



Iconic Spirits: An Intoxicating History

Mark, Spivak

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Over the past decade, the cocktail culture has exploded across America. Bars and lounges have become the Broadway theater of mixology, with bartenders resurrecting classic pre-Prohibition cocktails and dazzling customers with their creations. Consumers, in turn, are recreating these cocktails at home, and spending unprecedented amounts on upscale bar gear. With more and more emphasis on quality ingredients, the number of small-batch spirits is increasing all the time, and craft distilling has become popular as an offshoot of the locavore movement. In *Iconic Spirits*, Mark Spivak, wine and spirits guru and host of the NPR show *Uncorked!*, explores the history and cultural significance of twelve iconic spirits and reveals how moonshine invented NASCAR; how gin almost toppled the British Empire; how a drink that tastes like castor oil flavored with tree bark became one of the sexiest things on earth; how cognac became the "it" drink of hip-hop culture, and much more. To top it all off, Spivak then offers the most tantalizing cocktail recipes from the era in which each spirit was invented.

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