

The Gin Guild celebrates over 600 members and welcomes Charles Maxwell as Grand Rectifier at its Autumn Installation

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LONDON, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, November 18, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Gin Guild](#) celebrated a significant milestone at its Autumn Installation and Annual Banquet, held on 17 October 2025 at London's Mansion House, as it welcomed 30 new members from around the world, bringing its total membership to 612.



The new intake represents the Guild's most international cohort yet, with members joining from Australia, Bermuda, France, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, the Netherlands, the USA, and the UK. Among them are a leading Japanese mixologist, the Apprentice to Master Distiller Lesley Gracie at Hendrick's Gin, a botanicals expert with six decades of experience, and senior executives from Diageo and Bacardi.

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Grand Rectifier*

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The evening saw Rob Dorsett, Master Distiller at Alcohols Ltd's Langley Distillery, presented with the Gin Guild Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of 35 years dedicated to gin distilling. It also marked a leadership transition at The Gin Guild as Desmond Payne MBE, the long-serving Master Distiller of Pernod Ricard's Beefeater Gin,

concluded his two-year term as Grand Rectifier, passing the baton to Charles Maxwell, tenth-generation distiller at Thames Distillers and a founding director of The Gin Guild.

Mr Payne, who will retire from Pernod Ricard later this year after a remarkable seven-decade career in the drinks business, was presented with a Gold Gin Guild Sprig in recognition of his service to both the Guild and the wider gin community.

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Mr Maxwell, who received the Guild’s first Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014 and whose family history in gin stretches back to 1681, said: “It’s a great honour to follow in the footsteps of Desmond Payne and the Grand Rectifiers before him. The Guild plays a vital role in bringing the global gin community together, and I’m proud to continue that work, supporting innovation, promoting quality, and ensuring we are here for all those involved in the gin trade, large or small.”

Reflecting on the Guild’s growth, he added: “As a founding director, it’s remarkable to see how far we’ve come. When we began in 2012, we thought we’d do well to reach 250 members, so to breach 600 this year shows that the Guild has relevance to a worldwide audience.”

Mr Payne said: “Over the past two years, I’ve had the pleasure of welcoming many new members to the Guild. It’s been huge fun, and a wonderful way to finish my career – a real privilege. I wish Charles the best of luck; he has more knowledge of the gin industry than most people put together.”

Offering a parting reflection on the industry, he said: “One of the great things about gin is its ability to adapt. I’d describe it like a chameleon. Whether it’s enjoyed as a classic gin and tonic or a sophisticated cocktail, it changes its character to suit its surroundings – and that’s why gin is



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Pal Gleed, Director General of The Gin Guild, concluded: “The Autumn Installation is always a highlight in the Guild calendar, and this year was particularly special as we thanked Desmond Payne for his outstanding contribution as Grand Rectifier, and to the gin category altogether as he moves into a well-earned retirement. We celebrated Rob Dorsett’s exceptional career with the Lifetime Achievement Award. And it was an honour to welcome Charles Maxwell as the new Grand Rectifier – I very much look forward to working with Charles as we continue to support our members.”

Membership of The Gin Guild brings together individuals and organisations involved in gin distillation, production, promotion, and service. Members benefit from professional networking, shared expertise, and opportunities to shape the future of the gin industry through collective initiatives, from the introduction of its flavour guidance framework, Gin-Note™, to the launch of the [Sustainability](#) Toolkit earlier this year as part of its #TenGreenBottles campaign, helping the sector embed sustainability into every stage of production.

About The Gin Guild:

- The Gin Guild is a not-for-profit international membership body supported by The Worshipful Company of Distillers. It promotes excellence in gin distillation, production, and promotion, supporting members across the global industry. For more information, visit www.theginguild.com

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