



How To Properly Make An American Gin & Tonic

Jun 12, 2014 2:00 pm

There's a recipe. And, no soda gun involved.

BY MATT RODBARD



Adding juniper berries or edible flowers as a garnish can step up your G&T game.

House Spirits Distillery has come into its own since Christian Krogstad co-founded the operation with Lee Medoff in Corvallis, Oregon in 2005 — later moving to the heart of [distillery row](#) in Southeast Portland. The spirits produced in the distillery are almost as eclectic as the inventors (Medoff and Krogstad began their careers as brewers during the microbrew boom in

the 1990s). And while the aquavit and very small batch whiskey are both excellent, it's the company's Aviation Gin that I have stocked at my home bar year-round.

Unlike classic London dry gins that are very juniper-heavy (think the gins you might have grown up on, like Beefeater), Aviation is softer and less astringent, with coriander and lavender pushing through. Krogstad calls Aviation an "American-style dry gin," which he defines as a balanced botanical blend. So why all the tasting notes and jargon? It's to prove a single point: We like making cocktails with the accessible Aviation, especially in the summertime. Who doesn't want a gin and tonic after a long, sweaty day at the keyboard? But, is gin and tonic a cocktail? We think so.

"We tested over 50 different tonics and found that Fever Tree works the best," admits Brooke Arthur of the ideal tonic to mix with Aviation. Arthur, a Los Angeles-based bartender, serves as the company's cocktail guru and is of the strong opinion that a good G&T takes a good recipe (as in, no soda guns are allowed). In her version, she mixes the gin with a small amount of Maraschino liqueur (made with the tart Marasca cherry) and a squeeze of both lemon and lime. "The biggest flaw with gin and tonics is that people don't actually squeeze the juice," says Arthur. With the addition of Maraschino, she is tipping her hat to the gin's namesake cocktail — the Aviation — but hardly pours to the drink's full specifications. It's a wink more than a nod. Arthur also suggests adding garnishes like lavender petals or juniper berries to liven up the presentation, which is how they do it in Madrid. The Spanish are G&T masters. And what can't we learn from the Spanish?

American Gin & Tonic Recipe

Ingredients

2 ounces Aviation American Gin
1/4 ounce Maraschino liqueur
4 ounces Fever Tree tonic water
Squeeze of 1 lemon wedge & 1 lime wedge

Directions

1. In a Collins glass add ice, spirits and mixers.
2. Garnish with a lemon & lime wedge squeezed & dropped into a glass.
3. Stir and enjoy.