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TASTE-TEST



AVIATION GIN

Portland, Ore. | medoyeff.com



BROKER'S GIN

England | brokersgin.com



CASCADE MOUNTAIN GIN

Bend, Ore. | bendistillery.com



GIN NO. 209

San Francisco | 209gin.com

STYLE	Dutch-style genever	London dry	American gin	American gin
AROMA	Earthy and spicy, with a lightly sweet mix of herbs, grasses, tree sap, anise and rye	Sweet with a strong juniper character, like a classic London dry gin	Astringent and thin with sweet citrus notes	Sweet and floral, with hints of juniper and orange zest
FLAVOR	Herbal, spicy and clean, with zesty notes of citrus and pine	Lightly floral and citrusy, with dominant juniper and alcohol	Mild, with a lightly herbal character and an alcohol burn on the back of the palate	Spicy and sweet, with touches of vanilla, cardamom and juniper
SMOOTHNESS	Very smooth and full-bodied, with a substantial sachet of flavors	Medium, with an alcohol burn	Very smooth but thin	Supple and velvety
STRENGTH & STURDINESS	Medium strength, with a nice finish and a bold character that can add dimension to a cocktail	Strong but light-bodied	Light-bodied and mild; could be overpowered by tonic	Starts strong and finishes smooth; good for sipping or mixing
OVERALL	★★★★ ^{1/2} Memorable; excellent neat, and a fun addition to a cocktail	★★★ Appealing to fans of classic London dry gins; not one to sip neat	★★ Not strong enough for mixing; not complex as a sipper	★★★★ Very elegant and smooth

GIN, PLEASE

Lucky are fans of the martini and a host of other classic cocktails, as gin—that favorite import from England by way of the Dutch—makes a well-timed comeback, this time with some American interpretations thrown into the mix. In a blind tasting with guest expert Kevin Ludwig, bar manager at Park Kitchen in Portland, Ore., we evaluated eight artisanal offerings.





HENDRICK'S GIN

Scotland | hendricksgin.com

JUNIPERO GIN

San Francisco | anchorbrewing.com

MARTIN MILLER'S GIN

England | millersgin.com

OLD RAJ DRY GIN

Scotland | wmcadenhead.com

Scottish gin	American dry	Reformed London dry	Scottish dry
Sweet vanilla, honey and cucumber, with a blast of alcohol	Bouquet of juniper, sweet vanilla, grains and ripe fruits	Floral and fragrant, with notes of pepper, cucumber, rice vinegar, rose and sake	Deliciously herbal, spicy and lightly sweet, with notes of juniper, lavender, sweet basil and raisins
Astringent and subtly spicy, with notes of vanilla and a rose-petal linger	Lavender-heavy herbal taste mingles with grasses and grapefruit with a spicy finish	Bright, woody and sweet, with hints of bubblegum, peppermint, cucumber and cedar, and a spicy finish	Full-bodied, spicy, herbal and floral; a tantalizing bouquet of lavender, pine, juniper and saffron
Smoother than expected, considering the strong alcohol aroma	Rich mouthfeel; medium smoothness	Smooth, with a nice heat at the finish	Surprisingly soft and smooth, considering its whopping 55 percent alcohol content
Sturdy and strong, with a medium body and lots of heat on the finish	Strong herbal character will hold up to mixing; bitter notes will add a nice dimension to a cocktail	Smooth but sturdy, with a strong spicy character that will work alone or in a mixed drink	Sturdy and strong; perfect for a martini or any other cocktail
★★★ Classic; too astringent to drink straight but good for a martini or other cocktail	★★★ 1/2 Would be showcased best in a classic martini or other cocktail	★★★★ Unique, with a nice warming quality and a pleasing cedar aftertaste	★★★★★ Unforgettable, with a character that's delightful neat or in a cocktail; saffron yields a straw-yellow color

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Tough to Find, But Worth Seeking Out

BLUECOAT GIN

Philadelphia | bluecoatgin.com

This staunchly American take on the classic dry gin is pleasantly earthy and herbal in aroma and taste, with a good balance of sweet fruits, nutty notes and warming citrus spice, with a full, soft body. It's elegant straight or in a martini but, unfortunately for the rest of the colonies, it's not yet available outside Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

★★★★★