



INSIDE

CRAFT BEER TRENDS FROM ACROSS THE POND

CREATE YOUR OWN BESPOKE SPIRITS

SPIRIT OF GLASTONBURY NAMED BEST ENGLISH CLASSIC GIN OF 2022

Issue 5 | February 2022 | handcrafteddrinksomag.co.uk

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Welcome

■ Welcome to **issue five** of Hand Crafted Drinks Magazine and to the start of 2022's events calendar.

At the time of writing Valentine's Day is just around the corner, which will be followed by Mother's Day in March and Easter – this year the middle of April – all of which we hope will continue to help boost the leisure and hospitality industry, and in turn drive sales for the artisan and hand-crafted drinks producers.

As the economy continues to open up we can all look forward to a post-Covid 19 world, but caution must be the watch word, because the virus is still with us and we might never actually be Covid-free.

The good news is that will soon be enjoying the warmer weather and we can all look forward to seeing bars, pubs and restaurants busy with customers who will be spoilt for choice for drinks that have been lovingly created by the diverse and growing number of independent distillers, breweries, cideries, meaderies and those producing fine soft drinks.

Provenance is going to be even more important over the coming weeks, months and years, as consumers continue to become far more discerning and who want to know where their food and drinks come from.

The future for artisan and hand-crafted drinks producers is looking bright.

Simon Turton | Editorial Director

HAND CRAFTED DRINKS MAGAZINE

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Published by **Artisan Publishing Limited** | Baslow | Derbyshire | DE45 1RG.
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CONTENTS ISSUE 5

On the cover:
Mr Hobbs Gin

- Page 3** Welcome
- Page 7** Lost Loch Distillery
- Page 8** Wye Valley Meadery
- Page 10** Q&A with Hip Hop
- Page 14** Cambusier
- Page 16** Somerset Craft Distillery
- Page 18** Spirit of Wales Distillery
- Page 20** Editor's Choice: Mr Hobbs Gin
- Page 22** Black Tor Rum
- Page 23** Northumberland Spirits
- Page 24** Shakespeare Distillery
- Page 26** American Brewers Association
- Page 29** Our Marketing Services

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Lost and found in Scotland

Lost Loch Spirits is owned and managed by Pete Dignan and Rich Pierce, who first explored the idea of launching a distillery – as many great plans are – during a late-night drinking session.

The company was incorporated in 2017 and since then everything they have done has been for the love of distilling and the three things that are important at Lost Loch are the place, the process and the spirits.

The place – the Lost Loch Spirits distillery is in the heart of Royal Deeside, 30 miles west of Aberdeen. The distillery is built on the banks of the now drained Loch Auchlossan, the lost loch, which was the inspiration for the company's name.

The dramatic landscape and the history surrounding the distillery inspires the storytelling, the flavours and the branding.

The process of producing their fine spirits is to maintain the highest standards by applying a small batch mentality in an honest and transparent way. They only use the finest natural ingredients, which are sourced as locally as possible.

Pete and Rich very much respect the environment and are keen to reduce their CO2 emissions. They have installed



a bank of solar panels, a wind turbine and a biomass boiler, and they have also been removing single use plastics from their production process – choosing environmentally friendly products as a sustainable alternative.

Their spirits are at the heart of company operations, which are produced in smaller hand-crafted batches. Each product is thoughtfully created, drawing inspiration from local provenance and history of the land around them.

The final products are quirky, invigorating, and imaginative, distinctly separate but part of the Lost Loch Spirits family. Their

ethos is to be inventive, to draw inspiration their local history and to produce enticing and unique spirits.

Lost Loch's current line-up of spirits includes: **The Murmichan** – Scottish Absinthe, **Eenoo** – Scottish Gin, **Haroosh** – A traditional Scottish spirit and **The Singular Series** – unique gin, rum and absinthe infusions.

In less than five years Pete and Rich have created a unique range of enticing spirits; it will be very interesting to see what they create in the next five.

For more information:
<https://lostlochspirits.com>



Mead in Heaven



Brothers **Kit** and **Matt Newell** are playing their part in the renaissance of mead – the oldest alcoholic drink in the world – and helping to boost the bee population, as they explain here in their own words.

The Wye Valley Meadery is a small, family run company that we founded in 2017, based in the beautiful Wye Valley, in the Welsh borders.

We combine our love of nature with our interest in brewing. We set out to create something as original as possible by taking the world's oldest form of alcohol and giving it a modern twist. What we have created is innovative, light,



refreshing and rich in flavour, but also steeped in history – a true blend of the old and the new.

We could go on about passion, pride and perfection, but that should come over on the first sip. We aim to be different. Many think mead is sweet and strong, and something that was consumed by druids and monks. Well that was then (and occasionally now during the summer solstice...).

With mounting quantities of honey from our own bees and a desire to drink something different, we began creating session strength meads made with great ingredients and delicious flavours.

Our mead is a marriage of modern brewing techniques applied to the most ancient beverage to bring you sparkling, medium sweetness, flavourful mead. We start with the best quality ingredients we can lay our hands on, add yeast and time, and leave the product to do the talking.

If you have never tried mead we think that our range will convert you to become a mead lover, knowing that you are also helping to promote the bee population on which the very future of humanity depends.

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

ABOUT THE FOUNDERS

■ I am **Matt**, a geologist turned beekeeper and brewer. I began chasing bees when I was 16 and took a summer job working for a local commercial beekeeper in the Forest of Dean.

I was paid a jar of honey a week, so I wasn't in it for the money, but this taught me valuable skills in the art of beekeeping. It wasn't long before I caught my first swarm and was hooked.

Our products come from a love of nature and a love of this area. The Wye Valley is unique in its biodiversity, which is excellent news for bees. Making mead gives us the opportunity share a piece of what we love with everyone.

■ I am **Kit** and I worked as a product designer for a tech company in Reading and spent every weekend back in the Wye Valley where I felt I belonged. I was keen to create a job for me and Matt in the area we love so I applied my product design skills to the honey that Matt's bees were making; we spotted a gap in the market for a modern mead.

It is really important for me that we do something worthwhile and creative. Matt and I are both very keen on the outdoors, so creating a product that enables us to work closely alongside nature is fantastic. Creating a product of our own and sharing it with the world is hugely satisfying.

WHAT MAKES THEIR MEAD DIFFERENT?

■ We brew our mead in our purpose built meadery in Caldicot with honey from our bees from the Wye Valley, an area well known for its natural beauty and excellent biodiversity.

There is a great concentration of small leaf lime trees here which gives our honey quite a distinct flavour. We wanted to make a mead that you can enjoy in the same way as a beer, cider or sparkling wine so we brew to a lower alcohol level than a typical mead.

We also bottle condition to get a delicate sparkle into the liquid. This combined with our infusions

of seasonal flavours gives us something truly unique and a real flavour of the local area. If anyone would like to learn more about the process, join one of our mead making courses.





Q&A



The functional drinks industry is exploding as consumers become more conscious of their health and wellbeing, and one of the most popular functional health drinks is kombucha, which is set to have a market worth £550 million by 2026, according to Market Data Forecast 2021.

We spoke to **Emma Thackray**, co-founder of award-winning kombucha brand, **Hip Pop**, to discuss the health benefits of kombucha, the current trends in the wellness and drinks industries and why Hip Pop differs from other kombucha brands.

How has Hip Pop developed over the last 12 months?

"In 2020, we were a one-year-old start-up that had experienced three stalled launches (April 2020, October 2020 & July 2021) due to the pandemic. WeWork offices took a chance on us and agreed

to stock our kombucha on tap in all of its UK sites. Having a business as big as WeWork believe in us helped us get the traction we needed, and we are delighted that we are now able to commence rollout into its offices.

"As a result, other businesses such as Harrods, Amazon, Google, Booths, The Hut Group and many others now stock us or work with us on their wellness programmes for their employees, customers or members.

"Instead of shrinking during the pandemic, we have won multiple awards and have seen 100% year on year growth. We have completed a total rebrand, going from our old name 'Booch & Brew' to Hip Pop in August 2021. We have also become certified organic which has been a roaring success, and we are currently building a brand new manufacturing facility to meet demand.

"Over the past 12 months we have had great support from Juliet Barratt, who is non-exec of Hip Pop. Juliet is co-founder of Grenade and has helped us build our brand from the ground up with her expertise in the food and drink industry. Her help has been invaluable, and we are so glad to have her on board."

What is kombucha and how does it benefit your health?

"Kombucha is made from fermented tea and the fruits and herbs you choose to flavour it with. There aren't yet any scientific studies that detail why kombucha is good for you, so we don't know conclusively whether it's kombucha's natural vitamins, antioxidants, organic acids or the living cultures that cause people to come back for more. Either way, we are one of the only kombucha brands in the world that infuses all our drinks with friendly living bacteria called *Bacillus Coagulans*, which has undergone rigorous scientific studies for its gut health benefits. We include at least one billion of these scientifically proven mighty cultures in every bottle and can, plus all the other benefits of fermented kombucha."

How has the popularity of kombucha grown in recent years?

"The probiotic drinks market is set to grow to £21.95 billion by 2027, with kombucha continuing to grow globally following an increase in demand for appetising functional beverages.

"The market is further driven by an increase in the trend of 'health and wellness', the growing consumer demand for all-natural ingredients

and the surging demand for low/no alcohol beverages. Organic and vegan products have also grown in popularity, and in 2020 we saw a 40% increase in UK vegans, meaning there is a larger consumer market for vegan beverages, like kombucha.”

What makes Hip Pop kombucha different?

“Hip Pop fiercely follows this internal 3-step code without exception:

“1. Tastes Good - Although our products are non-alcoholic, they are craft brewed by professional qualified brewers to ensure the highest quality and then taste tested by 10 qualified wine and beer experts led by drinks expert Kate Goodman from BBC Food & Drink to ensure taste, depth and character.

“2. Does Good - Hip Pop is certified organic, ensuring the best ingredients whilst answering the demand for all-natural ingredients.

“3. Looks Good - Hip Pop is an aspirational premium brand and meets the demand for premium artisanal/craft products. Consumers want gut healthy drinks but they also want products to look good.”

What is CBD and how does it benefit your health? What makes Hip Pop CBD kombucha different?

“CBD, short for cannabidiol, is the non-psychoactive compound found in hemp plants. The CBD that we use in our CBD kombucha is independently tested and regulated. People use CBD for all sorts of reasons, most commonly to provide feelings of calmness and relaxation. However, there are an increasing amount of studies that are investigating CBD’s benefits for gut health.

“With Hip Pop CBD kombucha you get a double dose of goodness - CBD and kombucha in one. We add 20mg of CBD which is market leading and more than most other brands.”

How do you see the non-alcoholic and health drinks market evolving during 2022 and beyond?

“The low/no alcohol market is expected to grow by 34% by 2024 with a CAGR of 14% and this is due to a moderation trend that’s sweeping across key markets, bringing with it increased demand for reduced alcohol, or alcohol-

free drinks. As people become more health conscious due to better health information, they become more moderate in their alcohol consumption.”

What are your growth plans for Hip Pop during 2022?

“We are expanding beyond kombucha and will be bringing out an Apple Cider Vinegar Soda range which is an exploding trend in the USA and is something our customers have requested. We have taken it one step further by ensuring it passes our rigorous taste test without adding sugar or sweeteners, so it’s all natural.

“We are also including over one billion live cultures for the added gut health focus to increase the benefits of your daily dose of premium Apple Cider Vinegar. We plan to expand this range along with our kombucha into the US market and across Europe, and we also have another gut focused drinks product in our development and will be releasing details of this later in the year.”

<https://drinkhippop.com>

ABOUT HIP POP AND THE PRODUCT RANGE:

■ Hip Pop is an affordable aspirational brand which currently has three product ranges which are all gluten free, sweetener free, contain nothing artificial and have over one billion live cultures in each bottle or can for the added gut health focus:

1. Organic Kombucha

- Apple & Elderflower
- Blueberry & Ginger

- Ginger & Yuzu
- Strawberry & Pineapple

2. CBD Kombucha all with 20mg of plant powered CBD

- Cheery & Blackberry
- Blood Orange & Grapefruit
- Passion Fruit & Guava

3. Apple Cider Vinegar Sodar

- Ginger, Turmeric & Black Pepper



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Now available in the UK

Cambusier

Destined for premium cocktail bars and restaurants, Cambusier fruit liqueurs are now available to the UK drinks market, following an exclusive distribution deal with purpose-led drinks firm Ten Locks.

The Cambusier range has been described as ‘France in a bottle’ and has been inspired by several regions across l’Hexagone: Crème de Cassis (Bourgogne Franche-Comté), Strawberry (Bretagne), Mirabelle Plum (Grand-Est), Raspberry (Centre Val-de-Loire), Apple (Normandy) and Violette (Occitanie) liqueurs.

The history of the Cambusier brand dates back to 2016 in the Grand-Est region of France, where three young people, proud of their native Lorraine, met and discussed the phenomenal success of Spritz, the famous Italian cocktail that had been reigning supreme in French bars for many years.

They realised that it was made from a single ingredient: a Venetian liqueur which had been largely forgotten for over two hundred years. When they compared the Italian liqueur with their regional speciality, the





Mirabelle plum liqueur, it occurred to them that this intense, fruity-tasting beverage was rarely consumed today and was heading for a place in the history books.

But, after months of research and hard work, and traveling across France to meet craft liqueur producers, Cambusier was launched with its sole ambition: to bring France's regional craft liqueurs back to life.

Commenting on the deal, Becky Davies, head of commercial at Ten Locks, said: "Cambusier is incredibly striking and executed beautifully with a finesse few brands can compete with.

"Its devotion to bringing back an array of flavour profiles at a time when the spritz is booming, offers UK bartenders and mixologists endless possibilities.

"Working to re-establish liqueurs that deserve to be re-discovered and enjoyed, Cambusier is well positioned to inject a finesse to a well-made cocktail and even more life into the return of the spritz and will do so in the most contemporary way. It's a welcome dash of joie de vivre and with a team who've all spent time behind the bar, I know it'll be a hit with premium venues."

Recent sales of liqueurs have been very strong with interest set to continue as spritz culture affirms itself at home on in the trade.

Cambusier fruit liqueurs have been created specifically to sit at the heart of modern cocktails as a key flavour, but can also be enjoyed as a digestif, over ice, blended into tonic, white wine or champagne.

Partners Martin Smadis and Theo Moog founded Cambusier in June 2017, inspired by the term 'cambusier'. Meaning "ship's galley" in English, the maritime theme is intrinsic to the brand's design from the blue and white logo and stripes, through to its sailor top as an emblem of France.

Alphonse Cassanet, Commercial Manager at Cambusier said: "The partnership with Ten Locks will go some way to ensure French regional liqueurs regain their glory. We're proud to partner with a distributor that values innovation, has a true appreciation for quality while being respectful of heritage and the role distinctive brands play in premium venues. We embark on 2022 excited to embrace the lively spritz culture in the UK, and bring Cambusier to venues across the country."

Cambusier joins premium spirits brands Bourgoign Cognac, Salford Rum, Mary White Vodka, Nusa Caña Rum, Applewood Gin, Diabliesse Rum, Banhez Mezcal, El Tequileño, Langley's Gin, Redwood Empire and West Cork Irish Whiskey in Ten Locks' progressive portfolio of drinks brands with a difference.

For more information visit:
www.ten-locks.com

World Drink Awards announce Spirit of Glastonbury Somerset Gin 'Best English Classic Gin' 2022



An expert panel of international judges have evaluated the world's best gins and have announced Somerset distilled Spirit of Glastonbury to be the best classic gin in England.

Somerset Craft Distillery that produces the gin have only been going for a short while and are

delighted with the award. Managing Director, Barry Davies told us "We were overwhelmed when we received the news – it was totally unexpected." The gin, which has an ABV of 42%, contains nine botanicals including apples from Somerset's traditional orchards. The water used in the distillation process is drawn from deep beneath the mystical Glastonbury Tor which towers 518 feet (158 m) above the town. At the top of the Tor is the ancient tower of St Michael which has become synonymous the brand and is illustrated on the label.

Mandy Davies continued the story. "We had the idea to make our own gin in the autumn of 2018. We obtained our licence and then began experimenting with a small 2.5 litre still. We really did start from scratch, reading books,

visiting distilleries, attending seminars and finding as much as we could about the process. We had lots of help from neighbours and friends in evaluating the results of our efforts and slowly, over a period of time Spirit of Glastonbury was born. We now have a much bigger still we have named Guinevere, but continue to use our original small one for experimenting with new flavours."

One of the unusual aspects of Spirit of Glastonbury is that it can be enjoyed neat as well as with a mixer. It is popular in many local hostelrys and has been sent all over the UK via the company's website

www.spiritofglastonbury.co.uk.

A Navy 57% version has evolved which is Spirit of Glastonbury – but stronger. "It's the same recipe", says Barry "We simply cut it at a higher ABV. The difference however is quite striking; they are like two completely different drinks!" The company hopes to bring out a range of speciality flavoured gins in the future, however at the moment they are busy keeping up with demand for their award winning gin.

VISIT:

www.spiritofglastonbury.co.uk
Info@somersetcraftdistillery.uk
01458 851122



LEFT: Mandy Davies bottles the latest batch RIGHT TOP: The Spirit of Glastonbury Team - Clive Davies, Barry Davies and Barrie Wickenden

MEMORABLE BOTTLE, UNFORGETTABLE GIN

■ With so many gins on the market, it can't be easy to differentiate new products or introduce new elements, flavours or styles.

And yet, this is what I believe the owners of Somerset Craft Distillery have achieved with their Spirit of Glastonbury Premium Dry Gin, which we are currently sampling at the time of writing – although, not literally at the time of writing.

The points of difference start with the bottle, which incorporates a spiral of glass rising up from

the shoulder to the neck of the bottle – deliberately designed to emulate the spiralling topography of Glastonbury Tor.

Then, there's the gin itself. On their website the owners suggest trying it neat at room temperature, which I did and I also sampled it with ice. As with all my reviews, I never introduce mixers – I only ever want to experience the unadulterated gin.

On the nose there is the unmissable juniper, but with the

Spirit of Glastonbury the distillers have turned up the volume – you know it's gin before the first sip. The mouthfeel is very smooth and confident, again the juniper notes are prominent, which remains with you though to the finish.

This is a very well produced dry gin, which is not trying to be something that it isn't; neither is it going for the super-premium market. At £39 for a 70cl bottle I think it is well priced and is one gin that I would enjoy sipping all evening in front of a roaring fire.



We love water - especially when it's frozen into cubes and surrounded by our award winning gin!

Voted best Classic Gin in England 2022 by The World Drink Awards.

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Crafted with nine botanicals including apples from Somerset's traditional Orchards.

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with the **Spirit of Wales Distillery**

The Spirit of Wales Distillery is now giving teams, businesses, charities and others

the chance to bottle their own craft spirits as an own label brand.

Based in Newport, South Wales, the Spirit of Wales Distillery now offers consultations to create private label spirits at their distillery. The process for creating a personalised spirit is divided into three tiers: recipe development, production and bottling.

Aspiring spirit makers can also consult with James Gibbons, the Spirit of Wales' head distiller, to develop their own recipe, or they can let him help create the unique spirit for their own brand.

During recipe development, clients work together with the distillery in their bar area to fine-tune the recipe, where they can also sample existing products within their own range of Welsh rums, vodkas, and gins. Then, it's off to the distillery where product specifications and recipes are completed.





Recipe production is second tier process, during which the team produce their clients' bespoke recipes using premium ingredients. The Spirit of Wales Distillery offers various types of bulk production, from recipe creation to blended, macerated, or distilled methods.

At this stage of the process, aspiring spirit makers can capture the personality of their creation. The team at Spirit of Wales Distillery recommend creating personalised labels, which can be produced from one of their own templates for the bottles they supply, or for bottles supplied by the client.

Commenting on this new service, the Spirit of Wales Distillery's marketing manager, Claudette de Chermont, said: "We recommend extending your brand for gifting, fundraising or to create a private spirit brand. You can use an in-house designer or work with our team of creatives to assist you in bringing your



personalised spirits to life".

During the final stages, the finished premium distilled Welsh spirit is bottled, sealed with wax, and labelled – ready for delivery or collection from the Spirit of Wales's Newport distillery.

Commenting on the own label process James Gibbons, who produces the Welsh spirits at the distillery said: "Working with third parties on the development of new products is brilliant, it's always a good challenge to put our expertise to use in

developing recipes that exceed our clients' expectations".

The distillery was launched in South Wales in October 2020, inspired by Welsh passion and the dramatic Welsh heritage and environment. The Spirit of Wales range includes the award-winning Dragon's Breath Spiced Welsh Rum, award-winning Steeltown Welsh Dry Gin and Steeltown Welsh Vodka.

For more information visit:
www.spiritofwales.com



Mr Hobbs Gin

One of the very enjoyable aspects of running this magazine is the chance to sample a wide range of drinks. Recently I was delighted to have received two sample bottles from Henley-on-Thames-based Mr Hobbs Gin: **Mr Hobbs 150** and **Mr Hobbs Spiced Plum Gin**

Mr Hobbs 150 was extremely smooth – with and without a mixer – and I would enjoy keeping a bottle in the drinks cabinet, but it was the spiced plum gin that made a lasting impression.

My first impression of Mr Hobbs Spiced Plum Gin Liqueur was ‘wow’, which I know isn’t in the vocabulary of most drinks

writers, but it really was very good.

On the nose there was inviting Christmas pudding aromas, which I have never experienced in any other liqueur and even before tasting it I wanted more. The mouthfeel was light and pleasantly sweet, with confident plum pudding flavours flooding in. The finish was very satisfying with lingering plum notes and if I had closed my eyes whilst drinking this divine spirit it could have been Christmas Day all over again.

Some liqueurs can be over sweet

and quite syrupy, but not so with this one – the lightness belies the depth and complexity of flavours of this very quaffable spirit.

I sampled this over ice and I would like to try this with sparkling wine or Champagne, which I think would make an excellent cocktail. For parties this would be a fantastic apéritif whether served neat or over ice.

Either way, this is very smooth, very flavoursome gin and I look forward to exploring the full Mr Hobbs range, which now runs to five gins.

Such is the quality of their products it was a surprise to learn, when I interviewed Suzy Hobbs – who runs the business with her husband, Jonnie (the great, great grandson of the founder of the boating business, Hobbs of Henley) – that their gin started out as a marketing exercise to help promote their boating business.

In 2017 Jonnie and Suzy decided to launch a premium gin, distilled using finest ingredients, which would be in keeping with their boating business's heritage and reputation. Following the launch of their first Mr Hobbs Gin they produced three fruit-



flavoured gin liqueurs and their most recent addition was Mr Hobbs 150 – a classic London dry gin celebrating the 150th anniversary of Hobbs of Henley.

Today, Hobbs of Henley has the largest fleet on the Thames with over 60 boats available for self-drive rentals, boating holidays, river cruises and corporate hospitality.

They also organise various events including cocktails and gin-tasting cruises and gin and jazz evenings, which customers enjoy on board as they glide along the the River Thames.

Before Covid-19 the company organised around 35 events a year, but the lockdowns devastated the boating business.

Now, as we continue to emerge from the grip of pandemic the rental business is returning to pre-Covid levels and they are looking forward to getting as many events back in the diary as they can.

Looking to the future I asked Suzy if the pandemic had brought any changes that the company would want to adopt permanently. Suzy explained that the pandemic has reinforced how important their local community is and they want to continue to promote other local businesses.

Suzy also said she would like to stop trying to do too much and focus on doing things better not bigger, and never to be complacent.

At Hand Crafted Drinks Magazine we wish Suzy and Jonnie every success for the year ahead and we look forward to the next time we can sample the delights that Mr Hobbs has to offer.

For more information visit:
<https://www.mrhobbsgin.co.uk>





Black Tor Rum

Black Tor Distillery is an independent distillery based in the rugged foothills of Dartmoor whose pursuit of quality and flavour has led to the creation of fine, premium rums.

With sales of rum continuing to rise year-on-year this artisan producer is well placed to take advantage of the renaissance of this unique spirit.



Here at Hand Crafted Drinks Magazine we can't wait to sample, review and provide feedback on their two rums, which are detailed below.

To produce their Premium Reserve Golden Rum (40% ABV) involves the selection of Caribbean rums, which have been barrel-aged for eight years. They are blended at their distillery and augmented with granite-filtered local spring water to create a premium reserve, golden rum with an exceptionally clean, rounded flavour and long, warming finish.

This can be enjoyed as a sipping rum, which lets the unique depth of complex flavours slowly reveal themselves. Smooth on the palate, with subtle hints of caramel sweetness and vanilla undertones, leading to a lasting soft spice aroma of ginger and cedar.

Black Tor Distillery's Premium Organic White Rum (40% ABV) is produced by specially selected organic rums, aged to perfection, which are then with pure, natural spring water that has been filtered through the Dartmoor National Park to create a premium organic white rum that is bold and smooth with hints of tropical fruit and subtle sweetness.



www.blacktorrum.com



Northumberland Spirit Company's new gins



The story behind the launch of the company is one of long summer evenings and a journey down memory lane to the end of the garden. More specifically, a visit to a garden shed, almost half a century ago.

The shed was an Aladdin's cave of old car parts, tools and forgotten trinkets, but this mysterious shed piqued one young boy's curiosity. The inquisitive grandson was Neil Osborne, who launched the company in 2016.

As a child he had often wondered what was inside his grandfather's retreat hidden away in the orchard and after weeks of pestering, pleading and questioning, Grandad Willy finally opened the door to show Neil what was hidden inside.

At the back of the shed, in the collection of buckets, jars and steel containers, was a sizeable quantity of beer, cider and gin. Grandad Willy had been using foraged ingredients, local produce and his own orchard to bring these drinks close to perfection.

Forty-five years later, during one long summer of evening of gin and tonics in the garden, Neil's



thoughts took him back to the old rusty tin shed. He tried to remember the botanicals and ingredients that his grandfather had used so successfully in what became a quest to recreate the family recipe.

With some experimentation, refining and a dash of nostalgia, a rich, smooth flavour began to emerge. Friends and family were generous enough to taste test and one chance remark planted the seed that this could lead to something more. Several bottles later, Northumberland Spirit Company was born, quite aptly in a garden shed.

Over the intervening years the company's range has expanded, which now includes their fabulous Blacksmiths range.

Blacksmiths Rose Gin

Take time to savour the essence of the perfect summer's day. By using genuine rose petals they have created this superb Rose Gin, which elegantly captures the beautiful fragrance of an English country garden. **Available in 70cl glass bottles. ABV 38.5%**

Blacksmiths Northumberland Dry Gin

Blacksmiths Northumberland Dry Gin has been hand-crafted to create the perfect G&T. The delicate blend of botanicals, including dill weed and lemon pepper, perfectly enhance the fresh juniper undertones. Best enjoyed with a quality tonic, ice and a slice of pink grapefruit. **Available in 70cl glass bottle. ABV 40%**

Blacksmiths SP

Relax and enjoy the rich, mellow character of this delicious blend of Alnwick Sloe Gin and the finest Portuguese Ruby Port. Described as the 'ultimate after dinner drink', but it's also good to drink anytime! **Available in 70cl glass bottles. ABV 23%.**

www.northumberlandspirit.co.uk



Shakespeare Distillery

Shortlisted twice in the West Midlands Tourism Awards!

Shakespeare Distillery has been shortlisted twice in the prestigious West Midlands Tourism Awards. The independent artisan spirit producer based in Stratford-upon-Avon has been shortlisted in the Experience of the Year and Small Visitor Attraction of the Year and is one of only a small handful of businesses to be shortlisted in the Stratford-upon-Avon region. The awards are being held in March and regional winners will automatically be put through to the national VisitEngland Awards for Excellence in June.

The Distillery is up for Experience of the Year for their Gin School, which was launched three years ago, and ran for almost a year before the first national lockdown. The Gin School enables visitors to try their own hand at being a distiller and create their own gin using a miniature copper still and an array of botanicals, alongside expert tuition. At the end of the 3-hour session, visitors will have distilled, blended, bottled, sealed, and labelled their very own unique bottles of gin to take away with them.



Some of the recent 5-star reviews on TripAdvisor say "It was a brilliant and fun experience. You can make whatever you want, under the guiding hands of the staff. Really nice and charismatic, entertaining guys, with lots of anecdotes about gin and the history of distilling, which all helped to make the afternoon a great experience", "Fabulous experience, guides were so friendly, and the spirit tasting was so much fun! Can't recommend enough", "The distillery tour was really interesting & fun! And ended with tasting some amazing gins/ rum. Great team at the distillery who gave us a fun couple of hours. Really enjoyable".

The awards are supported by the West Midlands Growth Company, one of the partners responsible for delivering the 3-year Business and Tourism Programme which aims to leverage the profile of the 2022 Commonwealth Games to attract more tourists and events to the West Midlands and UK. Pre-pandemic, the tourism sector contributed £13.1 billion to the West Midlands economy, attracting 134 million visitors, and supporting more than 137,000 full-time equivalent jobs.

Peter Monks, Director at Shakespeare Distillery said "We are absolutely thrilled to have been shortlisted twice in these Awards. Having established our business six years ago, our gins and rums have gone from strength to strength, and we introduced our distillery tours and gin school three years ago with plans to further develop our visitor experiences in Stratford this year. Winning either of these awards would be testament to our brilliant team who work incredibly hard in producing high quality, locally made handcrafted spirits and delivering a five-star visitor experience".

Becky Frall, Head of Visitor Attraction at the growth company, said: "The West Midlands Tourism Awards will celebrate the venues which, despite working in an often-unpredictable climate, have consistently delivered a first-class welcome for our region's visitors. This year, more than ever, major global events such as the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, the Birmingham 2022 Festival and the culmination of the UK City of Culture in Coventry are set to produce lifelong memories for everyone who comes to the region".

Shakespeare Distillery is no



stranger to winning awards, in 2020 the company won gold in the New Tourism Business category in the West Midlands Tourism Awards on its last outing. The Distillery was also awarded the **Trip Advisor Travellers'**

Choice Award 2021 and a silver medal in the International Wine & Spirit Competition 2021 for its Jester White Rum.



For more information about Shakespeare Distillery please visit: www.shakespearedistillery.com

For more information about the West Midlands Tourism Awards visit: westmidlandstourismawards.com



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OUR EXPERIENCES:

Our visitor centre was awarded Gold in the New Tourism Business category at the 2020 West Midlands Tourism Awards. We offer a range of popular ways to visit us and taste our spirits...

DISTILLERY TOURS

Visit our distillery to learn how we make our gins and rums.

GIN SCHOOL

Distill your own unique bottle of gin here at the distillery

COCKTAIL MASTERCLASS

Learn how to make a range of cocktails with our master mixologist

GIN TASTING CRUISE

See all the riverside sights while enjoying a tutored tasting of our spirits

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Mindful drinking

And opportunities with American craft beer

Lotte Peplow,
the Brewers
Association's
American craft beer
ambassador for
Europe, takes a deep
dive into American
craft beer trends,
flavours, attributes
and mindful drinking

Every year the Brewers Association, the not-for-profit trade organisation representing small and independent American craft brewers, carries out a survey* looking at trends within the American craft beer industry. Latest results reveal 94% of weekly American craft beer drinkers indicate they're drinking at least one other alcoholic beverage category weekly, ie wine, sprits, liquors, seltzer, cider, FMBs (flavoured malt beverages). Why? The answer is simple....there is more choice in alcohol beverages than ever before. RTDs (Ready To Drink) are performing strongly with spirit based

canned cocktails growing due to a surge in home consumption and the desire to recreate the cocktail experience at home.

However, beer remains the dominant alcohol beverage in America with craft beer accounting for 12.3% market share by volume in 2020. Retail dollar value was estimated at \$22.2 billion, representing 23.6% market share**. There are now more than 9,000 craft breweries in America, the highest number ever recorded. The percentage of craft beer drinkers (several times a year) continues to grow and accounts for 44% of the population aged 21+ (up from 35% in 2015).

FLAVOUR PROFILES

Survey respondents were asked what flavours they were more or less interested in, from crisp, juicy/hazy, fruity, dark, malty, hoppy, spicy (yeast) or tart and the results indicate that all flavours are growing. Since 2018 interest in juicy/hazy has grown the fastest at 9% followed by fruity at 8% and that's a good indicator of what we see in the marketplace today.

Analyse the data by demographic and it shows that all age groups were more interested in crisp beer styles, followed by juicy/hazy that was more interesting to craft beer drinkers under the age of 54. Tart beers tend to be more polarising and are less interesting to drinkers 45+ years old but potentially an area of growth for the younger drinker.

Popular beer flavours are equally interesting to both male and females, such as crisp beer being 40% more interesting to both male and females equally. There are a few variations such as female being more interested in fruity and male in dark but in general preferences are very similar. According to the research, the gender gap in craft beer consumers continues to narrow with 71 male v 29 female split in 2015, shifting to 64 male v 35 female in 2021.

The next generation of craft beer drinkers are driving the market. Newest legal drinking age 21-34 year olds are more interested in craft beer and excited about the whole gamut of beer flavours.



MINDFUL DRINKING

A few years ago mindful drinking was never part of the craft beer conversation, but times they are a-changing. We asked what attributes craft beer drinkers were more interested in than they were two years ago and at a base level interest in all attributes has increased ie. local ingredients, low calorie, organic, low carb, health-centric ingredients, fitness goals, smaller formats, low ABV, gluten-free and non-alcoholic. In the recent survey, three quarter of weekly craft beer drinkers said at least one of these mindful drinking trends was important to them.

Looking specifically at 21-34 year old drinkers, they are at least as interested in these trends as overall drinkers and it's clear that these attributes will continue to grow in importance for the next generation. For example, a beer drinker who cares about low calorie at 21 is likely to care a lot more as a 35 year old since in general calories do not become less important to people as they age. Some of the trends we're seeing in the broader alcohol beverage space are only going to intensify within craft beer as the next generation clearly cares more about these attributes than previous generations. ➡

Alcohol by volume (ABV), particularly higher and lower ABV, is becoming more important to craft beer consumers and driving trends in the market where beers of 5% and below are growing strongly and 6/7/8% and above are also growing. Double IPA is now the growth driver within the IPA category and research suggests IPA is decelerating while DIPA takes a greater share. This growth is reflected in the fact that consumers are looking for higher or lower abv beers and the middle is a tougher place to be.

Also noteworthy was the growth in non-alcoholic beers that now account for .5% of the total craft beer market. It's a niche but growing sector and may not seem much on its own but compared to other sub-styles of craft beer it's



a big chunk. Trial and discovery is helping to grow the sector and keep it stable and this is particularly evident in January when people try low and no-alcoholic drinks then stick with them.

American craft beer is available from national wholesalers or direct from Cascade Club or Athletic Brewing. For more information visit: www.brewersassociation.org



ABOUT THE BREWERS ASSOCIATION

■ The Brewers Association (BA) is the not-for-profit trade association dedicated to small and independent American brewers, their beers and the community of brewing enthusiasts.

The BA represents 5,600-plus U.S. breweries. The BA's independent craft brewer seal is a widely adopted symbol that differentiates beers by small and independent craft brewers. The BA organizes events including the World Beer Cup®, Great American Beer Festival®, Craft Brewers Conference® & BrewExpo America®, SAVOR™: An American Craft Beer & Food Experience, Homebrew ConTM, National Homebrew Competition and American Craft Beer Week®.

The BA publishes The New Brewer® magazine, and Brewers Publications® is the leading publisher of brewing literature in the U.S.

Beer lovers are invited to learn more about the dynamic world of craft beer at CraftBeer.com® and about homebrewing via the BA's [American Homebrewers Association](#)® and the free [Brew Guru](#)® mobile app. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

* Harris Poll among 1,900 US adults aged 21+

** Brewers Association annual production figures survey



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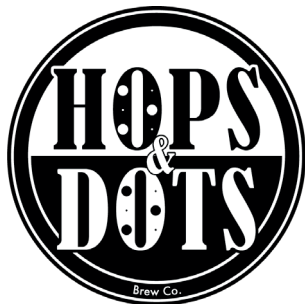


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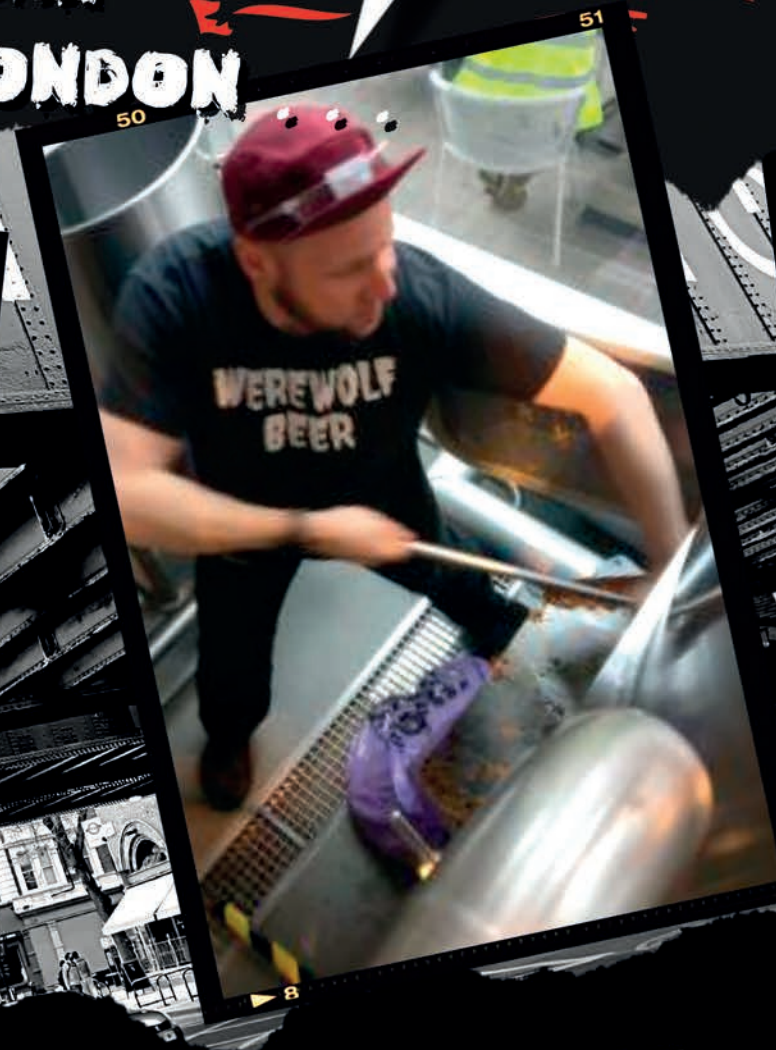
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