

From once viewed as the favourite tippie of the senior members of the UK's Royal family to becoming the drink *du jour* of the millennials the world over, gin has made quite a comeback leaving behind its odourless counterpart vodka by miles.

The thing is: gin has always been delicious. We have just woken up to that fact and to the ongoing ingenious movement of creating artisanal

gin flavoured with juniper (berries). It's a sort of a farm-to-glass movement. None of that industrially produced stuff will cut it anymore. And why should it? There is mind-boggling variety coming out of Spain, Scotland, Australia, Germany, and Japan. The more exotic it is, the better. In fact, we are now making craft gin even in India.

At the moment, though, drinking gin is not enough. One must also know the botanicals that go into your favourite brand—the herbs, how small the batch is, where and how it was distilled and what will go with it. While juniper berry is the principle

ingredient used to add flavour to the spirit, gin distillers also use elements like rose petals and citrus fruits to afford a distinct flavour to their brand. These vary from brand to brand—some may use 10 ingredients, and others over 50. *Here is a list of some of my favourite gins from around the world:*

Monkey 47, Germany
It has a very attractive nose with typical London Dry characteristics. It is as crisp on the nose as it is in the mouth. Some tangy notes add an extra bit of freshness to the taste. Overall, it offers a good balance of all the components with a refreshing finish.



Gin Mare, Spain
It has balanced notes of juniper, herbs like thyme and rosemary, and a hint of pine balanced with aromas of tomato plants and olives. It is full-bodied with expressions of fresh coriander that evolve into spicier notes originating from thyme, rosemary and basil. The finish is long with a delicious aftertaste of the Arbequina olives topped with cardamom and basil.

Sipsmith London Dry Gin, UK
It's floral, summer meadow notes are followed by mellowness of rounded juniper and freshness of zesty citrus. It confidently hits the palate, warms it with the spices and then wrings it dry, begging you to take another sip. The bold, complex notes are smooth enough for a Martini, yet rich and perfectly balanced for a refreshing G&T.



Bathtub Gin, UK
The juniper rich bouquet is backed with a solid backbone of grain spirit. Top notes of cardamom and orange blossom are evident with a hint of cinnamon. A portion of the gin is infused with six botanicals, capturing the vibrant essence of orange peel, cassia, juniper, coriander, cardamom and clove. This infusion is then meticulously blended back, giving the copper pot-distilled gin an entrancing flavour.

Tanqueray No. TEN, UK
It's the only gin to be made with whole citrus fruits, including white grapefruit, lime, and orange, along with juniper, coriander and a hint of chamomile flowers. It has a unique, full-bodied character and a citrusy undertone. Grapefruit and chamomile are evident on the nose and so are the complex spices and juniper. The wonderfully rounded palate is incredibly smooth giving it the consummate

taste of gin, while the other ingredients add to the soft and subtle notes. Furthermore, white pepper and coriander add depth. All these flavours continue through the long, almost creamy, sherbet-like finish.

The Botanist, Scotland
A delectable spirit, it comes with a citrusy freshness that excites and stimulates the taste buds.

It offers notes of sweet delicate menthol, apple mint, spring woodlands, juniper, coriander with aniseed undertones, lemon and orange peel, a bouquet of summer flowers, honey from thistle, coconut from gorse and wild mint. The taste is rich and mellow—cool at first till you slowly feel the warmth and the absolute purity of its slow unhurried distillation.



Caorunn Gin, Scotland
The modern London Dry gin boasts an aromatic taste and a long dry finish. Perfectly clear like pure Scottish water, it offers notes that are fresh,

floral, tangy, slightly spicy and aromatic



with a clean, crisp, sweet, full-bodied palate. The finish is invigorating, long-lasting and slightly drying.

Ki No Bi Dry Gin, Japan
Ki No Bi is as clear as the air in the sacred mountains of Kyoto. It comes with a fresh aroma of yuzu and a thread of sansho that lingers like morning mist in a bamboo forest. The juniper complements the Japanese botanicals, even as the ginger root affords it a slightly warming and spicy finish.

Hendrick's Gin, Scotland
The Scottish tippie flaunts an intense nose with an initial burst of crisp zesty botanicals. Harmoniously balanced juniper, coriander and a deep floral aroma

of violets and rose make it stand out. It offers smooth and balanced botanicals on the palate, which are clean and dry without being astringent. The complexity of the nose comes through in the pleasurable taste that ends with a lingering finish of refreshing cucumber and rose. **E**



Nikhil Agarwal

It's always Gin o'clock somewhere

Swot up your gin knowledge with recommendations from sommelier Nikhil Agarwal.

