



Cotswolds Artisan Drinks Awards 2016

Over the past few years, the Cotswolds has become famous for its bounty of edible offerings and now holds many festivals and awards to celebrate the best that is on offer within this rural, south-central region. The Kingham Plough and Mixellany Limited have joined forces to create the first, annual 'Cotswold Artisan Drinks Awards' which has been designed to celebrate producers' hard work and acknowledge their achievements.

Encompassing picturesque counties such as Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and Somerset, this region not only offers some of the finest foraged and farmed foods, but is also home to many wonderful drinks. In total, Cotswold producers craft over 375 different alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. The Kingham Plough's aim is to ensure that the vast array of drinks being produced in the Cotswolds has as much recognition as its food. This is an exciting opportunity for craft or artisan producers based in the Cotswolds to enter and become involved in this inaugural drinks' awards.

The evening is sponsored by The Craft Drink Co and the panel of judges includes co-organisers of the evening, award-winning drinks historian of Mixellany Limited, Anistatia Miller and her husband, Sipsmith Limited Master Distiller, Jared Brown. The inseparable cocktail couple are the directors of Mixellany Limited®, a consultancy and publishing company, specialising in anything and everything to do with spirits and mixed drinks. During the course of their 20+ year collaboration, Miller and Brown have written more than 30 books focusing on drinks and the latest trends. Miller and Brown also received the 2010 Best Drinks Writing Award from CLASS Magazine and in April 2011, became the first spirits writers to receive the coveted International Wine & Spirits Competition's Communicator of the Year Award, joining a roster of authorities such as wine experts Anthony Dias Blue and Oz Clark.

The other two judges on the panel are Beefeater Distillery Master Distiller, Desmond Payne and Louis Lewis-Smith who owns The Dark Horse cocktail bar in Bath and has 18 years' experience pursuing various endeavours in the drinks industry, including Hendricks Gin. Each category will be judged for gold, silver, and bronze awards and all entries will also qualify for a 'People's Choice' award by a panel of 50 industry experts, chefs, journalists and VIPs.

Emily Watkins, owner and chef-proprietor at The Kingham Plough, is really looking forward to the event, "We are so excited to be launching this prestigious award. The local drinks produce has grown so much since we moved to the area 10 years ago in both quality and quantity. It used to be

that there was the odd fruit wine or sloe gin at a farmers market, but now you find these amazing products on the shelves all over the country. It is about time they are recognised in their own right and not squashed into one category at a food awards.”

On 9th May 2016, the top three award winners in each category will then be invited to showcase their produce at the first annual Cotswold Artisan Drinks Fair where the overall ‘Best of Show Award’ will be presented in front of the public.

The awards ceremony will take place on the evening of 9th February 2016 at The Kingham Plough, which is offering a six course meal on the evening, for only £95 per person. The drinks and canapé reception will be open to the public.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

The Kingham Plough was opened in 2007 by husband and wife team Emily Watkins and Miles Lampson and is located near Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire. Their aim was to create a dining pub in the Cotswolds that they themselves would like to visit, with excellent modern British food and comfortable rooms set within a warm and relaxed environment.

The award-winning food at **The Kingham Plough** is inspirationally modern British and delivers an exciting take on English classics. Everything is produced from scratch on site by their team of talented chefs, with an emphasis on celebrating local produce sourced in and around Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire. The abundant native ingredients are delivered daily and transformed into delicious dishes. The concise, regularly-changing menu is perfectly balanced offering game, meat, fish and vegetarian dishes.

The Oxfordshire pub with rooms has six individually decorated, comfortable en-suite bedrooms which have been fully refurbished earlier this year. Each room features feather duvets and pillows, Egyptian cotton linen, free WiFi, a large flat screen TV and DVD player, Neals Yard Toiletries, a mini bar filled with deliciously tempting treats and luxury towelling robes.

The Kingham Plough

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Cotswolds Drink Awards 2016

Are you producing an alcoholic or non-alcoholic drink in the Cotswolds that is commercially-available? Then join us in celebrating the Best of Cotswold beverages by entering your product in the inaugural Cotswold Artisan Drinks Awards. <http://www.cotswoldsdrinkawards.co.uk/>

The Judges

DESMOND PAYNE: It all started when Desmond Payne finished working a Christmas job in Harrod’s wine department. He wrote to all the wine companies, hoping to find a post. Wine merchants and

distillers Seager Evans hired him as a trainee in 1967, sending him to learn a bit of everything before sending him to its gin distillery at Deptford Bridge. Two years later, he was sent to Plymouth as assistant distiller then assistant manager and eventually (when Bert Roberts retired) general manager. By the 1990s Allied Domecq owned both Plymouth Gin and Beefeater. And when Beefeater distiller Brian Martin retired in 1995, Payne was sent to London to oversee the iconic brand. Recent highlights include the creation and introduction of Beefeater super premium gin, Beefeater 24, followed by the limited editions including Summer, Winter, Burroughs Reserve, and Crown Jewel.

JARED BROWN: Sipsmith Master Distiller Jared Brown made his first spirits at age ten after reading that early American colonists froze cider and lifted out the ice to concentrate the alcohol. As an adult (after a degree in hospitality from NYU, five years in operations at the Essex House Hotel and a few good bartending jobs) Jared's fascination with the spirits world has gone well beyond idle fancy. Developing a gin formula for the first micro distillery restaurant in the USA, in 1998, led to more diverse projects. He crafted, in 2002, the formulation of Heavy Water Vodka in Norway. That was immediately followed by consultancy work for a Vietnamese ruou (rice vodka) in 2005 and work on tasting panels for Beefeater 24 and No. 3 before crafting Sipsmith's award-winning formula. Brown lives Upper Slaughter with his wife/business partner Anistatia Miller and their cat Kitten.

ANISTATIA MILLER: Drinks historian and publisher Anistatia Miller is co-author along with her husband Jared Brown of a few dozen books on spirits and drinking. Co-recipients of the 2011 IWSC Communicators of the Year Award, she co-wrote the award-winning two-volume tome, *Spirituos Journey: A History of Drink*, tracing alcoholic beverages from 7000BC to the 20th century. She was a co-founder of the Museum of the American Cocktail in New Orleans and is former co-director of Exposition Universelle des Vins et Spiritueux in southern France. She serves as curator of the EUVS Digital Collection (www.euvslibrary.com), a free online library of vintage drinks and distillation books dating back to the 1750s. Miller also organises and hosts the biennial Havana Club Cocktail Grand Prix in Havana, Cuba. Together with Jared Brown, she has consulted on the the formulation of gins and vodkas as well as sat on tasting panels for rums, gins, and whiskies in Norway, the USA, Cuba, and the UK. Miller lives Upper Slaughter with her husband/business partner Jared Brown and their cat Kitten.

LOUIS XAVIER LEWIS-SMITH: Child actor, pyjama model, international banjo picker. Louis Lewis-Smith has spent the last 18 years pursuing various endeavours in the music and drinks industries. Working in some of London's high-end cocktail bars including Milk & Honey, he took the next major step as an international brand ambassador for William S Grant. After 10 years working on Hendrick's Gin and Sailor Jerry, Louis now finds himself the owner of a small recording studio on the banks of the river Avon, The Dark Horse cocktail bar in Bath, and a cat named Titan.