



Photo courtesy of Aviation Gin/House Spirits

Aviation American Gin

by Brett Konen

"There are a lot of gins out there that hit you directly with powerful herbal notes," explains Christian Krogstad, founder of [House Spirits Distillery](#) and distiller of [Aviation American Gin](#). "With Aviation, we were going for less of the bright, 'green' flavors and more of the 'brown' flavors—the earthier notes."

Say juniper-forward gins are conversational: this one is a covert exchange under the breath. The juniper is there, but it's muted with less common components: cardamom, lavender, sarsaparilla and dried orange peel among them. Aviation is a quirky, quality-oriented introvert, which is maybe what makes it seem so Northwest. That said, it truly shines in a cocktail. The 35 batches it took the team to get the proportions perfect resulted in a spirit strong enough to stand alongside fresh, flavorful mixers without hogging the spotlight. It can certainly be sipped solo, but try it with local honey and lemon in a Bees Knees, or alongside Northwest blackberries in the Muddled Blackberry Gimlet (these and more on the Aviation website) to fully understand the 97-point rating from Wine Enthusiast.