj in India and was developed to create a differentiated brand from the more traditional British London Dry Gins. Bombay Sapphire is triple distilled and features 10 botanicals. Bombay Sapphire is now owned by Barcardi and their new distillery and visitors' centre in Hampshire opened its doors in 2014. Bombay Sapphire gin is one of the most recognised and popular gins available. It mixes well and has a little more complexity than some other mainstream gins. Bombay Sapphire is also comparatively subtle when it comes to being driven by juniper, with the other botanicals also coming to the forefront. It's a solid gin with a distinctive bottle, and it certainly has its place in the gin world.

Recommended Garnish: Lime.

Gordons Gin

Gordon's Gin was conceived by Scotsman Alexander Gordon in 1769 and was produced in Southwark (London) before moving to Clerkenwell and now Basildon in Essex. Gordon's Gin is triple distilled and uses a combination of botanicals that has been kept secret for almost 250 years. Gordon's Gin is one of the top selling gins in the world and its bottles display the royal coat of arms by appointment of Her Majesty the Queen. Gordon's Gin can be found behind almost every bar and its green bottle is instantly recognisable. It's certainly an iconic gin with a long and rich history. Aside from its history, Gordon's is a standard London Dry Gin, without leaning strongly in any direction of flavour. At the low end of the market in terms of price, it compares well with supermarket own brands and makes a reasonable G&T. It doesn't compare to premium and craft gins, but it doesn't pretend to either.

Recommended Garnish: Fresh Lemon or Lime.

Saffron Gin

Gabriel Boudier was challenged to make a London Dry Gin and came up with a twist on an old, 19th century Indian gin recipe that contains the very expensive saffron. It takes between 150.000 to 250.000 saffron crocus flowers to get 1 kilo of saffron threads and it takes many hours to handpick the flower and pick the threads. No wonder saffron is the most expensive ingredient. The saffron not only gives the gin its distinct colour – it also gives the gin a spicy touch. Besides saffron 7 other botanicals are used: juniper, coriander, angelica seeds, fennel, iris, lemon and orange peel. By looking at the beautiful bottle many think that the gin must be a sweeter and floral kind of gin, but it is much more a classic gin with a little spicy twist. It can be a bit difficult to pair with a tonic without the GT becomes a bit bitter but with a sweeter Mediterranean tonic and an orange slice or peel, it works much better.