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Gin: A Global History (Reaktion Books - Edible)

Lesley Jacobs Solmonson

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Mother’s Milk, Mother’s Ruin, and Ladies’ Delight. Dutch Courage and Cuckold’s Comfort. These evocative nicknames for gin hint that it has a far livelier history than the simple and classic martini would lead you to believe. In this book, Lesley Jacobs Solmonson journeys into gin’s past, revealing that this spirit has played the role of both hero and villain throughout history.

Taking us back to gin’s origins as a medicine derived from the aromatic juniper berry, Solmonson describes how the Dutch recognized the berry’s alcoholic possibilities and distilled it into the whiskey-like *genever*. She then follows the drink to Britain, where cheap imitations laced with turpentine and other caustic fillers made it the drink of choice for poor eighteenth-century Londoners. Eventually replaced by the sweetened Old Tom style and later by London Dry gin, its popularity spread along with the British Empire. As people today once again embrace classic cocktails like the gimlet and the negroni, gin has reclaimed its place in the world of mixology. Featuring many enticing recipes, *Gin* is the perfect gift for cocktail aficionados and anyone who wants to know whether it should be shaken or stirred.

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