

Drink up

Great value high-street wines, an easy autumn cocktail to make at home and the best new gins

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TRENDS WE LIKE GIN GENIES

Hogarth's famous *Gin Lane* print (1751) depicted a world of gin-induced urban decay. Present day views on gin and its qualities have improved, but in a parallel with the 18th century, small, indy gin distilleries are again springing up. Try the creamy juniper notes of Sipsmith's London Dry Gin, made on a residential street in Hammersmith and available at venues such as the OXO Tower bar in London (harveynichols.com) and the Watergate Bay Hotel in Newquay (watergatebay.co.uk). From Highgate, north London, Sacred Gin - with frankincense in its botanicals - is available in 20 nearby pubs including William IV (kingwilliamhampstead.co.uk). New in Scotland is Caorunn using local heather and bog myrtle. Try it at Glasgow's Lebowsk's (lebowskis.co.uk).



SOMMELIER SPEAK 'CLOSED'

Wine can go through a period where it has little or no aroma, known as a 'closed' stage. In a good wine this stage passes and the wine recovers its full character, but a poor or mildly faulty wine may never recover. A sommelier worth his salt should know not to serve a wine during its closed period.



BAR OF THE MONTH THE COURTHOUSE

Housed in a former courthouse, this stylish new bar in the heart of Douglas, on the Isle of Man, wouldn't look out of place in any of the UK's cities. Open from 11am, seven days a week, it's the place to go for coffee in the morning; lunch (including Sunday



roasts using meat from local farms), and later on for drinking. There's a slick line-up of wines and a cocktail list that concentrates on old favourites (such as piña colada, mojito and cosmopolitans) with some sophisticated twists. (the-courthouse.com)

BARGAIN OF THE MONTH SAINSBURY'S FRASCATI SUPERIORE SECCO 2008, ITALY (£4)

Sainsbury's value Italian Frascati delivers plenty of style with a light, appley character and refreshing mineral notes.



COCKTAIL HOUR THE AUTUMN KITCHEN CAIPIRINHA

The caipirinha is a classic cocktail made using Brazil's national spirit, cachaça. New Manchester bar Kitchen has given the drink a seasonal, British edge with the addition of a few blackberries. Take a good size lime, cut it into 8 wedges, and put 4 in a rocks glass. Add 2 tsp sugar, 4 fresh blackberries and 4 raspberries, and muddle together for 15 seconds (using the end of a rolling pin if you don't have a muddler). Add crushed ice up to the rim of the glass (you can also use your rolling pin to smash ice cubes in a tea towel if you don't have a crusher), then pour over 50ml of cachaça (Leblon is good), stir thoroughly and garnish with fresh berries. (13 Barton Arcade, Barton Square, Manchester; 0161 288 8118)



HIGH-STREET WINES TRY A NEW WINE THIS MONTH WITH OUR HANDY CUT-OUT-AND-STICK-IN-YOUR-WALLET GUIDE



La Différence Carignan 2008, France (£4.90, Asda, Co-op, Tesco)

A great-value, award-winning autumn red. Dark, spicy and with mocha notes - ideal with slow-cooked casseroles and hard cheeses.



Zalze Shiraz/Mouvèdre/Vioignier 2008, South Africa (£5.99, Waitrose)

This grape blend has French pedigree, but the succulence, ripeness and soft tannin is all South African. A dash of (white) viognier in the mix gives perfume and richness.



Asda Extra Special Prosecco Raboso NV, Veneto, Italy (£6.98)

Pink wine isn't just for summer; brighten up rainy days with this light fizz, packed with round, soft fruit flavours.

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