Press Release

Monday, December 18th, 2017

**Gin sales are up as drinkers vote it their favourite spirit tipple**

*Gin is now the UK’s favourite spirit according to a new poll*

*Latest stats show Brits bought a record breaking 47 million bottles of gin in a year*

Gin sales continue to soar in the UK with yet another bumper sales quarter for the quintessentially British spirit, according to the Wine and Spirit Trade Association’s latest market report.

Brits have bought over 47 million bottles of gin, a record breaking equivalent of 1.32 billion G&T’s, in the last recorded 12 months. This is up 7 million bottles compared to the same period a year ago.

The new figures have been released at the same time as a YouGov poll found gin is now the most popular spirit with 29% of drinkers voting it their favourite spirit tipple.

Gin has moved up from third place, compared to the same poll a year ago, the next two most popular spirit drinks in 2017 whiskies (25%) and then vodka (23%).

Gin sales in the UK have doubled,in value, in the last six years with consumers buying are £630 million worth of gin in 2011 compared to over a whopping £1.2 billion in 12 months (to Sept 2017).

The WSTA market report, released last week, shows the equivalent of over 8.8 million bottles of gin were sold in our pubs, bars and restaurants worth £729 million in the same 12 months.

But the majority of the gin sold in the UK is from our shops and supermarkets where 38.7 million bottles flew off the shelves between September 2016 – 2017.

Gin continues to be the standout performing, in growth, in the spirits category with yet another double digit sales increase across the on and off trade.

In the 12 weeks up to September 2017 gin sales went up 26% by volume in the off trade (shops and supermarkets) and up 34% by value compared to the same time last year.

In the same 12 weeks sales in the on trade (bars, pubs and restaurants) were also buoyant with volume up 23% and value sales 28%.

British Gin sales abroad have also seen a meteoric rise in UK food and drink exports with sales now worth more than beef and cereals.

The UK hit its largest ever gin exports in 2016 worth £474m making it the world’s 7th most valuable food and drink export, and growth won’t stop there – the IWSR Forecast Report projects that gin is expected to grow by 37.2% by 2021.

**Miles Beale, Chief Executive of the Wine and Spirit Trade Association, said:**

“The latest WSTA market report is showing yet another sparkling result for gin sales in the UK. The British public show no signs of growing tired of trying new gins with well over 100 brands now available on the UK Market. It comes as no surprise that gin has climbed to the top of a poll of most popular spirit drinks.

Gin is a very versatile spirit which works well in cocktails as well as in a traditional G&T serve. Although gin is predominantly juniper based our innovative gin distillers are now offering a range of gins infused with locally sourced botanicals, including seaweed, rhubarb and even Christmas gins with frankincense and myrrh. Gin’s versatility has proved it is attractive to consumers who have increasingly sophisticated palettes. In the past people were less concerned about where a gin came from or what botanicals it used; now, consumers are now more interested in a gin’s back story.”

British gin is renowned for its quality world-wide and you only have to look at the British gin trophy cabinet to see why.

In the 2017 International Wine & Spirits Competition (IWSC) UK gins received a record breaking 153 medals. This is up from 96 in 2016 and more than double the 75 awards picked up in 2015.

A total of 45 new distilleries opened in the UK during 2016 according to HMRC which brings the total to an estimated 273 distilleries in the UK. This has more than doubled since 2012 when there were 128.

The gin phenomenon has gone far beyond a drink with ice and tonic. Brits love of gin has seen a surge of gin themed Christmas gifts including gin themed hot water bottles, baubles, advent calendars, gin Christmas jumpers, fairy lights, gin flavoured cheese and gin Christmas crackers.

But sales stats show that gin is not just for Christmas but is a drink that Brits love all year round.

Drink in all the latest gin facts below:

* Gin sales in the our shops and supermarkets (off-trade) have grown 19% by volume in the past year (ending 09/09/17) to 268,000hls (38.7m bottles) worth £538m (+25% on last year)
* Gin sales in our pubs bars and restaurants (on-trade) have grown 15% by volume in the past year (ending 09/09/17) to 61,000hls (8.8m bottles) worth £729m (+19% on last year).
* Gin sales combined (both on- and off-trade) reached 329,000 hls in the past year (ending 09/09/17) equalling over 47 million bottles, worth over £1.2bn.
* The UK drank the equivalent of 1.32bn G&Ts in the last 12 months (to 09/09/17)
* Gin sales have grown more than any other spirit sold in UK in the last year.
* The UK hit its largest ever gin exports in 2016 - worth nearly half a billion pounds at £474 million, around 180 million bottles.
* The UK exports British gin to 139 countries around the world.
* Since 2012 UK gin exports have increased 32% by value and 37% by volume
* The UK is the biggest gin exporter in the world. The USA, Spain and Germany are the largest export destinations for UK gin by volume.
* Gin exports to France, Italy, Portugal and Belgium have all more than doubled by volume in five years.
* In March, gin was added to the ONS’ typical shopping ‘basket of goods’ which is used to calculate inflation
* In the 2017 International Wine & Spirits Competition (IWSC) 153 gins from the UK won medals. This is up from 96 in 2016.
* The Chancellor froze spirit duty at the Budget in November but consumers still pay the Treasury £8.05 in spirits duty for an average priced bottle of gin. Duty and VAT make a up a staggering 77% of the price.

**Notes to editors:**

The WSTA is the UK organisation for the wine and spirit industry, representing over 300 companies producing, importing, transporting and selling wine and spirits. The WSTA works with its members to promote responsible production, marketing and sale of alcohol.

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