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Ultimate Cocktail Challenge: experts pick the gins for Classic Gin Cocktails

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Ultimate Cocktail Challenge
Photo: Daniel Krieger

The Ultimate Spirits Challenge is one of the premier spirits competitions in the world, a highly respected gathering of carefully vetted and selected judges who gather each year to taste an array of spirits in designated categories to select the most outstanding representations.

F. Paul Pacult, founder, organizer, chief judge and presiding grand guru of the Ultimate Spirits Challenge, had a brilliant idea: since the spirits were already gathered, and the judges were already

gathered, why not take the best of the best and have the best bartenders carefully make a series of classic cocktails with those selfsame spirits---and then select the best spirit for each cocktail?

And he made it so.

The result was the [Ultimate Cocktail Challenge](#). Results were announced this week.

The first category of classic cocktails was Gin Cocktails:

(Note: Nine gins in total were reported in this category, produced by six companies. This is not a representation of all gins, but only those gins entered in this particular competition.)

The Extra Dry Martini

The best spirit for a Martini, with a score of 95 points, a description of “Exceptional; Ultimate Recommendation”, and a Chairman’s Trophy Award, was [Beefeater London Dry Gin](#), from the United Kingdom. The only gin not from the United Kingdom, with 86 points, was [New Amsterdam Gin](#) from the United States.

Gin & Tonic

The best spirit for the classic G&T, with a score of 94 points, the Ultimate Recommendation and a Chairman's Trophy was also Beefeater...but the new [Beefeater 24 Gin](#), a variation on the classic formula with the addition of grapefruit and two different aromatic teas. Again, the only US gin mentioned was the New Amsterdam, with a score of 83 points.

Aviation

Next up was the Aviation, a lovely concoction of gin, [Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur](#), lemon juice, and crème de violette, and the gin selected was [Plymouth Gin](#), from the United Kingdom, with 96 points, a Chairman's Trophy and an Ultimate Recommendation.

Negroni

The final gin cocktail, the Negroni, is a combination of gin, Campari, and sweet vermouth, and the selected spirit was [No. 3 London Dry Gin](#) from the United Kingdom, with 94 points, the Chairman's Trophy, and a "Highly Recommended". *(Note: This gin is not currently available in Oregon; the second rated gin, which is available in Oregon, was Beefeater 24.)*

These are the picks of the experts, under controlled conditions and in pristine surroundings. But all gin drinkers have their favorites, for their own reasons (mostly their own taste buds). What are your favorite gins for cocktails? Examiner.com wants to know.

Online at: <http://www.examiner.com/spirits-in-portland/ultimate-cocktail-challenge-experts-pick-the-gins-for-classic-gin-cocktails>