



NORTHWEST

INGENUITY

REDEFINING MODERN-DAY GIN

Gin, put bluntly, is flavored vodka. Specifically, it is flavored by juniper. With thousands of alternatives, it ought to represent hardly a sliver of the world of spirits. Instead, supporting botanicals, distillation techniques, blending and far more make gin a Narnia of possibility—perhaps more so than any other spirit.

Yet for inexplicable decades, gin stagnated. Ten years ago, asking for it virtually anywhere would elicit a juniper-dominated London Dry. But that was when something stirred. A debate ignited over how far gin could reach. And in the intervening years, Northwest gins, spearheading a shift away from the conventional, have surfaced at the forefront of the evolving redefinition of juniper spirits.





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PHOTOS BY
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CRAFTING AN EVOLUTION

That debate was first kindled by **AVIATION AMERICAN GIN**. In 2006, then-Seattle-based bartender Ryan Magarian partnered with Portland's House Spirits—the first American bartender-distiller collaboration on record. Thirty-five batches later, Aviation was finalized, balancing revolutionarily muted juniper with supporting botanicals that *almost* shared center stage.

Magarian then penned an influential piece characterizing the style as “New American Dry,” throwing open the floodgates to heated discussion and provoking consequential experimentation. In the span of half a decade, the resultant gins have already made their mark. Today, variety is emerging where monotony previously reigned. And perhaps more than anywhere else, that variety pervades in the Northwest.

From revitalized pre-Prohibition styles, to gins with never-before-used Cascadian botanicals, to others aged in local whiskey barrels for stronger flavor, Northwest spirits of completely disparate styles have all found a place in a snowballing gin renaissance.

NORTHWEST GIN, AS TOLD BY ITS BARTENDERS

An incredibly dynamic regional cocktail scene plays a powerful role in Northwest gins' evolution. Foreshadowed by the Aviation partnership, the intersection of local spirits and receptive bartenders has bred a favorable climate for experimentation, in turn begetting gin success stories. In the process, the Northwest is establishing itself as a world-class gin incubator, and gin as a category continues to evolve toward its rightful place among the most prestigious spirits.

So from the bars soldiering on the frontlines of the forward-marching Northwest gin scene, we asked **FOUR NORTHWEST COCKTAIL PROFESSIONALS** to pour us their quintessential gin drinks with the gin that makes each one dazzle. Who better to do it? Here's what they served.