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Citadelle Gin: a unique and luxurious gin from France

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[Hoke Harden](#) - [Portland Spirits Examiner](#)



Citadelle Gin
Credits: Citadelle Gin

We've all been trained by the fancy advertising campaigns and the glittery jabber of the marketing gurus to be more than a little skeptical when we look at any products---and spirits products are as prone to this phony approach to aggrandizing reality as any.

So when you see an attractive bottle and hear a paean of praise from every direction about a gin, it's reasonable to be just a little suspicious. Ho-hum. Another gin. How good could it be?

Apparently, quite good.

[Citadelle Gin](#) certainly doesn't attempt to avoid the glamour---its package is impressive to the eye and conveys a sense of quality---but it takes a very serious approach in its marketing materials to earnestly explain the care given to make this a gin of exceptional quality.

Citadelle Gin is a grain-based gin---as most are---but its primary differentiation is in how it is produced: it's twice distilled in Charentais Cognac copper-pot alembic stills at an estate in the Grand Champagne Cognac AOC, the very heart of Cognac.

Besides great prestige, what does that mean? A great deal. The Charentais, or traditional cognac still, cooks with direct flame rather than high-pressure steam, is a much slower and more laborious distillation process and, because it operates at significantly lower temperatures, produces a much more aromatic, soft, and luxurious style of ethanol. Add the nineteen choice botanicals to the distilling process and you've got a flavorful gin!

In essence, it's a tradeoff of efficiency for quality and results in a lush, rich, full-flavored gin with a malty, herbal/fruity/spicy aroma, registering licorice, fresh citrus, and pink peppercorns at various times in one sip---and of course the obligate pinene snap of juniper. The Citadelle harkens back to the old style of London Dry Gin. It's gin on a big, bold, assertive scale.

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Alexandre Gabriel, President of Cognac-Ferrand (in which portfolio Citadelle resides and at which estate Citadelle is made), is quite pleased and proud with all the acclaim and accolades and awards Citadelle has received. It was awarded a Double Gold Medal at the prestigious [San Francisco World Spirits Competition](#) and was acclaimed as the Best London Dry Gin, with 96 points, by Wine Enthusiast, along with a slew of other mentions and awards throughout Europe.

He also likes to drink Citadelle Gin and suggested an enticing new way to use Citadelle---in a classic-cocktail-with-a-twist, the old familiar Gin & Tonic with a distinctive difference.

Alexandre Gabriel's Gin & Tonic

1.6 ounces Citadelle gin

200 ml Fever Tree tonic (about 6.5 ounces, and usually the size of a small bottle provided at the bar)

Lime or lemon skin (for just a little oil from the peel; not the full wedge)

Grated nutmeg, star anise, or cinnamon stick

In a large tumbler, stir together gin, tonic and ice. Twist citrus peel over the drink and add to the glass. Garnish with spice and drink (no straw).

Local Portlanders like Citadelle as well, and you're likely to find it on the best back bars in the city.

High-powered bartender/mixologist, David Shenaut, President of the Oregon Bartenders Guild and a man who has dazzled behind the bar in some of those best places, is an aficionado of Citadelle.

Here he tells his story of Citadelle and offers up a favorite recipe as well:

Divine Offering

2.25 oz Citadelle Gin

.75 Pineau de Charentes

2 dashes hibiscus grapefruit bitters*

Stir and garnish with a grapefruit peel

*The house-made bitters contain black and pink peppercorns along with the hibiscus flowers, dried orange peel, and grapefruit zest.

"This was the favorite cocktail of a woman who would bring her blind dates to the bar so that the staff could help judge them, She'd always been impressed with how well we could read her, and make cocktails to suit her mood, so she trusted us implicitly. Citadelle is great in its subtle complexity: it helps me define French Gin. I was once served an **Alaska Cocktail** by Jared Schubert at <http://www.732social.com/spirits/> using the aged Citadelle [Citadelle Reserve Oak Aged Gin]. It was inspiring and helped lead me further along in the search for deliciousness."

Citadelle Gin is available in Oregon and is priced at \$23.45/750ml.

Online at: <http://www.examiner.com/spirits-in-portland/citadelle-gin-a-unique-and-luxurious-gin-from-france>