

Gin might be the tonic we need

NATHAN DAVIES

IN just a few short years, gin has gone from the spirit you found in your grandma's liquor cabinet to the hottest drink in the world.

And, according to South Australia's gin kings, the dream run is far from over. In fact, distillers Sacha La Forgia and Tim Boast believe SA is uniquely positioned to make some the best gin in the country.

As Mr La Forgia, the founder of 78 Degrees gin, and Mr Boast, co-founder and head distiller at Never Never Distilling Co, prepared for upcoming events in the upcoming Adelaide Food Fringe, they agreed SA was at the forefront of the gin revolution.

"SA is the best-placed state in the country to dominate the spirits industry," Mr La Forgia said.

"We have the best produce – super fresh and super good ingredients.

"But we also have this tremendous pool of knowledge and people who know how to work with flavour and how to do distillation coming out of our wine sector."

Mr Boast said that the increase in the popularity of gin had coincided with the rise in small bars and a corresponding change in the way people liked to eat and drink.

"There's been a rise in curiosity around spirits," he said.

"That's been led by consumers and can be seen in the proliferation of small cocktail bars globally."

Mr La Forgia agreed, and said people had generally moved on from the "most drinks for the least amount of money" mentality.

"There's been a massive shift in consumer preferences," he said.

"We've seen this shift with beer, wine and cider, and now we're seeing it with spirits. People have shifted focus from value to quality."

Mr Boast, whose products have scooped awards around the globe, including World's Best Classic Gin at the 2019 World Gin Awards, said the versatility of the drink was part of its big appeal.

"As long as there is juniper in it, then it is gin. But beyond that you can go on whatever excursion you like," he said.

"There is a huge breadth of flavours to explore."



Gin-themed events for next month's Adelaide Good Fringe include:

■ Lot 100 By The Sea @ Melt/Sea Salt/West

■ The Ultimate Mother's Day Gin Cocktails and High Tea at Hains and Co.

For a full rundown, go to adelaidefoodfringe.com.au

Sacha La Forgia and Tim Boast pour some of their product at Adelaide small bar Hains and Co. Picture: Matt Loxton