

# GIN



*the base is juniper*

*history dates back to the 16th century*

Gin is an alcoholic beverage whose main ingredient is juniper, which gives it its characteristic flavor.

The history of gin is linked to the Netherlands, where in the 16th century a drink known as **jenever** first appeared – a distillate made from barley and juniper. Jenever was popular mainly among physicians, who used it for medicinal purposes, as it was believed to aid digestion and improve circulation. After further experimentation and the addition of various herbs, this drink evolved away from jenever, reached England, and under the name **gin** spread around the world.

In England, gin became popular in the 1730s during the “**Gin Craze**”, when it was cheap and widely consumed by ordinary people. At that time, many pubs opened in London where gin was the main drink offered. The Gin Craze led to a massive increase in alcohol consumption, resulting in social, economic, and health problems, which eventually prompted laws regulating its production and distribution.

In the 19th century, gin production began to evolve with technological innovation. The invention of distillation equipment that allowed for better separation of flavors and aromas led to higher-quality gin. Today, gin is known worldwide and used in many cocktails, such as the classic **gin and tonic**.



# Production

Its production is a fairly complex process that involves distillation and maceration of herbs, spices, and especially juniper. There are several methods of production, but the basic process looks like this:

## Basic Ingredients:

### Alcohol:

The base alcohol for gin production is a neutral agricultural spirit, usually made from grain, sugar beet, or other crops. This alcohol has a very mild flavor profile, making it an excellent carrier for the aromas and flavors of all the botanicals used.

### Juniper:

Juniper is the key ingredient that gives gin its distinctive taste. Ripe juniper berries are used and added as one of the botanicals.

### Other Botanicals:

In addition to juniper, various herbs and spices – known collectively as botanicals – are added, such as coriander, angelica, licorice, citrus peels, fennel, lavender, or pepper. The ratio of these ingredients determines the final flavor profile.

## Maceration, Infusion, and Redistillation:

Maceration means soaking herbs and spices in alcohol for several days or weeks.

### Methods of Flavoring Gin:

#### Cold compounding

Botanicals or their essences and oils are added to the spirit without heating.

#### Racking

A bag filled with botanicals is placed in the neck of the still, and the passing alcoholic vapors become infused with their flavors.

#### Steeping

Botanicals are mixed with neutral alcohol, and this macerate is then redistilled.

## Refinement and Bottling:

After distillation, gin is often diluted with water to the desired strength, typically between 40–47% ABV. The gin is then filtered and bottled. Some varieties may undergo additional adjustments, such as adding citrus or other flavoring components.

# Types of Gin

## London Dry Gin

- *Characteristics:* Dry, clean, strongly juniper-forward
- *Production:* All ingredients must be redistilled. No flavorings or sweeteners may be added after distillation.
- *Examples:* Bombay Sapphire

## Plymouth Gin

- *Characteristics:* Softer and earthier gin
- *Production:* May be produced only in the city of Plymouth, England.
- *Note:* There is only one brand – Plymouth Gin.

## Old Tom Gin

- *Characteristics:* Sweeter, historical style of gin
- *Use:* In classic cocktails such as the Tom Collins
- *Examples:* Hayman's Old Tom

## Genever (Jenever)

- *Characteristics:* Traditional Dutch predecessor of gin, technically not a gin
- *Flavor:* Closer to whisky – malty and grainy with hints of juniper
- *Origin:* Netherlands, Belgium, and some northern parts of France and Germany
- *Examples:* Bols Genever

## Contemporary / New Western Gin

- *Characteristics:* Modern styles of gin where juniper is no longer dominant
- *Flavor:* Emphasis on other botanicals – e.g. citrus, lavender, cucumber, rose
- *Examples:* Hendrick's, Malfy

## Flavoured and Infused Gin

- *Characteristics:* Gins with added flavors (fruit, spices, flowers), often colorful
- *Examples:* Various pink gins, such as Greenall's Wild Berry

## Sloe Gin

- *Characteristics:* Technically not a gin (an exception that can still legally carry the gin label), but a sloe-berry liqueur based on gin. Sweet, red, with a strong sloe flavor and mild tartness.
- *Alcohol Content:* Usually around 20–30% ABV.
- *Use:* Cocktails, aperitifs.



*Gin is used today not only in cocktails but also in gastronomy as an ingredient in various dishes and decadent beverages. Some interesting uses of gin include:*

### ***Gin and tonic***

*The most famous way to enjoy gin is in the Gin and Tonic cocktail. This drink is refreshing, light, and extremely popular worldwide. The mixing of this cocktail was introduced by the army of the British East India Company. Quinine mixed with water was used as a preventive measure against malaria. The drink was very strong and bitter, so gin was added to make it more palatable.*

## **Cocktails**

### **Martini**

- A combination of gin and dry vermouth, served with an olive or lemon twist

### **Negroni**

- A blend of gin, Campari, and sweet vermouth; a highly aromatic and bitter drink

### **Gimlet**

- A mixture of gin and lime cordial; simple but very popular cocktail



## **Culinary Uses**

- Various marinades for meat or fish, where gin adds depth of flavor
- Ice creams or sorbets with a subtle citrus or herbal note
- Fruit salads or desserts enhanced with a touch of gin for contrast



## *Food pairing*

Gin pairs wonderfully with various dishes – for example, seafood such as oysters or shrimp, or lighter meats such as chicken or lamb. Its refreshing character also complements spicy cuisine like Indian or Thai dishes.

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Gin is a fascinating drink with a rich history that continues to evolve. Its wide range of uses in both gastronomy and cocktail culture makes it an indispensable part of the modern world of beverages.