



As Seen In
Wine Enthusiast Magazine
April 2011



Spirits

FOR STYLISH GIN, LONDON DRY

Gin is a wonderfully versatile spirit, and a key ingredient in cocktails, including the classic gin & tonic, Tom Collins, Singapore sling and, of course, the classic martini. But it's also received a boost in recent years thanks to the revival of "speakeasy-style" bars specializing in pre-Prohibition cocktails, many of which feature gin.

If you don't think of gin as versatile, you certainly should explore its various styles. Here the focus is on London Dry gin, a style designation that differentiates it from the sweeter Old Tom style, the stronger-flavored Plymouth style, flavored/infused gins, aged "golden gins" and Dutch genevers/jenever.

Although the London Dry style originated in England, excellent dry gins are now produced elsewhere, including America and France. Regardless of origin, most "dry style" gins are light-

bodied and aromatic, usually dominated by the piny juniper berry and accented with an array of other botanicals, which can range from herbs and spices (coriander, cardamom, anise, ginger) to floral notes (iris, elderflower) to tea and citrus peels.

While we're talking about gin, a brief word about martinis: a real martini is made with gin—not vodka—and just a splash of vermouth, shaken with ice until very, very cold. A "dry martini" simply means it has very little vermouth (not that it's made with London Dry gin, or dry vermouth).

If you want to make a bartender snicker, ask for a "very, very dry martini" and watch what happens next: Many will wave the vermouth over the martini glass but not pour it; they will simply slide across the bar a martini glass full of well-chilled gin, and nothing else. Not that there are any objections to that, of course. —Kara Newman

Slightly oily feel. Great for a gimlet or martini with a lemon twist.

92 Martin Miller's Westbourne Strength (England, Kindred Spirits, Miami, FL); 45.2% abv, \$35. This gin has a soft feel and English-garden aroma reminiscent of cucumber and fresh-cut flowers (iris is one of the botanicals). On the tongue, look for cucumber and juniper, and a sweet and slightly floral finish. Drink this gin in a tall glass garnished with cucumber slices, preferably while relaxing in a porch swing.

92 Bluecoat American Dry Gin (USA; Philadelphia Distilling, Philadelphia, PA); 47% abv, \$28. A classic London Dry gin to sip in tennis whites. Assertive, brisk and showing lots of lemon with just a hint of sweetness, it finishes dry and citrusy. Strong anise and juniper aroma and soft feel. Save the gorgeous peacock-blue bottle for a vase.

91 Greylock Gin (USA; Berkshire Mountain Distillers, Sheffield, MA); 40% abv, \$30. Perfumy pine and licorice, with some citrus in the background. This gin starts floral and dry, and finishes with bitter orange peel, clove and peppery bite. When chilled, this gin has a sweetness to it. Would make an intriguing martini.

91 Beekeeper London (England; Pernod Ricard USA, Purchase, NY); 47% abv, \$27. At first, this gin comes across as sweet, clean and mild, but it finishes with a pronounced spice box punch of juniper, cardamom and citrus. Note to mixologists: Thanks to the assertive finish, this gin would hold up in a cocktail with a lot of other flavors.

90 Oxley Classic English Dry Gin (England, Oxley Spirits Company, Miami, FL); 47% abv, \$50/1 L. This gin has

96 Citadelle Gin (France, W.J. Deutsch & Sons Ltd., Harrison, NY); 44% abv, \$25. A soft and refined standout. Bright, citrusy aroma. This supersilky gin has a big licorice and juniper twang and a slight quinine flavor—in other words, it cries out for tonic water. The sweet, lingering finish evokes pink peppercorns, citrus peel and white wildflowers.

95 Darnley's View Gin (Great Britain, Weyms Wine and Spirits, San Francisco, CA); 40% abv, \$35. Fresh, delicate fragrance of anise and coriander. This light-bodied, soft gin has a clean, brisk finish with anise and eucalyptus notes. A beautiful small-batch gin.

95 Beekeeper 24 London Dry Gin (England, Pernod Ricard, Purchase, NY); 45% abv, \$29. Polished, versatile and well-balanced. Clean, mild aromas of juniper and citrus, and a sweeter flavor than most gins, with a bracing, astringent, citrus-peel finish. The gin's famed tea botanicals were not apparent in tasting; it had more of a pronounced grapefruit profile. The bottle is striking, with a red base and decorative glasswork.

94 Broker's Premium London Dry Gin (England, Broker's Imports, Hood River, OR); 47% abv, \$21. Unscrew that adorable bowler-hat bottle top, and a warm fra-

grance of orange peel, cinnamon-cassia, juniper and licorice wafts out. Well-balanced, clean, medium feel. Classic, strong juniper flavor, with a refreshing citrusy, piny finish, spicy and lively. Good value. Gin and tonic all the way.

93 Martin Miller's Gin (England; Kindred Spirits, Miami, FL); 40% abv, \$30/1 L. One of the most aromatic and least junipery gins, with aromas of cucumber, white pepper and lemon zest. On the tongue, look for a brief sweetness and floral taste, which rolls into invigorating, pleasingly bitter flavors of orange pith and pine.

93 Tanqueray London Dry Gin (Great Britain, Diageo, Norwalk, CT); 47.3% abv, \$20. The vibrant juniper and licorice flavors and a pretty, slightly braced up with a some time to open the reward is a cit

92 Bombay Dry Gin (Bombay, India; F&L Spirits Company, Miami, FL); 47% abv, \$21. Sweet, mild, clean and licorice. This can be detected by astringent pine needles. Finally, a big licorice

96 Citadelle Gin (France, W.J. Deutsch & Sons Ltd., Harrison, NY); 44% abv, \$25. A soft and refined standout. Bright, citrusy aroma. This super silky gin has a big licorice and juniper twang and a slight quinine flavor – in other words, it cries out for tonic water. The sweet, lingering finish evokes pink peppercorns, citrus peel and white wildflowers.