



Belgin Fresh Hop Dry Gin

Country: Belgium

Region: Lion d'Orweg - Aalst

Producer: Hand Crafted Belgian Gin

Bottle size: 50cl - abv: 40%



The history of Gin starts in the Low Countries (Belgium) in the 15th century

To find where 'gin' comes from we need first to find the origins of genever/jenever, the prototype combination of grain spirit and juniper berries and other botanicals. According to the National Jenever Museum of Belgium it was first produced in Flanders in the 13th century. At this time, this area was part of the Low Countries that also included what is now Holland, bits of Northern France and Luxembourg.

Originally used as a medicinal tonic or a herbal medicine, it wasn't long before genever was being drunk for pleasure. Again the transition lacks precise dates and written records but one source of information is the numerous records of taxation levied on distilleries throughout the Low Countries from the late 15th century onwards.

The first recorded mention of genever as a distilled beverage flavored with juniper and botanicals was in 1552, in a book called 'Een Constelijck Distileerboec' by Antwerp-based Philippus Hermanni. That's not to say there are no other recipes yet to be found and diligent historians will keep looking no doubt. But, knowledge tended to be handed down orally then, as not everyone was literate.

The English first met genever during the Eighty Years War (1568-1648) when the armies of France, England and Spain fought over religion, politics and territory in the Low Countries. Here, English mercenaries were introduced to the local grog, given to steady their nerves before battle.

The origin of gin can be traced back to Belgium, Brugge with the first published recipe of a spirit made with juniper berries (the main ingredient in gin). Belgin's artisanal Belgian gins are the result of 500 years of Belgian distilling history since giving birth to gin, Belgian's rich spice trade going back to medieval times and the craftsmanship from Belgium's famous beer and culinary history. Belgin continues the story of gin with unique new flavours such as Fresh Hop and brings a new level of gin quality back to the country that started it all.

To be legally classified as a gin, the primary flavour influence in the finished spirit has to be juniper, and Belgin source their hand-picked juniper berries from Macedonia, regarded by many experts as the finest available.

The company philosophy is to only use natural ingredients, and to extract their flavours by treating every component individually. No artificial colours, synthetic concentrates or sweeteners are used in the process - it's all in the skill of the distiller.

The staff are involved with the annual hop harvesting, which ensures that they have total control over the quality of the secret hop variety that helps to make Belgin unique. They use an exclusive source for the fruit in their Raspberry Rosé gin, and the completely natural flavours that their master distiller captures takes fruit gins and vodkas to a level that is unmatched by other producers.

*Certain botanicals are distilled separately and others in groups. In addition, fresh herbs or fruits are macerated for extra fresh flavours. The European definition does not allow these innovative techniques in a London Dry Gin,
Is this better than a London Dry.?*

Belgin Fresh Hop is crafted with fresh aromatic Belgian hops, juniper berries, soft coriander and a combination of citrus ingredients such as lemon peels from the mediterranean, cardamom, lime and Italian Bergamot.

These 16 pure and natural ingredients are masterfully blended for an ultra refined gin with a versatile and nuanced character.

Starting with juniper berries from Macedonia, Belgin bring together 14 more botanicals from around the world, including citrus peels from around the Mediterranean and Italy, vanilla from Madagascar, cardamom and star anise from the Far East and finally we add that most Belgian of ingredients - fresh green hops. This combination of aromatic ingredients creates a sensationally light, delicate refreshing gin with a dry citrusy aftertaste that makes people return to it time after time.

Fresh Hop is an excellent starting point for those of you that are just discovering the Belgin range. It has an astonishingly clean taste, with a perfect balance of botanicals that combine to produce a truly smooth, easy-going gin.

NOSE: Crisp, fresh and delicate

PALATE: Floral, Juniper

FINISH: Elegant with a long floral finish

THE IDEAL SERVE

This is highly recommended for those of you that like their gins to be complemented with a great tonic water, try Fevertree Elderflower tonic garnished with fresh coriander leaf and a zest of orange.

Try it in a classic martini by mixing 50ml of chilled Belgin Fresh Hop with 15ml dry vermouth, a single olive and a slice of lemon or lime. Alternatively, add a few drops of angostura bitters to 50ml Fresh Hop, add a couple of ice cubes and top up with soda water and garnish with lemon peel for a refreshing pink gin.

