

SPRING44 GIN

Here's a spirit for those who appreciate taking the road less traveled. Spring44 Gin is handmade by Denver-based Spring44 Distilling Company using Rocky Mountain spring water and many locally sourced botanicals and aromatics. The result is a pristine spirit with a singularly fresh character.

"Spring44 Gin is a zesty product with floral and fruity notes. It distinguishes itself by the unique combination of juniper berries, coriander and agave. And of course the secret ingredient is our water, which comes from a spring a chilling 9,044 feet above sea level," says Spring44 CEO Jeff Lindauer.

The gin is distilled five times from a base of corn, rye and wheat and infused with botanicals that include juniper, coriander, nutmeg and agave. After distillation, it is filtered through a virgin coconut husk carbon filtration system to ensure absolute purity and bottled at 80 proof.

Spring44 is an unconventional and thoroughly imaginative gin. It's graced with a wafting bouquet of juniper, lavender, jasmine, citrus and spice. Its aromatics alone are worth the price. The gin has a soft, satiny textured body and a largely dry palate marked by the flavors of juniper, grapefruit, herbs and spicy ginger. The minerals from the spring water are readily apparent on the extended finish.

—Robert Plotkin

SRP: \$29.99; supplier: SPRING44 DISTILLING LLC



nutmeg and lime are incorporated for a finished product that's built for contemporary cocktails and connoisseurs. G'Vine Nouaison and G'Vine Floraison are both available.

SRP: Nouaison \$31; Floraison \$33; supplier: DOMAINE SELECT

Hendrick's Gin

Finding so much traction that it could easily be deemed a modern classic, Hendrick's boast cucumber as its most noted botanical—thanks to their process of mashing the fresh fruit, then



PERRY'S TOT AND DOROTHY PARKER AMERICAN GIN

Both produced by Allen Katz, Director of Mixology & Spirits Education for Southern Wine & Spirits of New York, these new brands will celebrate the old and the new in 2012 and beyond.

Perry's Tot—the only navy-strength gin in the U.S.—is named for a historic American naval figure and is meant to reintroduce the gin lover to the 114-proof naval gin, while giving bartenders the over-proof label they've been waiting for.

On a more contemporary note, Dorothy Parker American Gin is a unique blend of classic and contemporary botanicals. In addition to juniper and citrus, it showcases elderberry and hibiscus.

SRP: retail TBA; Perry's Tot \$24.95 wholesale; Dorothy Parker \$23.95 wholesale; supplier: NEW YORK DISTILLING CO.



ZEPHYR GIN

English import Zephyr Black Premium Reserve Gin is a traditional small-batch London dry gin. That said, it is anything but staid and conventional. Made with a base of neutral grain spirits, the gin is redistilled with a singular botanical mix that includes elderflowers and elderberries. These ingredients give the spirit a distinctive touch of sweetness on the finish. Prior to bottling the gin is rendered to 88 proof.

Zephyr Black is crystal clear with a lightweight body and a decidedly floral bouquet with savory juniper notes. Its aromatic signature makes an enticing first impression. The gin fills the mouth with a dry assortment of flavors dominated by lively citrus, semi-sweet flora and dry juniper. Mixologists will greatly appreciate its wide and diverse palate. The finish is moderate in length and quite smooth.

Zephyr Blu Elderberry Flavored Gin is crafted in the same manner as Zephyr Black. After the neutral spirits are redistilled with the botanicals, the spirit is infused with gardenias and sweet elderberries. The additional two botanicals impart a delightfully sweet floral quality to the gin and give the spirit a faint, naturally induced blue color. Zephyr Blu is bottled at 80 proof; the lower alcohol content allows the spirit to luxuriate on the palate longer.

"Zephyr Blu's smooth flavor makes it extremely mixable in a variety of cocktails," states Kevin Swadish of importer Sabemos Beverages. —R. P.

SRP: Zephyr Blu \$29.99, Zephyr Black \$34.99; supplier: SABEMOS BEVERAGES



NEW & NOTEWORTHY

Stock them while they're hot!



NOLET'S Silver Dry Gin

Earning Double Gold at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition in 2011, this spirit contains unique botanicals like Turkish rose, raspberry and peach, giving it an intensely floral and sweet combination

when sipped neat. The company also unleashed NOLET'S Reserve Dry-Gin this year as well, imbuing saffron and vanilla, positioned ultra-premium and released in limited quantities.

SRP: NOLET'S Silver \$49.99; NOLET'S Reserve \$69.99; supplier: NOLET'S SPIRITS

No. 3 London Dry Gin

A hearty London dry with intense taste, No. 3 is produced in the



Netherlands from three fruits and three spices, distilled in traditional copper pot stills. While unabashedly juniper forward, there are notes of cardamom and grapefruit lingering in the back sip.

SRP: \$39.99; supplier: ANCHOR BREWERS & DISTILLERS

Caorunn Gin

Small-batch gin distilled with Celtic botanicals of heather, bog myrtle, dandelion and native Coul Blush apple, alongside traditional juniper, coriander seed, orange peel, lemon peel, angelica root and cassia bark, this Scottish-bred product promotes its distillation in a copper berry chamber, where the grain spirit is vaporized in a slow process to infuse the more subtle flavors.

SRP: \$39.99; supplier: INTERNATIONAL BEVERAGE COMPANY



Hey! Bulldog!

JOSH HAYES, WHO RECENTLY JOINED BULLDOG GIN AS VICE PRESIDENT, GLOBAL DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, SAT DOWN WITH MARTIN BIHL FOR A BRIEF Q&A.



Martin Bihl: Why do we need another gin?

JOSH HAYES: I'm not sure everyone does—and that's fine, because honestly, Bulldog isn't for everyone. Our drinkers tend to be, well, different. Bartenders—with whom we have tremendous currency—are telling us that people want a different voice in the category. And we're that voice.

MB: What's the state of the category?

JH: The whisk(ey) category has really expanded, with different finishes and ages, and the vodka category has pushed the limits with different flavors and infusions. Now, you're seeing some new thinking in the gin category in a way you haven't seen in the past. Bulldog is part of that. I think that's very exciting, and a very good sign.

MB: How do you compete with brands with much bigger budgets?

JH: By not competing with them—we're small, but we're not stupid. Our focus is to become a part of the conversation with certain

trend-setting young people in specific parts of New York, Philadelphia, D.C., Boston—major metro areas. That's why we're literally going neighborhood by neighborhood to make sure we're relevant. And the thing is, we have to do it that way; in every place we've been successful, it's been as a word of mouth brand. It's part of our DNA.

MB: Can you describe Bulldog Gin?

JH: I should hope so! To start with, we're made from a dozen exotic botanicals—including dragon eye, orris, and angelica. As a result, we've got a more rounded, less perfumey texture than other gins, which is also because of our traditional copper pot stills and painstaking quadruple-distillation process. But it's worth it, of course.

MB: Last question: favorite bulldog—Uga or Handsome Dan?

JH: And don't forget there's Spike from the old Tom & Jerry cartoons and the Aussie Rules football team the British Bulldogs, and I think the Marines' mascot is a bulldog. But my favorite bulldog? Bulldog Gin, of course!

SRP: \$30; supplier: BULLDOG GIN CO.