



Truly Tastes
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USA



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THREE GINS FROM BLUECOAT AND CITADELLE

What is tonic good for, if not for mixing with gin, the youngest of the major spirits? We've been trying three lovely beverages today, that are good for three very different purposes. Much like our other coverage, [with three vodkas for instance](#), we had a team of tasters try these out in a few ways, completely blind, and compiled the results later. All three gins were new to almost everyone, so we didn't have a pre-existing preference.



Top-ranked for straight drinking is the [Citadelle Réserve 2010](#). This is an interesting bottle, the third vintage from French company Cognac Ferrand, who ages wheat distilled in oak barrels. This year, they apparently adjusted the recipe a bit, modifying the botanicals to take the oak into account, and the result is a lovely golden color that surprises most everyone- even veteran gin drinkers. The nose and flavor are more floral than some, with less of the herbal notes, and a bit of a rounder sweetness that approaches vanilla bean with cinnamon. It winds down smoothly, making this one our clear favorite from nose to end, at least for sipping. Bottles are limited, and run \$54 or more, but we definitely recommend this one to spirit snobs, especially as a fall or winter gin.

Their other bottle, the [Citadelle 2010](#), looks much more like regular gin. It feels a bit deeper though, and though it lacks some of the spiciness of the Reserve, most rated it tops when mixed with tonic. The juniper is strong in this one, definitely more forward than most of the other 19 botanicals, and complements the quinine and citrus flavors nicely. This one is best crisp and chilled, and tasters commented that it was the prettiest bottle of the bunch (very similar to the Reserve, but looked more natural due to the spirit color). Make sure you check out their recipes as well.

Finally, [Bluecoat American Dry Gin](#) is one we've seen but hadn't had a chance to try. It's less expensive than the other two, and fills an important niche: the best value and best dirty martini. For use in cocktails, this one was the easiest to like, since its character was a bit more flexible. At \$20 a bottle, it's competitive with most brands, and hits a nice spot for balance: we tasted the juniper here as well, and tastes distinctive from many London-style gins. There are cardomom notes, and an earthier, orange rind hint that builds nicely. Overall, a solid gin, in an attractive package.