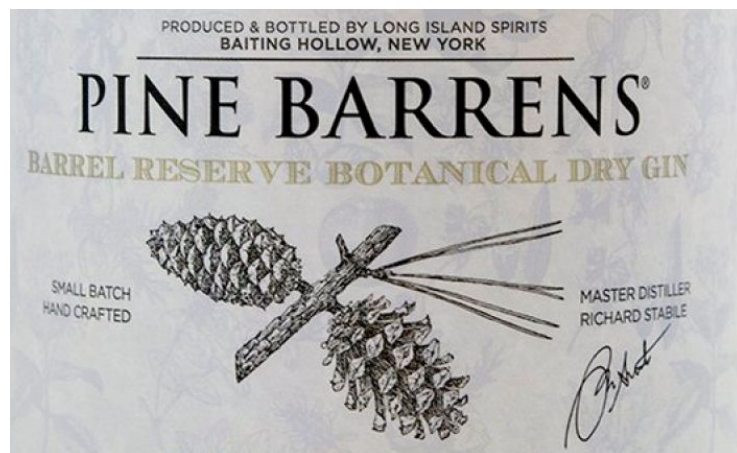


## LIFESTYLE / RESTAURANTS / FOOD AND DRINK

**Gin: A growing trend on Long Island's East End**

Pine Barrens Barrel Reserve Finished Gin is aged for four months in old whiskey barrels. Photo Credit: Long Island Spirits

**By Corin Hirsch**

corin.hirsch@newsday.com 

October 11, 2017 12:14 PM

A dubious reputation has long clung to gin. Mention the “g” word, and some people wince at the memory of a bad night or a long cry.

Fresh gin memories are constantly being manufactured, though, and gin’s changing fortunes are on the rise again, in tandem with a growing army of high-quality craft gins. Google “bathtub gin” and, instead of the blindness-inducing spirit of the 1920s, most results will point to a New York City bar. During a recent visit to London, it was almost impossible to turn a corner without running into a sign advertising a “gin menu” or, inside even the most unfussy of public houses, a cart stocked with a dozen or more gins.

Despite its legion of bad nicknames — “mother’s ruin” among them — gin is a clear spirit not much different from vodka; it’s the dozens of botanicals steeped into it, such as juniper and citrus peel, that lend gin its distinct character. Much of what we drink is in the London dry style — a floral, crisp gin with a juniper spine — but sweeter Old Tom gin and even sweeter genever (gin’s predecessor) dwell in the same category.

On Long Island, a small but growing crop of gins are trickling from East End stills: Wölffer Estate makes a “Pink” Gin, flavored with its own juniper berries and mint, among other things. At the soon-to-open Matchbook Distilling Co. in Greenport, founder Leslie Merinoff is building a “gin apothecary,” stocked with 400-plus botanical distillates that bar and restaurant owners can choose from to create customized, short-run gins.

aged in old whiskey barrels for four months to become Pine Barrens Barrel Reserve Botanical Dry Gin, a butterscotch-hued spirit that gains roundness and caramel notes from its time in a barrel, and can elevate a Negroni (equal parts gin, Campari and sweet vermouth) or gimlet (two parts gin, one part each simple syrup and lime juice) to another level.

---

## Subscribe to the Feed Me Newsletter for the latest restaurant news, recipes and recommendations.

Sign up

By clicking Sign up, you agree to our [privacy policy](#).

### By Corin Hirsch

corin.hirsch@newsday.com 

Corin Hirsch is a Long Island native who covers food, drinks and restaurants for Newsday, which she joined in March 2017.