



The Origin of GauGin

GauGin was born on an authentic ecological finca, a traditional country estate, near the white-washed Andalusian village Gaucin in Spain.

When the Romans conquered the entire region around the Mediterranean Sea, the Gaucin area also immersed itself in the Roman influence. On this finca, many herbs and fruits that were processed at that time such as wild thyme, rosemary, lavender, sage, lemons and oranges are still growing abundantly. These are the (g)redients still flourishing in present-day France, Italy, Macedonia and Croatia that constitute the Mediterranean DNA of GauGin.

Gin, however, goes much further back in time: after all, the earliest origins of distillation techniques can be traced back to Asia, no less than 9,000 years ago. Already in the Vedas, the oldest historical texts of mankind, written in Sanskrit, the word "khola" appears, which had a double meaning. On the one hand it signified a (mythological) spirit that could manifest itself in various guises, on the other it was used for any drug or substance that could enrapture the spirit, a double meaning that is still contained in the English word "spirit". Arab alchemists will introduce the loanword "al-kol" or "al-ghol" centuries later: our current word "alcohol". Via the "silk route" the distillation technique spread in antiquity all over Asia, India, Persia and Egypt. Centuries later, the citrus fruits & herbs we call "botanicals" today will follow a similar path along the "spice route".






In the third century BC, Alexander the Great learned about the techniques of distillation through the designs of the alchemist “Mary the Jewess” and on his conquests through Northern India eagerly spread them throughout the Greco-Egyptian Empire. One of his generals, Ptolemy I Soter, imported the technique into his post as ruler of Egypt and built the world-famous Library of Alexandria, a university avant la lettre that was of great importance for the further development and diffusion of distillation. One of the Alexandrian scholars, the Gnostic and alchemist Zosimos of Panopolis, built on the work of Mary the Jewess and drew the first true still based on her descriptions. The Hellenistic chemists of the time called the device “ambix”, which literally means pot or pitcher. The Arabic word “al-ambiq” that is derived from it will not come into vogue until after the 10th century, the same word “alembic” (pot still) we use today.

When the Dark Ages arrived in Europe, in the Near and Middle East the Arab alchemists (from the Greek *chemeia* - melting of metals - and the Arabic article “al”) Al-Jabir and Al-Kindi refined the techniques for what they called “al-iksir”, our present word “elixir” - or water of life. The Arab boom finally reached Europe when the Moors conquered the Iberian Peninsula in 711 AD. Spain and Portugal were henceforth known as “al-Andalus” for more than four centuries and at the first universities there, Spanish scholars such as Arnoldus de Vila Nova and Raymondus Lullus introduced the knowledge of distillation that later spread throughout Europe, aided by the invention of the printing press.



The logo for GauGin, featuring the brand name in a stylized, calligraphic font. The letters are black and have a unique, flowing design. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the upper right of the 'n'.A detailed black and white line drawing of a herb branch, likely juniper, with small leaves and berries, positioned in the top left corner of the page.

Archaeological research seems to suggest that the alembic from Mesopotamia and the Arabian part of Africa entered El Andalus via Gibraltar, among other through the smuggling routes that cut through the old finca in Gaucin. The Arabic-tinged calligraphic letters G-A-N and the Babylonian U-I that adorn the label of every bottle of GauGin explicitly refer to that period.

It's in Flanders - the birthplace of our GauGin founder and also the place where GauGin is distilled in a very traditional way - that the distillation technique will first fuse with the age-old medicinal use of juniper berries and will eventually culminate in the invention of jenever, the direct predecessor of gin. When the English introduced genever to Great Britain after the Spanish War, it mutated into "gin". In barely 50 years time, London will become massively addicted to gin and be saddled with a serious problem: the so-called "gin craze" will rage in the English capital for years, claiming many victims. In the decades that followed - partly through the invention of the column still - gin gained in quality and, thanks to the Royal Navy, embarked on a worldwide conquest.



In Spain, gin has been drunk since the 18th century via the island of Menorca, which was in English hands from 1712 to 1802. The love for gin of the English soldiers and sailors spread all over Spain and took on a distinct gastronomic approach in the early 2000s when top chefs like Ferran Adrià started putting gin prominently on their menu cards. Within Europe, Spain is today the country that consumes the most gin, completing the historical circle.

*"When it's loved by nature,
it will be enjoyed by you"*