

Imbibe 75 People to Watch: James Park and Wan Di of Guilder's Gin

STORY: [Penelope Bass](#) | PHOTO: [Teddy Wolff](#) | December 29, 2023



James Park and Wan Di, who launched [Guilder's Gin](#) last July, come from vastly different backgrounds. Park is a hospitality vet with a slew of wine and spirit certifications and multiple restaurants under his belt, while Di is a former high energy nuclear physicist who worked at NASA in Maryland and a lab in Sweden before falling head over heels for tea and opening a tea shop in Manhattan's West Village.

It was a simple twist of fate that Park's restaurant, Windrose, was right around the corner. The pair met and discovered a mutual interest, and their newest project was born. "Wan was originally experimenting with tea and beer, and I was toying around with tea and spirits," explains Park. "After we found out about our shared passion, we started working on our experiments together."

Guilder's Gin has three expressions:

- **RED OOLONG GIN**

A complex and floral gin made from red oolong tea sourced from the eastern Tai-Dong region.

- **GREEN TEA GIN**

Made with green tea from a single-estate tea farm in Lugu, Taiwan, this light and citrusy gin makes for a refreshing gin & tonic.

- **CANTON DRY GIN**

Infused with tart and sweet goji berries, this gin created to be used in classic cocktails, like a Martini. Its name is a nod to China's Canton, the major southern port in China, which first traded tea with Europeans in the 1700s.

"It took us about a year to lock down our tea selection for Guilder's because we were looking for specific flavor qualities and consistency," says Park. The teas are all tournament-grade leaves sourced from Taiwan (Di has a particular affinity for Taiwanese oolong). And the gin is distilled by a partner in North Carolina.

As the brand grows, Park and Di are hoping to move production to New York. But for now, bottles can be purchased directly from their website. And bars like Double Chicken Please and Cafe Salmagundi are already experimenting with the gin in cocktails.

Click [here](#) to read more about some of 2024's other *Imbibe 75 People and Places to Watch*.