



## GERANIUM LONDON DRY GIN

English Gin 44% alc./vol.

[www.geraniumgin.com](http://www.geraniumgin.com) 70cl bottle retail: Not yet available in UK Producer: Hammer & Son Ltd, Frederiksberg, Denmark

This gin was created by Henrik Hammer, a Dane who has for many years conducted tastings and seminars about gin, and whose mother owns a famous gin bar in Copenhagen. He had been thinking about geranium as a flavour for gin for some time as the smell from the leaves reminded him of the aroma of gin and tonic itself.

When Henrik made a chemical analysis of geranium he found that the significant oils in the plant (geraniol, geraniol formate, linalol, rose oxide, citronelol) are commonly found in fruits, vegetables and spices so he concluded this would be a flavour that would easily mix with a wide variety of mixers. Henrik's father was a chemist who worked with essential oils for the perfume and food industry for decades. The father and son team bought a five litre copper pot still and started to experiment how best to process and distil the geranium to best extract its natural oils.

Henrik wanted to make an authentic London Dry Gin so approached an English distillery to produce his gin which as well as geranium, also uses traditional botanicals such as juniper, coriander, lemon peel, angelica root, orris root, cassia bark and liquorice. A couple of additional secret ingredients bring the total number of botanicals to ten.

The geranium is harvested in Denmark and used fresh. Henrik found the concentration of the oils varied greatly according to the soil, age and season so he carefully monitors this and sends processed geranium to the distillery.

Geranium gin is based on English wheat neutral alcohol and is distilled in an old traditional copper pot still. A "batch distilled concentrate" is made which is then stretched with the addition of more neutral alcohol after distillation.

**Taste:** A reassuringly traditional London dry gin style nose with fresh aromas of upfront juniper, bursts of citrus and floral notes leads to a clean fresh palate which is rightly led by juniper with aromatic tea-like floral notes adding to its considerable complexity. The long, fresh, slightly bitter pine/juniper finish carries further floral notes. 5/5

## CAORUNN GIN

Scottish Gin

41.% alc./vol. [www.caorunngin.com](http://www.caorunngin.com)

70cl bottle retail: £22 Producer: Balmenach Distillery, Cromdale, PH26 3PF, Scotland

Caorunn, pronounced 'ka-roon', is the Gaelic word for Rowan Berry which along with Dandelion, Bog Myrtle, Heather and Coul Blush Apple make up the five Celtic botanicals used in this gin and their use is reflected in the attractive pentagon-shaped bottle. Gin traditionalists, myself included, have been appeased by the use of six other more traditional botanicals including juniper.

Caorunn is distilled in small batches of around a 1,000 litres from grain neutral spirit and unusually the vaporised spirit is forced through a unique 'Copper Berry Chamber' that was made in the 1920's. This is a round chamber with a copper frame and that holds four trays on which the botanicals are spread. These trays are designed to allow spirit vapour to come into contact with the largest possible surface area of botanicals.

The Balmenach distillery lies in the heart of Speyside whisky distilling region in the Cairngorm National Park at the foot of the Haughs of Cromdale. It was first licensed in 1824 by James McGregor. The worm tubs that hold the traditional condensers date back to the 1930s.

**Taste:** A floral, citrus, nose with spicy notes and hints of children's hot chocolate powder leads to a slightly sweet palate, which quickly turns dry. Not as rounded as some gins but with good juniper notes and complexity with hints of citrus, spice and floral flavours. Strangely, a hint of chocolate remains through the palate and the long, lightly spiced finish.

4/5

