

Sugarbird Gin - infused with the spirit of entrepreneurship

The craft gin trend is on the rise with a staggering R700m contributed to the collective R19bn spirits industry in SA in 2015. It has been predicted that gin alone will contribute R1bn to the economy during the 2017 financial year. The number of local distilleries has grown from 19 in 2014 to 30 in 2016 in efforts of keeping up with the increasing thirst for juniper juice.



New kid on the craft gin block, Sugarbird Gin, was born out of an entrepreneurial wish to bring affordable and delicious gin to all. The product is infused with locally-sourced floral fynbos, and through partnering with larger distilleries ensures it remains accessibly priced.

Inspiring and supporting entrepreneurship

The Sugarbird Gin team is also using the business as a means to sponsor aspiring entrepreneurs. They've joined forces with the Koi Group to enhance entrepreneurs skills to assist them to develop and launch their own innovative projects. It is the goal of Koi is to help people create a better world, especially by growing young entrepreneurs, solving social issues and building inclusive economies across Africa.

"I've always been inspired by entrepreneurship as a vehicle for creative expression and positive change. The idea of Sugarbird inspiring creativity and entrepreneurship in others fuelled me to help bring this product into the public eye," says Sugarbird founder, Rob Heyns.

For every 1,000 bottles bought, proceeds will go towards granting bursaries to intrepid entrepreneurs (mostly female and previously disadvantaged) who have an idea that they would like to see bear fruit.

Koi supports entrepreneurs through a range of resources including the KoiPath framework. Many organisations including Microsoft, mLab, the Bandwidth Barn, the Innovation Hub and Launchlab provide fully sponsored Koi workshops for startups.

Providing leverage for female entrepreneurs

Sugarbird Gin is a vehicle for female entrepreneurs and offers bursaries to further their skills and launch their innovations. While internationally, the number of women in entrepreneurship has doubled in growth compared to their male counterparts, South African female entrepreneurs only form 31% of the entrepreneurial landscape, according to a report by SME South Africa.

Sugarbird is hoping to provide leverage for female entrepreneurs through the sales of their female-focused, fynbos-infused craft gin. Sugarbird plans to put female entrepreneurs through a two-day 'Idea Workshop' hosted by Neil Hinrichsen of Koi Strategy, which is a fast-paced 'boot camp style' workshop that will teach invaluable tips and lessons on how to take an idea from a thought to a reality.

Crowdfunding campaign

Sugarbird has a [Thundafund campaign](#) running to aid in its expansion. Through the crowdfunding process, Sugarbird hopes to create its gin at scale and make it even more accessible locally, before expanding internationally. "You have to be a good gin before you can be a gin that does some good," says the company.

By supporting the campaign, you stand a chance to win prizes such as a private multi-course gin-infused dinner for two with a chef and mixologist or a three-day long weekend gin tour of the Western Cape including flights (local), accommodation, all meals and multiple bottles of our delicious gin. There is also a lucky draw prize for all supporters where the lucky winner can win Sugarbird gin for an entire year (24 bottles).

Click through to the [Thundafund page](#) to find out more about Sugarbird and the amazing prizes you can win for investing in this proudly South African gin.

Check out some of the pics from the [launch event here](#).

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