



# Taste the past with Rebellious Spirits

**Alchemist Dreams founder Ruth Ball is delighted to announce the upcoming publication of her first book, Rebellious Spirits: The Illicit History of Booze in Britain**

Ruth's first book will be published by Elliott and Thompson in October 2015. The book presents a thrilling history of people and events on the wrong side of the law, from the origin of spirits in ancient Greece right through to the present day via Scottish bothies, Cornish coastlines and London gin palaces. The stories are accompanied by dozens of authentic historical recipes which give the reader a real taste of history as well as some cocktail recipes from top bartenders as we ask how they were influenced by that history.

The combination of history and authentic recipes is a unique concept which will offer the reader a deeper engagement with the stories. The concept is inspired by past work by Alchemist Dreams, including the Intoxicating Tales event which combined storytelling with complimentary cocktails. It is also the result of some research into historical recipes which just kept turning up tales which demanded to be told.

From the gin dispensed from a cat's paw at the Puss and Mew shop which could have been the world's first vending machine, to whole funeral corteges staged just to move a coffin filled with whisky, the stories show off all the wonderful wit and ingenuity required to stay one drink ahead of the law. The accompanying recipes are just as intriguing: How did we drink gin before tonic? Was punch really made with curdled milk? Or breakfast served with brandy porridge, and gin mixed into hot ale? What did the past really taste like?

**Ruth Ball** is the founder and the sole full-time employee of Alchemist Dreams. A chemistry graduate with a life-long passion for food and flavour, Ruth founded Alchemist Dreams when she realised that Heston Blumenthal didn't have a graduate programme for scientists.

**Alchemist Dreams** produces custom blended handmade liqueurs as well as running pop-up bars and events both for clients and for the public. In the past they have created a liqueur which tastes like a Canadian forest in winter, a cocktail the flavour of musty books and tabletop forest of alcoholic trees and animals.

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An Elliott and Thompson press release is also available.