

# Q&A with award winning spirits business Sacred Gin

in this exclusive interview with Hilary Whitney, co-founder of specialist drinks retailer Sacred Gin, learn about retail trends, beautiful packaging and how she selected her fulfilment partner, **diamondlogistics.**

**What trends are you seeing as a specialist alcohol vendor? How do you expect the market to change in the next few years?**

Not surprisingly we have seen a huge increase in online sales. When consumers were unable to visit bars and restaurants, many of them started to make their own cocktails at home and quickly discovered that not only is it really good fun but it's a great way to create a sense of occasion, to draw a line at the end of the working week (or day!), for example. I think that this is a trend that will continue. Maybe not at the same momentum but it has definitely brought a great deal of pleasure to a lot of people.

“Interestingly, although online sales will continue to rise, I think that there is substantial evidence that smaller, independent retailers will flourish. During lockdown many of these businesses became community hubs for consumers who really appreciated the personal touch they provided.”



## Kate and Dan of **diamondlogistics**

**diamondlogistics** is experienced in supporting eCommerce shops with exceptional delivery solutions. Whether you design, manufacture, source or distribute your products, we have a delivery solution to suit. From designer vases, subscription boxes or stand-up paddle boards **diamond** has years of experience supporting unique brands store and deliver worldwide. Contact **diamond** today for your free fulfilment consultation.

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Category-wise, our vermouths, which have been given World's Best Awards, have really come into their own as they are so versatile. I think the biggest changes will come as a result of Brexit – it will become much more difficult to make UK products available in Europe and there will be shortages of European products in the UK. We are noticing that already.

### How has **diamond** supported your growth and the safe delivery of your products?

**diamond** has provided a great service, packing and sending out our online orders and going over and above to solve any problems or glitches in the system.

We have had some lovely feedback from customers, commenting on how quickly their delivery arrived and how beautifully it was packed.

### How are you dealing with Brexit? And the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic?

We are still trying to find workarounds to deal with Brexit - we are discovering new challenges all the time! We were very fortunate during Covid that we were already available online and on 13<sup>th</sup> June last year, we moved our distillery from our home to Highgate High Street where we also have a retail presence which, as an essential business, has been able to operate throughout lockdown.

We also moved our events schedule – gin tastings, cocktail masterclasses and so forth – online, which turned out to be much more effective than we would ever have thought!

### What should new retailers think about when choosing a fulfilment partner?

When choosing a new fulfilment partner it's important to consider your priorities. Obviously we needed someone who would be competitive pricewise and had a good handle on stock control.

“ As we needed a fulfilment centre to send out our products – high end spirits – to consumers, it was also crucial that the orders were packed to the very highest standard. This meant branded tissue paper, a complementary postcard and a gift note when required (presentation reflects hugely on our business). I am pleased to say that **diamond** have been able to deliver this. ”

It also helps that the staff are extremely personable and, on occasion, have gone over and above to meet our requirements.

### What other advice do you have for emerging food and beverage retailer?

You really need to be able to sell online. If you are not ready or think you don't have enough pull through to do this yourself, you can always find an online retailer that could sell your product alongside other, similar goods. I also think that customer service is paramount - prompt, polite efficient service and, if there is a problem, sort it out asap and make sure they're kept fully up to date of any action you might be taking to resolve the situation.

