



# Washington State Liquor Control Board

## Gin



5 Things You Need To Know

# Origin

Gin is probably best known as the main ingredient in the classic cocktails Gin and Tonic or Traditional Martini. Gin is a white or clear spirit with a very distinct aroma and character. Gins known as “London Dry” are typically produced in the United Kingdom and have a strength of 92 or 94 proof (compared to Vodka which is typically produced at 80 proof). The history of Gin begins in the 1500’s when the Dutch began producing “Genever”, the Dutch word for juniper from which Gin derives its distinct aroma. From there and in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century the English modified the Dutch version to produce the Gins we know today. In the United States Gin has remained a popular spirit since the repeal of prohibition and owes some of its lore to the fact that it was widely produced in private homes during prohibition, earning its still well-known title “bathtub gin”.

# What does it taste like?

Gin's distinct flavor and scent in part comes from juniper berries. Juniper can be described as a pine type aroma and its taste is normally very pronounced. Some Gins are flavored, but the majority of the brands carried in WSLCB stores are traditional in nature and thus defined by their juniper and botanical ingredients.

# **Gin in WSLCB Stores: By the numbers**

- There are currently 27 Gins available in the 750 ml size in WSLCB stores.
- In 1979, by comparison, the number of available choices was 26.
- The current price range for Gin is between \$9 and \$34, with a majority of brands (12) between \$20 and \$30.
- As a category, Gin contributes five percent of profits returned to the State.
- As a category, Gin is up between two and three percent in the past 12 months.

# Category Leaders

In Washington the leaders in the import category are:

1. Tanqueray
2. Bombay Sapphire
3. Beefeater

In the domestic category:

1. Seagram's
2. Gilbeys
3. Gordons

And in the economy brands:

1. Monarch
2. Potters

*Note:* Signpost brands (brands that are easily identifiable to the consumer and lead the category in Washington) are Bombay and Tanqueray.

# How it is used and what the future holds

Gin's popularity is almost guaranteed, especially in the long, warm days of summer when a cocktail that is refreshing and light is called for. The Tom Collins, Gin and Tonic and Classic Dry Martini are all cocktails that use Gin as the main ingredient. In Washington the new Gin on the horizon and Washington's first distillery is "Dry Fly". Since Gin is produced from readily available sources, the probability for more domestic premiums is a sure fit.