

## CHAPTER 6

# Dry Gin



We love gin. It's one of the most versatile and malleable of all spirits, making it the darling of bartenders the world over. It's also refreshing and invigorating, a winning combination when it is used as a cocktail base. The Martini, the Gimlet, the Rickey, the Fizz—they all demand dry gin.

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If you happen to be one of many people who think gin tastes like Pine-Sol, we understand. Gin can start more “love it—hate it” arguments than jazz. Yes, we admit that some (not all) gin tastes like you are drinking a Christmas tree. But, the simple fact is, if you are going to make real drinks, especially classic cocktails, you need to show gin some love.

For all intents and purposes, gin—the anglicized name of the word genever (“juniper” in Dutch), the spirit that is gin’s precursor—starts its life as vodka. This grain-neutral spirit (usually a combination of corn, barley, rye, and wheat) or grape-neutral spirit is then distilled with a wide variety of botanicals, particularly berries from the coniferous juniper shrub, which are generally what gives gin its distinctive, sometimes unpopular, flavor. The predominant use of juniper over other botanicals, as well as a lack of additional sugars, is what classifies a gin as dry. And the more juniper, the more perceived dryness. The bottom line is that with dry gin, there’s really no way to get around the presence of the juniper; after all, that’s how gin got its name.

### *Gin* IN A NUTSHELL

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**DEFINING FEATURES:** Botanicals, botanicals, and more botanicals

**FLAVOR PROFILE:** Juniper is most often key, along with floral, citrus, and herbal notes.

**WHY WE CHOSE IT:** It is the most versatile cocktail spirit there is.

**EMBLEMATIC DRINKS:** Martini, Gin and Tonic, Tom Collins, Gin Fizz

# *A Dry Gin Time Line*

**1688**

Dutch-born William of Orange becomes king of England and brings with him his love of the malt-based, juniper-flavored genever, the original Dutch gin.

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**1720**

The poor want to drink like kings, so they start making their own genever. Distilled from low-quality grain and cut with nasty additives like lime, oil of vitriol—that's sulfuric acid, folks—and turpentine, this rotgut made moonshine seem downright healthy.

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**1736**

London proper has more than twenty thousand gin shops, which include everything from back alley sellers to bars and general stores. Welcome to the Gin Craze era.

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**1750**

London alone, with its population of only 600,000, consumes roughly 11 million gallons of gin a year—at 160 proof! In comparison, modern gin is generally 80 to 90 proof.

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**1751 & 1756**

The final Gin Act drastically raises gin prices in 1751. Then a lousy grain harvest in '56, coupled with a change in tastes (rum and porter are the new drinks of choice), signal the death knell to rotgut gin.

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**1761**

The arrival of the first of the new breed of distillers, G & J Greenall's. Dry gin does not yet exist. The improved recipes are in the "Old Tom" style (possibly so named because of the "tom cat" sign used by the first Old Tom gin seller), sweetened and lightly flavored with botanicals.

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**1778**

Hello, Gordon's Gin. (Not yet a "dry" gin, but more in the Old Tom style)

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**1793**

Plymouth Gin, made only in Plymouth, with a sweeter, more citrusy profile than the future London Dry, arrives on the scene.

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**1830**

The year that changed everything. The Coffey, or continuous, still is patented, allowing alcohol to be continuously distilled, rather than distilled in parts. Continuous distillation results in smoother taste and no impurities.

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**1830**

The opening of the first gin palace, or "respectable" drinking establishment.

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**1830s–Late 1800s**

London Dry gin emerges, catering to the new taste for "nonsweet," more refreshing alcohol. In America, the gin martini is the new "it" drink.

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**1920–1933**

During Prohibition in the United States, "bathtub" gin—essentially moonshine mixed with artificial flavors—substitutes for the real thing.

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**1950s–1980s**

Vodka overshadows gin with its flavorless profile.

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**2000 & Beyond**

New artisanal gins, dry and otherwise, which often use old-fashioned pot stills to intensify flavors, continue to emerge, catering to the cocktail renaissance.

# THE BOTTLES TO BUY

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If you already have a gin you love, we hope we can convince you to try something new. And if you're yet to be convinced that gin is an essential cocktail spirit, we promise you that there are plenty of new gins out there with flavors that run the gamut from citrus to herbs and spices to garden flowers. Instead of spending a chunk of change on a bunch of full-size bottles that you may or may not like, go to the liquor store and buy up every mini you can find; they'll set you back anywhere from \$2 to \$5 per 50-milliliter bottle, but you'll be able to try a bunch of gins side by side, figure out what works for you, and maybe even discover something new.

One of the great things about gin is that even the cheapest brand—as long as it's labeled "London Dry"—is going to be a quality product. That means that you can spend as little as \$10 a bottle and still get your drink on. When you start looking at the "artisan" gins with higher price points, it becomes a bit more difficult to differentiate what's what. Just remember, more expensive doesn't necessarily mean better (some ingredients and distilling techniques just cost more)—and it certainly doesn't mean that you'll like it. Still, there's a good, even great, gin at every price and for every palate.

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## **Budget** (\$20 or less/750 ml)

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### **GORDON'S LONDON DRY**



### **BEEFEATER LONDON DRY**



**GORDON'S LONDON DRY GIN** Gordon's is one of the original post-Gin Craze London Dry gins. Even though it's now made in America, it retains its juniper character and makes for a good, solid mixer at a ridiculously low price point.

**BEEFEATER LONDON DRY GIN** This is what we reach for when we want a satisfying Gin and Tonic and don't feel like using the extra-special stuff. Beefeater is reliable and flavorful, and you won't be ashamed to have it on your shelf. Plus, its profile is classic London Dry.

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## **Artisan/Premium** (\$30—\$50/750 ml)

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### **LEOPOLD BROTHERS**



### **PLYMOUTH**



**LEOPOLD BROTHERS AMERICAN SMALL BATCH GIN** What happens when you distill cardamom, coriander, Valencia oranges, and pomelos in your gin? You get magic—big, citrusy magic. When we were trying to decide which gin to include in our 12 Bottle Bar repertoire, Leopold's won out only slightly over Plymouth. The citrus notes and the somewhat more esoteric nature of this American brand really get our engines revving.

**PLYMOUTH GIN** Along with Gordon's, this is the gin that the British Royal Navy took a cotton to. The navy had good taste; Plymouth is unlike any other gin. (Today, it comes in both standard—our choice here—and navy strength.) It's not officially dry, being more aromatic and less juniper-centric (perhaps even somewhat sweet), but it still uses juniper and citrus in the mix. The result is full-bodied and perfect in any cocktail where the gin takes center stage.

## FROM PLYMOUTH GIN TO PLYMOUTH ROCK

Today, Plymouth Gin features a ship on its bottle—one that any school kid will recognize. Before the Pilgrims left for the New World, they spent their last night in England at the Black Friars monastery in the town of Plymouth. Many years later, the monastery would become a distillery—one where Plymouth Gin is made to this day. You guessed it: the ship featured on the label is the *Mayflower*.

## *Sometimes a Cucumber Isn't Just a Cucumber. . . .* AND A GRAPE ISN'T JUST A GRAPE

Want to try something really different? Crack a bottle of Hendrick's or G'Vine gin. The Hendrick's is all cucumber and rose petals and chamomile. The G'Vine offers a sweet, perfumed floral bouquet thanks to green grape flowers macerated in the grape spirit. Either of these nontraditional profiles shines in Gin and Tonics and Gimlets.

Will either of them make a traditional Martini? Not so much; there's nothing dry to the palate about these non juniper-centric gins, which tend to have a fruitier character and a perceived sweetness. On the other hand, if you are on the fence about gin in general, one of these—or any other artisan gin—might change your mind. Besides, you gotta love the irreverence of these upstarts. Hendricks's Monty Python-esque website offers instructions for making "cucumber balls," while G'Vine riffs on the G in its name with words like *g'infusion*, *g'inesis*, and *g'intensity*.

# THE DRINKS

## Sweet & Fruity

### HONOLULU

GLASS: MARTINI | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



We like the Honolulu because it really wants to be a fruity rum drink, and you can't blame it for that. After all, this is a Prohibition treat from the golden age of Hollywood, when many a gin drink traveled west in search of Tinseltown stardom. As a friend once described the Honolulu, "it's kind of puzzling and enjoyable at the same time"—much like the private lives of many movie stars.

With lemon, orange, and pineapple juices plus simple syrup at play, fruitiness is central here, but the two ounces of gin and the addition of bitters keep any cloying sweetness in check.

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2 ounces dry gin

¼ ounce strained, freshly squeezed lemon juice

¼ ounce strained, freshly squeezed orange juice

¼ ounce pineapple juice

1 teaspoon Simple Syrup ([page 369](#))

Dash aromatic bitters

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**1** Combine all of the ingredients in a cocktail shaker. Fill the shaker three-quarters full with ice cubes and shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled, 15 seconds.

**2** Strain into a martini glass.

### HARD SHAKE

Japanese master bartender Kazuo Uyeda invented the "hard shake" style of mixing a drink—a method endorsed by its disciples as the best way to blend and aerate a cocktail simultaneously. On paper, it's a bit difficult to explain the technique behind the hard shake, so we recommend you search the Web for videos or ask any friendly bartender who shakes his drinks as if they owe him money.

The technique may take some practice, but it's a valuable skill to have in your repertoire for drinks like the Ace Cocktail ([page 98](#)) or the Clover Club ([page 108](#)) where you want to emulsify ingredients such as egg whites. Plus, it looks damn cool.

# ACE COCKTAIL

GLASS: MARTINI | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



The Ace is a funny little drink—one that really only has a place at brunch. But, oh what a brunch drink it is. Most likely dating back to Prohibition (the earliest version we have is from the 1934 recipe book *Boothby's World Drinks*), the Ace was a small drink—half the size we present here. If you find a more diminutive portion appealing, the best approach is to make a full recipe and share this creamy, rich, sweet-sour slice of heaven with a friend.

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1½ ounces dry gin

½ ounce Grenadine, homemade ([page 376](#)) or store-bought

½ ounce heavy (whipping) cream

¼ teaspoon strained, freshly squeezed lemon juice

White from 1 large egg

Fresh whole nutmeg, for garnish (see [Note](#))

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- 1 Combine gin, grenadine, heavy cream, lemon juice, and egg white in a cocktail shaker. Shake the drink vigorously without ice to emulsify the egg white, 15 seconds.
- 2 Fill the shaker three-quarters full with ice cubes and shake again vigorously until thoroughly chilled, 15 seconds.
- 3 Strain into a martini glass and garnish with a grating of nutmeg.

# OPAL

GLASS: MARTINI, CHILLED | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



One of the most familiar drinks to come out of Prohibition was the Orange Blossom, which is nothing more than gin and orange juice. It's horrible (apologies to Snoop Dogg, but we prefer a slightly more complex tippie). The Opal, on the other hand, is what the Orange Blossom should have been—light, delicate, delicious, and above all else, a great brunch drink that can easily be made in batches. It's almost a fizz (see [page 100](#)), but lacks the requisite egg white. Instead, the result is an explosion of mouthwateringly sweet orange with a gin kick on the back.

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1½ ounces dry gin

1 ounce strained, freshly squeezed orange juice

½ ounce orange liqueur

½ teaspoon Simple Syrup ([page 369](#))

Small dash food-grade orange flower water (see [Note](#))

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**1** Combine all of the ingredients in a chilled cocktail shaker. Fill the shaker three-quarters full with ice cubes and shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled, 15 seconds.

**2** Strain into a chilled martini glass.

**NOTE:** Orange flower water is distilled from bitter orange blossoms, which offer up an aromatic addition to cocktails. It is typically available at natural foods markets.

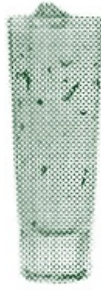
*Tip:*  
**PLAY WITH THAT DRINK**

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Drinks like the Opal are a great canvas for experimentation. Try substituting clementines or another more assertive citrus, like pomelos, for the orange juice. You'll like what you taste.

# POM GIN FIZZ

GLASS: COLLINS | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



The fizz is a wonder of mixology, a stunning combination of ingredients including but not limited to egg white or yolk, club soda, sugar, and usually dry gin. The resulting drink is almost ethereal, with the flavors of sweet citrus (and in the case of the Pom Gin Fizz, vanilla and pomegranate juice) plus the smoothness of cream and egg, as well as the bubbles of club soda. Satisfying, comforting, and eye-opening all at once.

The Pom Gin Fizz is our variation on the classic Ramos Gin Fizz (see [Variation](#)), one of the finest drinks ever created by man. The change—due to the pomegranate juice—is subtle, but it brings a beautiful pink color to the drink. Unlike many Ramos recipes, this one employs a technique we picked up from a barman of the old school: Rather than adding the orange flower water to the shaker, simply dash it onto the top of the finished drink, which amplifies the lovely bouquet.

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- 1½ ounces dry gin
  - 1 ounce Simple Syrup ([page 369](#))
  - ½ ounce strained, freshly squeezed lemon juice
  - ½ ounce pomegranate juice
  - 2 drops pure vanilla extract
  - 2 ounces heavy (whipping) cream
  - White from 1 large egg
  - Club soda
  - 2 drops food-grade orange flower water ([see Note](#))
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- 1 Combine all of the ingredients except the club soda and orange flower water in a cocktail shaker. Shake the drink vigorously without ice to emulsify the egg white, 15 seconds.
- 2 Fill the shaker three-quarters full with ice cubes and shake vigorously again until your arm tires, about 30 seconds. The goal is to shake the drink in keeping with the tradition in which it has always been shaken—until it hurts.
- 3 Strain into a collins glass.
- 4 Insert a bar spoon into the glass and chop the spoon up and down as you top the drink with club soda, to create a thick head. Add the drops of orange flower water to the top of the drink.

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## VARIATION

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Ramos Gin Fizz The original classic. Replace the pomegranate juice with lime juice.

### *If You Don't Know the Bartender* WHAT DO YOU ORDER?

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“As a bartender, I always appreciate customers who express curiosity about drinks. Ask a question about a spirit or cocktail showing genuine interest, and odds are good I'll try to make you something off menu or give you something unusual.”

—JACOB GRIER, BARTENDER AND DRINKS WRITER



# SHERRY BERRY BRAMBLE

GLASS: COLLINS | ICE: CRUSHED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



This bramble recipe comes to us courtesy of Trevor Easter, English Gins brand ambassador, and is a more savory version of the classic, fruit-based Bramble cocktail ([page 106](#)). It calls for amontillado sherry, which is off-dry and fuller-bodied than fino, and offers a distinct nuttiness that tames the sweeter elements of this drink. If you tend to prefer your cocktails sweeter, up the proportion of the blackberry liqueur from  $\frac{1}{4}$  ounce to  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce.

A note about that amontillado sherry: While we typically don't advocate buying extra bottles for mixing, we do use this sherry in the Mo Chi Chi ([page 264](#)) as well, and you will find that it is a frequent ingredient in cocktails today (not to mention in cooking—you may have a bottle in your pantry already). Further, amontillado is a luscious addition to any home bar, perfect as a savory dessert accompaniment (paired with a nut tart or cheese plate) or as a solo after-dinner drink. Good bottles, such as Lustau, can be had for \$15 to \$20.

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1  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounces dry gin

$\frac{3}{4}$  ounce amontillado sherry

$\frac{3}{4}$  ounce strained, freshly squeezed lemon juice

$\frac{3}{4}$  ounce Simple Syrup ([page 369](#))

$\frac{1}{4}$  ounce Blackberry Liqueur ([page 383](#))

Blackberry, for garnish

Fresh mint sprig, for garnish

Confectioners' sugar, for garnish

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**1** Combine all of the liquid ingredients in a collins glass. Fill the glass three-quarters full with crushed ice and stir until diluted, 30 seconds. Refill the glass with crushed ice all the way to the top.

**2** Garnish with the blackberry, the mint sprig, and a dusting of confectioners' sugar.

## THE SLOE STUFF

If you ever stumble across sloe gin, give it a try. This British liqueur is flavored with sloes, the berries of the blackthorn bush. In late October and early November, folks across Great Britain make their sloe berry pilgrimages, gathering fruit and infusing it in a good bottle of dry gin, along with some sugar. For a commercial version, Plymouth makes one of the best. Use it in place of dry gin in a Gin and Tonic ([page 115](#)).

# NO. 1 FRUIT CUP COCKTAIL

GLASS: COLLINS | ICE: CRUSHED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



Alas, many spirits are still available only overseas, and Plymouth's "Fruit Cup" is one of them. It is a lovely, deep, winey, red brew based on Plymouth's aromatic, citrus-forward gin with fruit liqueurs and a touch of bitters; it creates, as its name suggests, a superb fruit cup cocktail with the simple addition of 7-UP, sparkling lemonade (such as San Pellegrino's Limonata soda), or ginger beer.

The term "cup" refers both to a single drink and the bottled mixture to make that drink. If you ever make it to the U.K., bring a bottle (or a few) back with you. If you want to travel to the U.K. without leaving home, make this instead.

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1 ounce Cheater's Cup ([page 389](#))

5 ounces ginger beer or sparkling lemonade (see headnote)

Cucumber spear or orange slice, for garnish (optional)

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**1** Fill a collins glass with crushed ice and add the fruit cup and ginger beer.

**2** Garnish with the cucumber spear or orange slice, or any herb or fruit you desire.

# BIRD'S CUP

GLASS: COLLINS | ICE: CRUSHED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



Chef David Myers is one of our favorite people in the world, culinary or otherwise. Not only did we get our first taste of a Penicillin cocktail—a honey-ginger-Scotch marvel—from him (see [page 1](#)), but we watched as his Sam Ross–conceived cocktail program at his bistro, Comme Ça, quietly started the Los Angeles cocktail awakening. When Myers opened his restaurant Hinoki & the Bird, he continued the classic cocktail program, again expertly curated by Ross. The Bird's Cup is a wonderfully seasonal take on a Pimm's (a branded style of fruit cup) that can be changed up depending on what fruits and herbs you have on hand.

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- 1 lemon wedge
  - 1 lime wedge
  - 1 cucumber wheel, plus extra for garnish
  - 1 grape, plus extra for garnish
  - 1 strawberry, plus extra for garnish
  - ¼ orange
  - 2 or 3 fresh mint leaves
  - 2 ounces Cheater's Cup ([page 389](#))
  - ½ ounce Ginger Syrup ([page 374](#))
  - 3 ounces club soda

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- 1 Combine all of the ingredients except the club soda and garnishes in a Boston shaker tin and muddle.
  - 2 Pour the mixture into a collins glass, top with the club soda, then fill the glass with crushed ice. Garnish the glass with the cucumber. Skewer the strawberry and grape on a toothpick and garnish the drink.

# THE BLOODBATH

GLASS: MARTINI | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



The original name of this drink was “Bloodbath in the Bronx,” but we changed the name for thematic reasons because it was paired with the movie *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* for our movie-themed Halloween.

This is a version of the classic Bronx/Income Tax cocktails—gin mixed with OJ and dry and sweet vermouths—that appeared in gaz regan’s *The Bartender’s Gin Compendium* by way of bartender/journalist Simon McGoram, who spent a good deal of time bartending at Mea Culpa restaurant in Auckland, New Zealand. In McGoram’s drink, spiced sweet vermouth subs for regular sweet vermouth, while blood orange juice stands in for regular orange. Blood oranges aren’t generally available in October in the States (their season tends toward December–March), so we tweaked the recipe to approximate the color and berrylike flavor by muddling raspberries in orange juice. If you would like a deeper red color and a bit more sweetness, you can add a touch of grenadine to taste.

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6 raspberries

$\frac{3}{4}$  ounce strained, freshly squeezed orange juice

1½ ounces dry gin

$\frac{3}{4}$  ounce dry vermouth

$\frac{3}{4}$  ounce Spiced Sweet Vermouth ([page 388](#))

2 dashes orange bitters

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**1** Combine the raspberries and orange juice in a mixing glass and muddle to release the berry juices.

**2** Add all of the remaining ingredients, fill the glass three-quarters full with ice cubes, cover with a Boston shaker tin, and shake until thoroughly combined, 15 seconds.

**3** Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a martini glass.

## BEE'S KNEES

GLASS: MARTINI | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK

In concept, the Bee's Knees just sounds delicious. It's a classic sour but made with honey—what's not to love? The key here is to find the perfect balance among all of the ingredients, so you can taste each of them without any one dominating. And while logic would say that this drink, with its fresh lemon juice, gets a lemon twist for a garnish, we prefer an orange twist. The sweet honey balances the tart lemon, and the gin—particularly a more citrus-forward style of gin, such as our recommended Plymouth (or others like Uncle Val's and Leopold)—makes for a refreshing but not-too-tart sipper.

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1½ ounces dry gin

¾ ounce strained, freshly squeezed lemon juice

¾ ounce Honey Syrup ([page 371](#))

Orange twist, for garnish

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**1** Combine the gin, lemon juice, and honey syrup in a cocktail shaker, fill the shaker three-quarters full with ice cubes, and shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled, 15 seconds.

**2** Strain into a martini glass and garnish with the orange twist.

# BRAMBLE

GLASS: ROCKS | ICE: CRUSHED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



Created in the mid-1980s by Dick Bradsell at the innovative and trendy Fred's Club, in London, the Bramble is a true modern classic and a lovely ode to the way the fruit element can make a drink come together. The Bramble is all about the juiciness of the blackberry liqueur, which complements the aromatics of the gin (we like Plymouth for this).

We use Bradsell's original recipe here, but make our own blackberry liqueur. Of course, if you'd rather pop down to the local liquor store for your *crème de mûre*, the drink will be just as delicious.

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1½ ounces dry gin

¾ ounce strained, freshly squeezed lemon juice

½ ounce Simple Syrup ([page 369](#))

¾ ounce Blackberry Liqueur ([page 383](#))

2 raspberries, for garnish

Lemon slice, for garnish

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**1** Fill a rocks glass halfway with crushed ice. Add the gin, lemon juice, and Simple Syrup to the glass, stirring gently to mix.

**2** Pour the blackberry liqueur over the top of the drink. Do not stir. Garnish with two raspberries and a lemon slice.

# BOX CAR

GLASS: MARTINI | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



If you look at this recipe closely, you'll see that it's a Sidecar ([page 81](#)) in sheep's clothing—gin instead of brandy, plus some grenadine to tame it—which is far from a bad thing. The original recipe we adapted is from 1945 and included a sugared rim for the glass, strengthening the Sidecar connection. We think the orange liqueur and grenadine add more than enough sweetness, so we skip the sugar here, allowing the sour quality to shine through.

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1½ ounces dry gin

¾ ounce strained, freshly squeezed lime juice

½ ounce orange liqueur

1 teaspoon Grenadine, homemade ([page 376](#)) or store-bought

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**1** Combine all of the ingredients in a cocktail shaker, fill the shaker three-quarters full with ice cubes, and shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled, 15 seconds.

**2** Strain into a martini glass.

# CLOVER CLUB

GLASS: MARTINI | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



In 1934, *Esquire* magazine named the ten worst drinks to come out of Prohibition (see [box](#)), and the Clover Club was among them. Part of the reason people tend to deride the Clover Club is that, despite its origins as the eponymous cocktail of an old-school men's club, this is a big, pink, frothy drink. We ask you: What's wrong with big, pink, and frothy, as long as the thing's tasty? The pink comes from raspberry syrup and the froth from an egg white. And while there are similarities to the Ace Cocktail on [page 98](#), the lack of cream makes for a decidedly lighter, zingier beverage, making it perfect for a picnic, lawn party, or hot summer afternoon.

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1½ ounces dry gin

¾ ounce strained, freshly squeezed lemon juice

¼ ounce Raspberry Syrup ([page 372](#))

White from 1 large egg

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- 1 Combine all of the ingredients in a cocktail shaker and shake vigorously without ice to emulsify the egg white, 15 seconds.
- 2 Fill the shaker three-quarters full with ice cubes and shake again vigorously until thoroughly chilled, 15 seconds.
- 3 Strain into a martini glass.

## *If You Don't Know the Bartender,* WHAT DO YOU ORDER?

"Simple drinks with muddled citrus are easy to ensure quality. When muddling a fresh lemon or lime, you are guaranteed freshness of juice. Try a Caipirinha, Caipiroska, or Bramble to make sure you get a nice drink. If it's 1:30 a.m. and the bar is packed, skip the cocktail and grab a beer."

—JUSTIN DARNES, BARTENDER



# THE FITZGERALD

GLASS: MARTINI | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



You know that scene in *Good Will Hunting* where Matt Damon's character walks up to the chalkboard and easily solves the unsolvable equation? That's pretty much what Dale DeGroff, who started the modern American bartending revolution, did with the Fitzgerald. With the simple addition of a couple of dashes of bitters, he turned an ordinary gin sour into something much more textured and interesting. How do you like *them* apples?

Dale's original recipe simply called for aromatic bitters, but now that he's bottled his own, he always uses Dale DeGroff's Pimento Aromatic Bitters (see [page 307](#)). If you can't get DeGroff's, any aromatic bitters will work, and we have used Angostura countless times to superb effect.

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1½ ounces dry gin

¾ ounce strained, freshly squeezed lemon juice

¾ ounce Simple Syrup ([page 369](#))

2 dashes aromatic bitters

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**1** Combine all of the ingredients in a mixing glass. Fill the glass three-quarters full with ice cubes, cover with a Boston shaker tin, and shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled, 15 seconds.

**2** Strain into a martini glass.

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"The Gin and Tonic has always been the traditional 'Cocktail Hour' standard for summer gatherings. Several years ago, while [I was] working the Promenade Bar at the Rainbow Room, a customer challenged me to create a new summer drink, saying he was tired of the G and T, and asked me to do something more exciting with gin to get him through the summer. I made a Gin Sour, but I spiced it up by adding Angostura bitters, and called it the Gin Thing. Well it became quite the thing that summer, so I put it on my cocktail menu. One guest who enjoyed the drink was a fiction reader for *The New Yorker* named Valerie, who insisted I give the drink a classier name. Since the Hemingway Daiquiri was on the menu at the time, she thought F. Scott Fitzgerald should get some equal representation, so she suggested 'The Fitzgerald.'"

—DALE DEGROFF, *THE CRAFT OF THE COCKTAIL*

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# FRENCH 75

GLASS: FLUTE | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



Taking its name from the Soixante-Quinze, the French 75-millimeter field gun of World War I, the French 75 will hit you like cannon fire. Consider yourself warned. The quality and flavor profile of the Champagne you use here will have a great influence on the resulting drink. While we could have classified this as a “strong” cocktail, the use of Champagne puts it firmly in the festive camp. Still, remember that the combination of sugar and alcohol is heady, allowing the drink to go straight to your head.

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2 teaspoons Simple Syrup ([page 369](#))

$\frac{3}{4}$  ounce strained, freshly squeezed lemon juice

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounces dry gin

Champagne or sparkling wine, chilled

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- 1 Combine the Simple Syrup, lemon juice, and gin in a mixing glass.
  - 2 Fill the glass three-quarters full with cubes and shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled, 15 seconds.
  - 3 Strain into a flute and top with chilled Champagne.
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## VARIATION

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French 125 Substitute Cognac-style brandy for the gin.

# EASTER SORBET PUNCH

GLASS: COUPE | MAKES: 1 DRINK



This is a real crowd pleaser in both appearance and flavor. The pineapple and mint in the sorbet offer bright flavors that complement the gin's citrus/herbal character. And while we originally created it for Easter, there's no reason to relegate it to just one holiday. It is a perfect springtime quencher. In fact, the sorbet is so refreshing you might be tempted to eat it on its own—and we say, why not?

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Gin-Pineapple Sorbet ([recipe follows](#))

Champagne

Fresh mint sprig, for garnish

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**1** Add a scoop (or, if you're feeling fancy, a quenelle) of sorbet to a coupe glass.

**2** Fill the coupe with Champagne.

**3** Garnish with a sprig of mint.

**NOTE:** For a nonalcoholic version, replace the gin in the sorbet with lemonade or water and fill the drink with ginger ale or 7UP.

## Gin-Pineapple Sorbet

MAKES: ABOUT 3½ CUPS

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1 cup strained pineapple juice, chilled

1 cup Rich Mint Simple Syrup, chilled ([page 370](#))

1 cup water

Yellow food coloring (optional)

6 ounces dry gin, chilled

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**1** Place all of the ingredients in an airtight container and stir to combine. Add 4 or more drops of food coloring, if desired, to brighten the color. Cover and freeze until the mixture becomes slushy, 3 to 4 hours.

**2** Transfer the sorbet to a blender and blend until smooth. Return to the container, cover, and freeze overnight. The sorbet will keep, covered and frozen, for up to a week.

# FRESH LIME GIMLET

GLASS: MARTINI | ICE: CUBED | MAKES: 1 DRINK



These days, it seems like you can't mention a gimlet recipe without upsetting someone. The classic version calls for Rose's Lime Juice (see [following](#)), but as bartenders have increasingly returned to freshly squeezed juice, this version has become very popular. You can debate the composition of a real gimlet all you want, but you can't debate how delicious this one is.

The flavor of whatever gin you use will come through clearly here, but the tart quality of the lime and the sweetness of the Simple Syrup are equally present. The result: lip-puckering, energizing, and fresh.

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1½ ounces dry gin

¾ ounce strained, freshly squeezed lime juice

½ ounce Simple Syrup ([page 369](#))

Fresh mint sprig or cucumber slice, for garnish (see [Note](#))

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**1** Combine all of the liquid ingredients in a cocktail shaker, fill the shaker three-quarters full with ice cubes, and shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled, 15 seconds.

**2** Strain into a martini glass and garnish as desired.

**NOTE:** You may wish to tailor the garnish to the gin you use: a sprig of mint for a dry gin like Beefeater, a cucumber with the cucumber-rose-forward Hendrick's.

## THE CHRONICLES OF GIMLET

Back when the British Navy commanded the high seas, navy men were faced with all sorts of nasty shipboard illnesses. One of these was scurvy, which came with various picturesque symptoms such as bleeding gums. Enter citrus fruits (officially required aboard ship from 1795 on) and, indirectly, a little mixed drink known as the Gimlet.

Like the story behind so many drinks, the history of the Gimlet is infuriatingly murky. First off, the Gimlet is forever linked to Rose's Lime Juice Cordial, a sweetened mixing syrup patented in 1867. It appears that soon after its first production, Rose's found its way aboard navy ships and, presto, some enterprising officer mixed it with his gin ration. Most books—and the British Navy itself—claim that the drink is named for naval surgeon General Sir Thomas D. Gimlette. Others say that it gets its title from a gimlet, a sharp corkscrew used to open kegs of spirits aboard ship.

The truth as we see it is that navy men had likely been mixing lime juice rations with gin for quite a while before Rose's came along. In fact, lime rations had been given with a dose of sugar, most probably mixed in, as far back as the 1740s; Rose's just figured out a way to preserve the sweetened syrup they created. And even though a lot of histories claim that Rose's was created to supply the navy, it's more likely that it was invented to cater to the newly emerging market for soft drinks.

So, which came first? Rose's or the Gimlet? You could probably go so far as to say that, without Rose's, there would be no Gimlet—at least not the Gimlet as defined by purists (equal parts gin and Rose's Lime Juice Cordial). Others add a squeeze of fresh lime along with the Rose's. Whatever the answer—and there is no one answer here—the Gimlet, along with the Gin and Tonic ([page 115](#)), is a shining example of the British discovering how best to “take their medicine.”