



Issue 3 | October 2021 | handcrafteddrinks.co.uk



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Interview with Eva O'Doherty

INSIDE

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Welcome

Welcome to the third issue of Hand Crafted Drinks Magazine and the penultimate issue of the year.

Having come through a very mixed summer, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and latterly the effects of Brexit, the hospitality industry is hoping for a bright Christmas, but clouds remain over the sector. Staff shortages across various sectors, from food production and distribution, to those working in the leisure and hospitality industry, could start to impact on many businesses that have been struggling for the last 18 months. Add in the fuel crisis and we're potentially facing a second winter of discontent.

Here at Hand Crafted Drinks Magazine, we hope that the latest government announcements will keep the country moving and will ensure that we can all enjoy a well-deserved festive season this year.

In this issue we have an interview with Eva O'Doherty, one of the youngest distillers around, along with a Q&A session with the owners of Napton Cidery. We also have an article that explains how and why you should always pay attention to your beer lines and there's a feature on OakVilla, the Norfolk-based distillery and restaurant that offers two compelling reasons to visit.

As always, keep sending in your latest news and views – we're here as the voice of the increasing number of artisan and hand-crafted drinks producers and we want to do all we can to keep this sector as vibrant as possible.

Simon Turton Editorial Director

Chris Keightley Sales Director

HAND CRAFTED DRINKS MAGAZINE

Simon Turton | Editorial Director
simon@handcrafteddrinksomag.co.uk | 07976 826004

Chris Keightley | Sales Director
chris@handcrafteddrinksomag.co.uk | 07818 711387

Sharon Larder | Designer
inthedoghousedesign@gmail.com

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Pulling the perfect pint



THE SIX ELEMENTS OF PINT PERFECTION

By **Jeff Singer**, Commercial
Manager, Beer Piper

After the rockiest period for many a decade, the hospitality community has finally cranked back into action. And, despite recent setbacks with delayed deliveries and staffing issues, UK consumers are very much enjoying being back at the bar.

According to Nielsen Scantrack and the CGA, beer was one of the big winners of the 2020 lockdown period. Premium beers sales grew faster than standard beer, up £452m, compared to £164m.

This is backed up by the CGA's Drinks Premiumisation Report 2020, which demonstrated that premium craft beer sales were up 22.8% over the last two years.

So, when you take delivery of the premium craft beers – or any beer for that matter – here are my top tips to consider when storing and serving beautiful beer:

A STELLAR CELLAR

The cellar is the true engine room of the pub or bar, and should be treated as such.

Cleanliness is king in the cellar, which needs to be cleaned thoroughly at least once a week with the correct sanitising products. Regular cleaning will prevent the build up of bacteria and also help the air quality to remain tip top. Both of these things can affect beer quality, as dirt and unclean air can make beer go off.

It's also worth knowing how to cellar certain beer types. Cask ale especially needs to undergo conditioning in the cellar - it needs to be stored and settled correctly before serving to ensure it hits pint perfection.

To always ensure a gorgeous pint, there are other things that can help, too. Turning off the beer gas to all beer lines every night will reduce the possibility of over-carbonating the beer in the barrels, which can also lead to excessive fobbing.

TEST THE TEMPERATURE

Remote coolers are used to take the temperature of the beer down from cellar temperature (of around 120C) to the correct dispense temperature and, as with your cellar cooling unit, remote coolers should be kept running constantly.

BRILLIANT BEER LINES

Unclean beer lines can result in beer becoming infected with bacteria and wild yeasts, which will spoil the aroma and flavour of the beer and produce carbon dioxide which

results in fobbing. Poor line cleaning can also result in build-ups of things like mould, beer stone and limescale - all of which can also affect the taste and quality of your beer.

Beer Piper's latest BP4 beer line cleaning system ensures that beer lines are cleaned to extremely high standards at regular intervals with environmentally-friendly chemicals, something that is of utmost importance during the current climate.

As well as keeping beer lines spotless, the system allows bar managers and landlords to save waste because they can serve the beer in the lines that is normally thrown away as part of a "manual" line clean. This can lead to huge savings behind the bar. The BP4 system also eliminates the need for time-consuming manual line cleans, meaning that staff members are free to get on with additional activities.

SPOT-ON GLASSWARE

It goes without saying that glasses need to be cleaned until they are spotless, preferably in a hot pot wash or dishwasher, and then left to return to room temperature before using.

With your nose determining much of the taste of your beer, it's important to pick a glass that suits the drink's carbonation - which can affect its aroma and therefore taste. Traditional ales tend to be served in wider, straight glasses, as they have little carbonation. However, Pilsners

or Lagers are often best served in narrower, rounded glasses that help them to keep their carbonation and keep the pint cooler for longer.

PULLED TO PERFECTION

Glasses should be held at 45 degrees, and held without touching the beer nozzle. As the beer is pulled into the glass, it should be gradually tipped back to an upright position to allow the head of the beer to build up nicely. Hand-pulled pints are pulled in a similar way, but this can be a real art form for some bartenders and can take a while to perfect!

ADVERTISED WELL TO CUSTOMERS

Because of the nation's passion for craft beers and artisan drinks, younger drinkers especially like to be knowledgeable about the products they are drinking, so training bar staff to know their stuff is a no brainer.

As well as training staff members to be expert baristas and mixologists, consider sending them to craft beer breweries and distilleries for brands that you stock so they can find out more behind the scenes and enhance their knowledge.

Additionally, think about how you advertise your range of beers to customers at point of purchase. Consider investing in a chalkboard where you can write up the daily or weekly beer range - and rather than just write the names of the beers and the price of the pint, add a little flavour with some tasting notes and information on the beer's origin and brewery.

www.beerpiper.co.uk





Full of Eastern promise

London-based Bodha Drinks is the UK's first Eastern inspired, premium, non-alcoholic start-up drinks company; their drinks are made with 100% botanical ingredients and spices, with no artificial flavours, colours or sweeteners.

The underlying ethos of the company, which has been launched by good friends Ros Gears and Subha Rao, is that they believe food and drink have the power to unite cultures.

Their purpose is to kindle a love for new flavours for people to enjoy by introducing a range of drinks based on exciting and refreshing ingredients that have been used for centuries in the East.

In 2018 Ros and Subha were working for the same banking company and a friendship was forged, despite having very different backgrounds. Ros grew up in a typical English countryside setting, where she was surrounded by nature; Subha



grew up in the hustle and bustle of a crowded city in India going to school in tuk-tuks.

The following year they discussed the idea of bringing the flavours of the east to the west in a drink and the concept of Bodha ('awakening' in Sanskrit) was born.

By the time the country went into lockdown they had registered the business and were researching and developing their new range. Much of lockdown was spent sourcing ingredients and conducting international focus groups by posting the samples to people in the USA, UK and Europe.

With the products refined, ingredients agreed and branding finalised they launched their first flavour. Rose with a hint of cardamom, a refreshing drink, made with Damask rose extracts and cardamom extracts. It pairs wonderfully with pan-Asian and Middle Eastern cuisines and makes a great alternative to the traditional accompaniments to Gin and Vodka.

In November they will be launching two more flavours: Chilli Lemonade and Ginger Spice, which can be enjoyed on their own or mixed with tequila and spiced rum.

Ros and Subha are excited to be on the journey of producing one of the UK's first Eastern inspired drinks.

If you are interested in becoming a stockist please contact:
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Templars Cider

By Adam Bland

Our family cider business started 50 years ago in the Berkeley Vale, Gloucestershire, where I worked with my father, Vernon Bland, from a young age, and then 30 years ago my family and I bought a 30-acre cider and calvados farm in an area of Normandy renowned for cider making and very close to the City of Calvados, Vimoutiers.

Our thousand-year-old farm was owned by the Knights Templar, then the Hospitaliers of St Jean for hundreds of years, which gave us the inspiration to re-name the company, Templars Cider, changing from Blands Cider.

When we first bought the farm we were told by the locals that our farm was “bonne pour le calva” (good for calvados), which also meant it would be good for cider. We re-planted the old orchards in the mid-90s with 3500 Pays D’Auge certified cider apple trees – a mixture of standard and low height orchards on the south-facing gentle slopes of our farm.

A number of older apple trees continued to provide a harvest as the young trees developed. 25 years later they are now producing over 100 tons of AOC apples per year.

In 1992 I went on several courses in Normandy to learn about the French method of cider making that produces a naturally sparkling, unfiltered, unpasteurised pure pressed apple juice cider. The cider needs no sweetening or sugar for the medium and sweet ciders, after keiving. Slow winter fermentation on the natural apple yeasts is followed by bottling at the right gravity in the spring.

We immersed ourselves in the Normandy culture and we have been embraced by our adopted country. to the extent that I am now an official taster of Calvados for the Normandy Council.



The current line-up of drinks includes Templars Farm Calvados (45% ABV), which is very smooth and has earned plaudits from vintners and even a Bishop! It is distilled from our cider. We make naturally sparkling cider; an award-winning dry; medium, late harvest sweet, vintage cider and perry pear

ciders, available in 75cl and bar-sized 37.5cl bottles.

There is also a still strong Normandy pure juice 7% dry cider in 3L/10L/20L pouches/ BinBs and also in 50cl bottles. Our 45% ABV fine calvados is available in 5cl/35cl/70cl/150cl bottles (also in 5 litre oak barrels with tap by arrangement – very popular for shots).

We export our ciders and calvados to the UK, where we have a licensed warehouse in Marlow from which our drinks are distributed.

Plans for the future including becoming a totally organic operation by January 2022 and we have various plans in the pipeline...

For more information contact Adam Bland: Email: bland.adam@hotmail.co.uk or visit their website: www.templarscider.co.uk

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Afon Mêl

As seen on TV



Image courtesy of White Sky Creative

Afon Mêl, the Ceredigion-based meadery, is to launch its first ever TV advertising campaign in the autumn with AdSmart from Sky.

The company, which was established in 1995, is one of 100 small businesses across the UK that has been chosen to benefit from Sky's SME100 support scheme.

They have received £20,000 of free AdSmart TV advertising across Sky Media's channels, along with a free 12-month high speed business broadband and digital phone package, also from Sky.

The company's 30-second advertisement will be produced by Swansea-based The Content Creators and using AdSmart's revolutionary technology the campaign will be aimed at Afon Mêl's target audience: consumers looking for something more than a traditional mass-marketed brew.

The focus of their first ever TV advertising campaign will be their new range of meads, which will be positioned as an aspirational artisan drink, produced by a family-run drinks company and bee farm.

As with almost every company operating in the leisure and



hospitality sector Afon Mêl has been adversely affected by the lockdowns and COVID-19 restrictions. They would usually welcome 30,000 visitors to their farm each year, which generated additional income for the business, but the pandemic forced them to close their gates.

Now, with the majority of COVID-19 restrictions lifted, Afon Mêl continues to emerge from the economic slowdown having received overwhelming support from their existing and new business customers, along with buoyant online sales.

The opportunity from Sky AdSmart with further help boost sales and to reinforce the provenance of everything they produce, as Sam Cooper, director and co-owner at Afon Mêl explains:

"Our main message to customers is that although we may be a small, family-run farm we are also producers of some of the best mead available in the UK.

"We are the only mead producers to have ever won a Great Taste, Golden Fork Award and I believe this is because we approach mead making as beekeepers. In our eyes it is important that this classic drink should only be made by fermenting 100% honey and we believe there's an Afon Mêl mead for everyone!

"Sky AdSmart has allowed us to tap into our target market on TV, something we had never done before. This seamless approach and hands-on support has been something we'll be forever grateful for. We'd like to say a big thank you to Sky AdSmart for this incredible opportunity"

For more information:
www.afonmel.com





Interview with a *Distiller*

When I first started talking to **Eva O'Doherty**, a distiller at Irish Distillers' **Midleton Distillery**, based in Midleton in County Cork, it was immediately obvious that she loves her job.

Not likes or enjoys, but loves.

Although I was interviewing Eva over the phone, her passion for her job shone through. So, I was interested to know what sparked this passion.



Eva studied Food Innovation with Brewing and Distilling at Technical University Dublin (TUD) and it was during a course visit to the distillery, which produces whiskey for Jameson, Redbreast, Midleton Very Rare and the famous Spot series, that she had her epiphany: "I just felt that this was what I wanted to do and where I wanted to work; it was like coming home although I had never been to the distillery before."

Fortuitously for Eva, since 2014 Midleton Distillery has been running a graduate recruitment program and they also employ undergraduates for work placements. Eva applied to the company and was accepted for her six-month placement.

Eva returned to TUD for her fourth and final year, and completed her studies in May 2019. The following month Eva was invited by the distillery for an interview and was offered a place as assistant distiller at the Micro Distillery, Irish Distillers' innovation hub based on the grounds of Midleton Distillery.

Her first year was spent learning every aspect of the art of distilling under the watchful eye of distiller Larissa Marrichi and former master distiller Brian Nation. At the Micro Distillery, Eva was given the chance to work directly on experimental distillates, including whiskey and gin created for the METHOD AND MADNESS brand.

Innovation underpins everything the Micro Distillery does, and this has allowed Eva and her team to think outside the box.

Eva – who was recently promoted to the position of distiller – has relished the challenge of having to produce first class liquids that can compete in the global market for premium spirits.

One of the products that Eva has been involved with is the METHOD AND MADNESS Rye and Malt, the first aged distillate to be released from the micro distillery. Featuring floral notes and a spicy character, the combination of rye with malted barley amplifies the whiskey's naturally wide spectrum of flavours and aromas to evoke notes of lemon balm, white pepper, chilli flakes and toasted wood with a lingering finish of spiced fruit.

This release was hand-crafted under the care and creativity of distiller Katherine Condon, who herself joined the company as part of the company's Graduate Distiller Programme in 2014.

The whiskey is a reflection of the dynamic young team's confident and relentless approach to trial and error, which is very much encouraged by the company and one of the reasons why Eva arrives at work every morning with a smile on her face.

Commenting on the new addition to the METHOD AND MADNESS range – which already includes an award-winning Gin with Black Lemon and Irish Gorse Flower, as well as a range of Single Grain, Single Malt and Single Pot Still whiskeys from the brand's mother distillery finished in a range of casks including virgin Spanish oak, French Limousin oak, chestnut, and even wild cherry wood – Eva said: "While this whiskey has been maturing, we have not rested on our laurels. We have continued in earnest to experiment with new mash bills. It is a great privilege and responsibility to help shape the future of Irish whiskey, and METHOD AND MADNESS Rye and Malt represents the first in an incredible pipeline of innovation from this distillery."

The team experimented in the lab to discover the ideal ratio of rye to malt – they agreed on 60:40 – and then Katherine and the team then took advantage of the micro distillery's manual processes, where they trialled varying rates of reflux and distillation to achieve their desired result.

I asked Eva if there were any issues of working in a sector that has traditionally been male-dominated. She explained that since 2015 there had only been one male trainee distiller and that there had been no barriers to her working as a distiller.

Irish Distillers' focus is purely on talent and will only employ those who have the passion, desire, and ability to make it as a future distiller.

Challenging the norms and pushing the boundaries is the key to the company's success and this resonates very strongly with Eva, who looks forward to being able to continue to experiment with new products and to encourage the next generation of distillers.

For more information visit:
www.methodandmadnesswhiskey.com/en





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Barry Island Gin has Great Taste



Barry Island Gin, produced by Barry Island Spirits Co – based in the Vale of Glamorgan – has been awarded a 1-star by the Great Taste judges at this year's event.

Great Taste, organised by the Guild of Fine Foods, is the world's largest and most prestigious food and drink award, which this year judged over 5,300 products from across the globe.

Barry Island Spirits Co was founded in 2021 by Barry Island-based couple Claire and Tim Whalley, who both left high profile corporate jobs to follow their dream of opening a bar

and turning their passion for craft beer, wine and spirits into a successful, local business.

Claire and Tim launched Craft Republic, an independent bar and bottle shop based in the Goodsheds development in Barry, which opened in August 2020.

Barry Island Gin was originally developed to serve in their bar, but their gin was so well received by their customers that they decided to increase production and promote the gin. The popularity of Barry Island Gin has soared and has received accolades from industry experts, including the former head sommelier at The

Hinds Head in Bray (the Michelin starred pub, which is part of Heston Blumenthal's Fat Duck Group) – which has stocked Barry Island Gin since December 2020.

Commenting on the award, Claire Whalley, director and co-founder of Barry Island Spirits Co said: "We're delighted that our Welsh Dry Gin has received a Great Taste star. Barry Island Gin has just had its first birthday and we couldn't think of a better birthday present!"

"We've never put any of our products forward for any awards before, but we've always seen the Great Taste awards as a sign of quality. We're incredibly proud to be putting one of their gold stars on to bottles of Barry Island Gin"

Since launching Barry Island Gin, the husband-and-wife team have added Barry Island Botanical Spiced Rum to their portfolio. In October, they will launch their latest products: a Welsh Organic triple-distilled vodka and a Welsh Dry Pink Gin – all in brand new, custom manufactured bottles.

For more information visit:
[www.wearecraftrepublic.co.uk/
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balanced. It offers complex citrus,
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flavours. The natural sweetness,
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Bemuse

Awards for Bemuse – a start-up sparkling low-alcohol craft mead brand

Bemuse sparkling low-alcohol mead has been named Best low-or no alcohol drink and Best sparkling drink at 19th annual World Beverage Innovation Awards, which took place on 15 September 2021.

Bemuse has re-invented the style of mead to produce a refreshing, lightly sparkling low-alcohol drink that is appealing to a contemporary audience. Their



range includes four flavoured meads, which were also shortlisted in the categories for Best beverage concept and Best packaging design, which incorporates an inspirational, fictional Bemuse bee.

Annal Chalov who founded the company was delighted to receive the awards: "With a growing demand for low- and no-alcohol drinks, we wanted to create something unique for that segment that was tasty and refreshing, and believe that the range of four Bemuse craft meads has proved that innovation in the British drinks market is thriving.

"To be shortlisted for four awards and win two after only four months is a dream come true and reflects all the hard work that the Bemuse team has committed to brand development."

Bemuse mead is available in four natural flavours: Raspberry; Tarragon, Basil and Hops; Ginger and Cardamom; and Hops. The award-winning sparkling low-alcohol meads are 0.5% ABV and available in 330ml fully recycled cans.

For more information visit:
www.bemusedrinks.com





Taking the biscuit

A new, limited-edition beer made with Lotus Biscoff biscuits and spread has just been released, as part of a collaboration between two leading UK microbreweries – The Driftwood Spars Brewery, in St Agnes, Cornwall, and Fallen Acorn Brewing Co, based in Gosport, Hampshire.

The new beer, called Niflheim Imperial Biscoff Stout, will be available in cans, on tap and in kegs from a limited number of outlets. The small batch release of just 800 litres is a hefty 10% ABV and was made using over 2,000 of the famous biscuits – loved for their unique caramelised taste – plus a significant amount of Lotus Biscoff spread.

Not surprisingly, it's described as being 'sweet, malty and loaded with silky caramel.'

Commenting on the new unique beer, Mike Mason, head brewer at The Driftwood Spars Brewery (where the beer was brewed), said: "We've got a great relationship with Fallen Acorn. As breweries we share a very similar ethos, brewing both traditional and contemporary beers with a mindset for innovation and experimentation.



"Lead brewer, Felix Granell, and I both worked at the Brewhouse and Kitchen chain of brewpubs, albeit at different sites, so we had a similar beginning to our brewing careers and have parallel views on the future of brewing."

Following the official launch, which took place on 9 October, cans of Niflheim will be available direct from both breweries and via a small number of independent beer cellars in Cornwall



and beyond; it will also be on sale at The Driftwood Spars brewpub in Trevaunance Cove.

Felix of Fallen Acorn is delighted with the new beer: "We're really pleased with the result of our first collaboration with The Driftwood. It was a brilliant way for both of our teams to meet for the first time, and we got the chance to enjoy the amazing Trevaunance Cove - plus the beer isn't bad either!

"Now we're really looking forward to getting part two brewed here in Gosport with input from the boys in Cornwall. The beer will be a highly hopped New England IPA, using the English hops which The Driftwood Spars Brewery is renowned for sourcing."



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The owners of award-winning family-run **Napton Cidery** are celebrating the growth of their business as they emerge from the uncertainty of the pandemic.

Jolyon and **Charlotte Olivier** are going from surviving to thriving following a second successful crowdfunding campaign which exceeded their financial target within weeks.

The investment campaign was central to the entrepreneurs' plans to re-emerge from the pandemic once again robust enough to build on the early success of their business - which started life as a hobby 10 years ago.

The couple were first introduced to the taste of craft cider on a family holiday to Cornwall. Returning home to Warwickshire, they soon started experimenting with an apple tree in their own garden.

We spoke to Jolyon about what drives the family business and the resurgence of cider among drinkers.



From small trees a mighty business grows!

How did it all come about?

We made our first batch of cider, as most do, from the apple tree in our garden. Turns out we were born to be cider makers! We started Napton Cidery several years later with the sole mission to collect unwanted apples from our village and surrounding orchards to create amazing ciders and, before you know it, we're producing 90,000 litres of cider from 17 different cider apple varieties as well as juice and cider vinegars!

How has the business grown in the nine years?

Since our last round of investment two years ago we employed a small team, worked on our branding and, in March last year, opened a new tap room. Unfortunately though, it promptly closed due to COVID. We had been planning a big launch to celebrate. We also had six pubs lined up ready to install our kegs, all of which sadly had to close as well.

What does the cider-making process consist of?

The apples are harvested from several carefully selected orchards and pressed in Herefordshire before being transported back to us. The next stage is the fermentation which can take up to 9 months. The cider is then re-racked off the dead yeast, blended, and matured for a further 3-6 months and sometimes longer. Some of the cider is matured in oak, most is blended and some are selected to produce a single variety cider.

What is Napton Cidery's main USP?

Sustainability is at the heart of everything we do. All of our apples come from traditional unsprayed orchards, organic and biodiverse growers, so no unnatural chemicals are introduced into the ecosystem. The cider is also naturally fermented using only wild yeasts and packaged in recyclable materials and all ingredients sourced as locally as possible. (sourced within the UK)

We prefer not to use bush orchards which are long rows of apple trees all bunched quite close together. With these, once a disease hits a tree it spreads around the whole orchard which is why they have to be sprayed with pesticides. We decided very early on that we wanted to make cider that is environmentally friendly through using apples that aren't over-farmed.

Environmental sustainability is one of our top priorities and we're always looking into how we can improve. We've switched to using recyclable packaging and we have a lot more ideas we're also working on. Our goal has always been to build, manufacture and sell high quality cider made in the most natural way possible.

How has COVID affected the business?

We had to cancel all events at the cidery, pivoting instead to more of a focus on our home deliveries.

It suddenly became all about crisis management and we rewrote our business plans - but we were determined to find a way through. I don't know where we would be without the web shop's home delivery service. We were a business that was ready to grow but had its wings clipped.

We launched a hugely successful crowdfunding campaign which more than quadrupled its target and has helped us to focus on the growth of the business once again, including more staff, an expanded products range and branded merchandise.



What does the future of Napton Cidery look like?

We have recently finally been able to open our taproom and launch Tasting Tours and events, including live comedy, music and cocktail nights.

We've started to introduce 500ml canned products into our cider range and are hoping to pick back up on our plans to produce a new line of apple-based spirits within the next 12 months. Longer term, we are looking to get into national and international markets.

We recently won our latest award, an International Cider Challenge Silver medal for our recipe No3 6% Dry cider and are looking forward to a very exciting future ahead of us.

What has it been like running a business with your spouse?

We have had our ups and downs, but we

learnt to keep business and family life as balanced as possible, being passionate about our business keeps us focused and dedication is the key. We both have different strengths to contribute to the business which really helps bring in exciting aspects to Napton Cidery.

Tell us a couple of fascinating facts about cider

- A pint of Napton cider contains on average around 12 apples.
- The craft cider market has increased from 5% in 2016 to 9.4% in 2020.
- We squeeze 164 into every 70cl bottle of apple brandy.
- 1000 litre fermentation tank needs around 1.5 tons of apples to fill it.

Where and when?

The Cidery is open Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm and Sunday 12-5pm. Visit Napton Cidery at: www.naptoncidery.co.uk



Anyone can pour a decent gin and tonic, but what elevates it to become a great G&T?

The Zest Co

According to Sarah Roads, who established The Zest Co in 2019, it is the quality of the garnish that adds a unique finish to and enhances the drinking experience.

We eat and drink with our eyes, which is why our mouths water at the sight (and even the smell) of what we're about to eat or drink.

So, cocktail garnishes are far more than simply a decoration added to the rim of the glass for a bit of flash showiness; choose the right garnish to complement your favourite tippie for that added character and style.



The Zest Co produces a range of dried fruit garnishes, which provide a unique finish to any drink. Fresh fruit has been the go-to choice for decades, so why did Sarah decide to produce dried fruit garnishes.

The problem with using fresh fruit, as Sarah discussed over a G&T with her family one evening, is that there is a lot of waste. For example, whole lemons get used for the sake of a few slices, which are thrown away at the end of an evening.

During the evening someone mentioned that they had seen dried, sliced fruit on sale at a crafting market for making Christmas decorations. The question was asked: if dried fruits were being used to make wreaths, why couldn't they be used for cocktails?

The following morning Sarah's mind was made up and decided to pursue the idea to make dried fruit garnishes, using only with organic, chemical-free fruit: "I put my energies into tracking down a supplier who had the same ethos as me, delivered to my local area and supplied all the right fruit in all the right volumes.

"Going organic is not the cheapest option around, but is more than balanced out by the assurance and peace of mind this quality produce brings."

Sarah's process begins with organic fruit and her ethos also includes zero waste, which means using all the whole fruit.

In producing the new range of garnishes Sarah was also adamant that the packaging should be eco-friendly: "We finally found our bags, which are 100% biodegradable and compostable. Made with board sourced purely from sustainable and ethical sources, and the lining is made from bioplastic (PLA)."

PLA, as Sarah explained, is shorthand for polylactic acid or polylactide – a thermoplastic aliphatic polyester derived from renewable biomass, typically from fermented plant starch such as from corn, cassava, sugarcane or sugar beet pulp.

The raw ingredients (no pun intended) and the biodegradable packaging are good for the environment, but how good are the dried fruit garnishes?

Going by the number of plaudits on Sarah's website it looks like she has hit on something that is only going to get more popular, especially as there are on-going plans to



expand the range, a selection of which are summarised below.

Orange garnishes are probably one of the most used, useful and versatile fruit slices to have at hand. The list of cocktails they can grace is endless and they can pair quite happily and deliciously with gin, vodka, rum or whisky.

Lemon works particularly well with drinks on the rocks, and when it has been dried the flesh starts to turn golden, just as if it had been kissed by summer. As

with our oranges, our lemons are organic and untreated.

A zesty lime wheel is a simple but classic garnish. Cut a tiny nick in the peel towards the centre of the slice and wedge it on the edge of a glass. No serious mixologist should ever be without a supply of lime slices, as they are so versatile. What else goes with so well with an ice cold lager or adds the finishing touch to mojitos and margaritas?

There is also pink or ruby grapefruits, which are deliciously bitter and can be slipped into a myriad of cocktails to add another level of taste.

At the end of the evening there's no thinking about what to do with a part-used fruit. Sarah finds that putting the dried fruit in airtight containers is much more acceptable to customers.

www.thezest.co.uk





Photos © Tatum Reid Photography

OakVilla Restaurant & Distillery

Spoilt for choice

Some people aspire to owning a restaurant and some want to follow their dream and start their own distillery, but in the case of the owners of OakVilla they have the best of both worlds.

OakVilla Restaurant & Distillery based at St George's Distillery in Roudham, Norfolk, comprises a multi-award-winning gin distillery and a fine dining restaurant, offering food that is influenced by cultures from across the globe.

OakVilla offers breakfast, lunch and dinner, along with barista coffee, a selection of freshly baked cakes and afternoon tea. They also offer tasting and distilling experiences, where their customers can try their hand at distilling gin. OakVilla also has an extensive wine cellar with on- and off-trade sales.



OAKVILLA'S HISTORY

OakVilla Distillery was founded in 2017 – a stone's throw from the historic Ketts Oak in Wymondham, Norfolk, at a villa dating back to the early 1850s.

Ketts Oak was selected by The Tree Council in 2002 as one of 50 great British trees in honour of the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The tree is named after Robert and William Kett of Wymondham, who protested against the enclosing of common land, which hampered free movement and prevented common grazing. They assembled their men at the historic oak in 1549, before marching on Norwich to seek reinstatement of these ancient freedoms.

Historic documents and Title Deeds held at OakVilla show the property shared its south-west boundary with the Kett family's land.

In recognition that the property had been named after the famous historic oak, OakVilla's current owners, the Hancke family, decided to name their first gin as a tribute to the historic significance of the villa, the oak itself and those who fought for freedom. They also paid tribute to the Hancke family's roots, by naming their first gin 'Vryheid' (which means 'freedom' in Afrikaans).

One year after launching Vryheid, now an international award-winning spirit, OakVilla Distillery launched a second hand-crafted, oak-rested dry gin: 'Heart of Oak' – celebrating Nelson's county's strong nautical heritage. Heart of Oak won two international awards in the first international competition it was entered into.



During 2020 the Hancke family supported the University of East Anglia's scientists by supplying ethanol for hand sanitiser production for the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic.

April 2021 OakVilla Distillery opened its doors to the public for the first time at their new premises in Roudham, Norfolk – where the distillery is now based.

OakVilla has won numerous awards in the International Wine & Spirit Competition; in 2018 Vryheid Gin won a bronze medal in the London Dry Gin category and took silver in the Contemporary Gin category in 2019 and was awarded a bronze medal in the Gin & Tonic category. Heart of Oak won a bronze medal in the Wood Finished Gin category in 2020 and a bronze medal in the Gin & Tonic category during the same year.

For more information visit:
<https://oakvilladistillery.com>





Mixing it up



Clarence Spirits, owned by the husband-and-wife team Martin and Julie Summers, was launched in October 2018.

Since then, the couple have gone on to create a range of artisan gins, rums and vodkas, and have built up a following of loyal customers.

Here, they share their three favourite rum cocktails, which we're very much looking forward to sampling.

For more information visit:

<https://clarencespirits.co.uk>

Sweet Tea

- 1oz Black Earl Grey tea
- 2oz spiced rum
- Dash archers
- ½ oz lemon juice

Top with apple juice or lemonade
Shake all ingredients (not if using lemonade)
Lemon wedge



North Sea Storm

- 4 lime wedges
 - 1 ½ oz spiced rum
- Top up with ginger beer



Spice Old Fashioned

- 2oz rum
 - 2 dashes aromatic bitters
 - ½ oz sugar syrup
 - Barspoon Maraschino syrup
- Stir and strain
Maraschino cherry and
burnt orange wedge



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We are passionate about keeping Colemans Cider honest and part of the community and having a naturally low environmental impact while running the business. Using apples that would otherwise go to waste, is a large part of that.

E: hello@colemanscider.co.uk
T: Jodie Haines 07761 345 611 or Steve Jackson 07707 987 090
Unit 2, Twydale Business Park



Top marks for Hotham's Gin School

When you return to the classroom to learn about the art of gin making, the 'lessons' at Hotham's Gin Schools include history, biology, chemistry and even home economics (or cookery, as it used to be called).

Whether you choose the gin school in Hull or Leeds, attendees learn all about the origins of what has become one of the most popular spirits in the world and why the term 'Dutch courage' became an everyday term for alcohol-inspired confidence.

The name of the company, Hotham's, also dates back to the early 17th century – named after

John Hotham, baronet and local MP, who in 1642 refused King Charles I entry to the city of Hull – an act of defiance that is rumoured to have started the English Civil War.

Since launching, Hotham's Gin School in Hull has won a clutch of awards, including winner of the White Rose Award for Experience of the Year (2019 and 2020); winner of the Remarkable East Yorkshire Tourism Award for Remarkable Visitor Experience (2019 and 2020) and Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice (2021).

The events start with a Hotham's G&T – Hotham's is also an award-winning distillery – which you will enjoy with a group

of like-minded gin lovers, in their purpose-built Distilling Room.

Attendees have the chance to smell and taste amazing botanicals, from which they choose to make their own gin. Guided by their expert distiller the students will be advised on the quantities required to create a balanced recipe.

The distiller explains about the distillation process whilst the attendees enjoy a gin cocktail and they are encouraged to taste their own gin as it distils and experience the changes as the botanicals release their delicious flavours.

At the end of the event, the first-time distillers get to bottle (in full-size, 70cl, not sample bottles), name and label their unique gin before dipping the stopper in wax to seal the bottle; the bottle is finally stamped with the Hotham's seal of approval.

Before the students leave the school, the 'graduates' have the chance to have their photo taken, before leaving with your unique distillate.

For more information and to book a Gin School event visit: <https://www.hothams.co.uk> or <https://www.leedsginschool.co.uk>



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Charities we support

Here at Hand Crafted Drinks Magazine, we know that the recent lockdowns have been very difficult for the leisure and hospitality industry. We are also very much aware that the lockdowns have been equally trying for many children and young people across the country. This is why we are supporting the work of **Hospitality Action** and **Childline**.

HOSPITALITY ACTION

Hospitality Action was established in 1837 and has since offered vital assistance to all who work, or have worked within hospitality in the UK.

They are there to support everyone working in the industry, from chefs and waiters to housekeepers and managers; concierges, receptionists and kitchen porters, to sommeliers, bartenders and catering assistants across the UK.

Whether they work in hotels, restaurants, pubs, bars or cafés, schools, hospitals or event venues, Hospitality Action is there to provide help, advice and support whenever times get tough.

Whatever challenges people face – from physical illness or mental health issues to financial difficulty, family problems to addiction – Hospitality Action is there to help people get back on their feet. And when it's no longer possible to work, they can help prepare people for the next phase of their lives.

For more information visit:

www.hospitalityaction.org.uk

CHILDLINE

Childline is there to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. Children and teenagers can talk to Childline about anything, whether it's something big or

small, their trained counsellors are there to support anyone who gets in touch.

Childline's counsellors are volunteers and come from all walks of life, but what they all have in common is that they want to help young people.

A CHILDLINE COUNSELLOR IS TRAINED TO:

- Listen to everyone's problems and to be genuine, open and friendly
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For more information visit:

www.childline.org.uk

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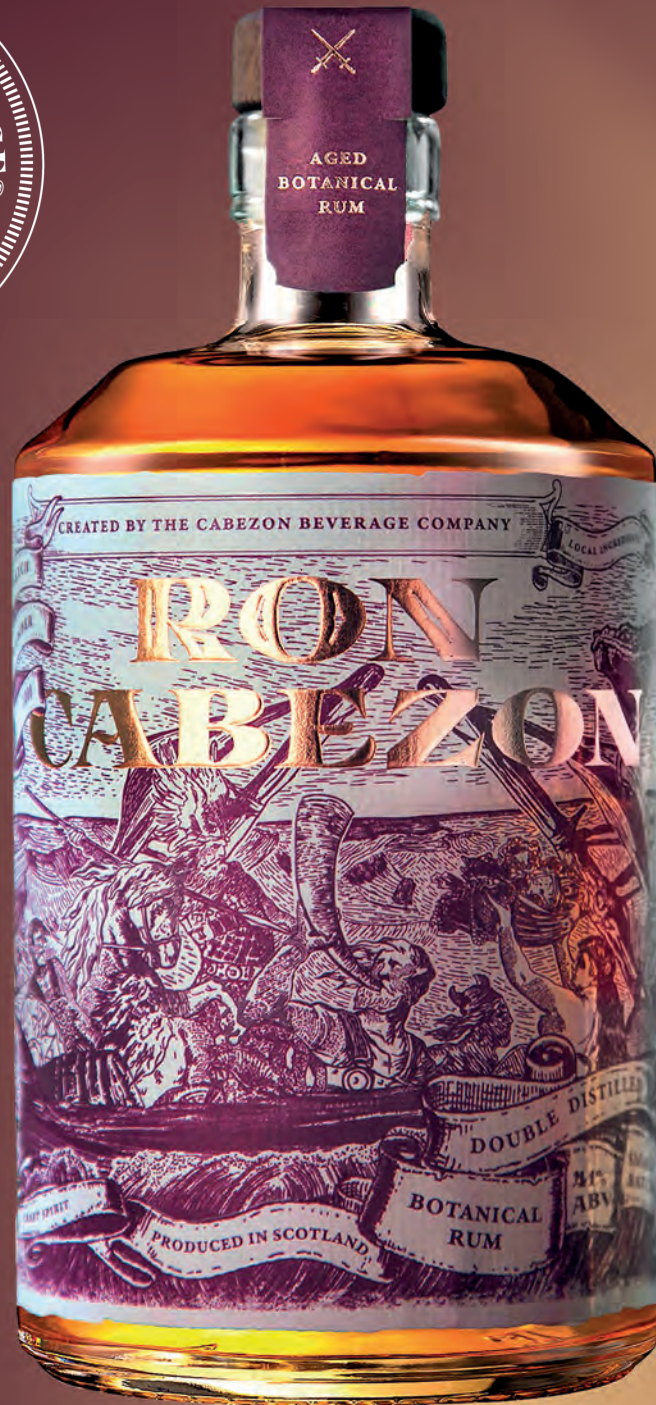
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NEWS

Round-up

A warm welcome awaits

►► **Langham Brewery** offers a delicious range of fresh keg beer, cask conditioned real ale, bottles and cans – lovingly brewed at their award-winning micro-brewery in West Sussex, in the heart of the South Downs National Park.

The Brewery Taproom and Shop are open 6 days a week, where they serve an extensive range of beers, along with soft drinks, delicious cakes, authentic Italian pizzas and more.

You can try four Langham brews in a single purchase via

their ‘flights’ – the brewery’s flight attendant (formerly BA) is happy to guide you through your tasting experience. The Taproom is also available for private hire.

Customers are invited to join the Langham Gulp Club, which enables them to receive discounts, purchase their beers direct from the brewery and make use of the Home Delivery service (delivery to all parts of the UK).

For more information visit:
www.langhambrewery.co.uk



Aged to perfection

►► Jordan Morris, who has been running **Abingdon Distillery** since 2018, has recently launched a new

Cask Series of three gins.

Their Single Malt Cask Finish is their London dry gin that has been aged in single malt whisky casks from Speyside, in which the juniper is infused with bright citrus, marmalade and a sweet maltiness.

The Port Cask Finish is produced by resting their gin in ruby port barrels, which create a gin that is red fruit driven with soft vanilla and floral orange.

As we head towards Christmas, their Madeira Cask Finish is one that will be on our list to Santa. Aged in wine casks from the island of Madeira, this gin has developed a rich flavour profile of Christmas spices, stewed raisins and toasted caramel.

www.abingdondistillery.com



Vigo – introducing the company

►► For over 37 years, **Vigo** has been supplying carefully chosen equipment and consumables to drinks producers, including craft breweries, cideries, wineries, distilleries and soft drinks producers.

Their range includes packaging equipment for bottling, kegging, canning and bag-in-box filling; production equipment for fermentation tanks, filtration, pasteurisation, temperature control, carbonating and testing.

They also supply processing equipment for brewing, and fruit presses, along with consumables, fittings, hoses, yeasts, enzymes and vineyard sundries.

For more information visit:
www.vigotd.com

Roll out the barrel

►► **Ten Locks**, the drinks company curating a portfolio of ethical brands, has entered the booming American whiskey sector with their latest partner, Redwood Empire Whiskey.

Now available in the UK are three unique, barrel-aged spirits from Redwood Empire Whiskey, including Pipe Dream Bourbon Whiskey, Emerald Giant Rye Whiskey and Lost Monarch Blend of Straight Whiskey.

Each Redwood Empire Whiskey is hand-crafted by a small team of five led by master distiller



Jeff Duckhorn, who is involved with all aspects of production – from grain to glass – before the whiskeys are nurtured by Sonoma's moderate year-round climate.

For more information visit their website: **<https://ten-locks.com>**

Bandsman's winter warmer

►► Whilst the G&T is a perfect summer drink, when the temperature starts to drop you need something guaranteed to insulate you from the cold.

Step forward **Bandsman** Carollers' Reserve Winter Gin Liqueur – a winter gin liqueur made using sloes picked from the fertile lands near the River Trent, damsons from a brass banding family in the wilds of the Staffordshire Moorlands, and honey from apiaries in the village of Doddington, a few miles from their distillery.

Because of its seasonal nature, Carollers' Reserve is only released from around November to March each year so keep an eye out for this year's release!

Recommended serve? Keep it simple with this one, it's perfect as it is.

www.bandsmangin.co.uk



Shaken and stirred

►► West Sussex-based **Harley House Distillery**, have created a number of Christmas gin cocktail ideas to impress your customers.

The run-up to Christmas is incomplete without some form of festive cocktail and if you really want to impress you're going to have to start sourcing ingredients now and consider making some of the components so they have time to infuse to their maximum potential.

Their Christmas cocktail recipes include the Christmas Negroni (recipe below). For details of their other festive favourites, including a Grape & Rosemary Cocktail and Mulled Gin, visit their website: **www.harleyhousedistillery.co.uk/blog**

HARLEY HOUSE DISTILLERY
CHRISTMAS COCKTAIL RECIPE

Christmas Negroni

The Negroni is a classic in the eyes of every cocktail drinker. The perfect mix of dry, sweet and zesty spirits.

In a mixing glass or jug pour:

- 25ml Christmas gin
- 15ml Amaro Meletti
- 10ml Sweet Vermouth
- 25ml Campari

Stir with ice for 30 to 60 seconds and then strain into a glass filled with fresh ice. Garnish with a slice of blood orange.



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