442 years of craftsmanship & cocktail history

Bols is the world's oldest distilled spirit brand, based in Amsterdam since 1575.

In 1575, the Bols family started distilling liqueurs in Amsterdam. The first flavours were cumin, cardamom and orange. The company is named after the influential grandson Lucas Bols, born in 1652, who was responsible for expanding the distillery into an international company during Amsterdam's Golden Age in the 17th century. In 1700, Lucas Bols became a major shareholder in the East India Trading Company (VOC), giving him first choice of newly arrived herbs and spices from which, together with his knowledge of distilling, macerating and percolating, he created 300 different liqueur recipes. He also initiated the worldwide distribution of the Bols liqueurs through the VOC. Today, inspired by Lucas Bols, the Bols liqueur range consists of more than 45 flavours and is sold in over 110 countries across the globe.

In 1664, the Bols family expanded their distilling expertise and started producing the famous Dutch spirit genever, at that time a very common drink, made from long-fermented rye, corn and wheat, triple distilled in copper pot stills and blended with juniper and other botanical distillates. This mix gives Bols Genever its characteristic, smooth, malty taste. Genever is Holland's dominant spirit category, outselling vodka, gin and whiskey, and is consumed straight from a traditional tulip glass or is used as a base for great tasting cocktails.
In 1820 Bols created a revolutionary new genever recipe with a more accessible taste. This Bols Genever was first shipped to America in 1823 and played an important role in the emergence of the cocktail culture in the USA. In 1862, Jerry Thomas wrote the world's first cocktail recipe book, in which one in four cocktails are based on Dutch genever, for example the Original Holland Gin cocktail, which is still popular today. Since 2008 we have made Bols Genever from 1820 available again in all major cocktail cities around the world and Bols Genever is the number one Genever brand in the world.

Throughout the years, product innovation has been key to the success of Lucas Bols. The Lucas Bols company has a strong culture of, and skills in, product innovations. The Lucas Bols master Distiller uses the company's rich heritage and history as an inspiration for the future, and has created many successful innovations ranging from new liqueur flavours such as Bols Honey and Watermelon and new to the world innovations such as Bols Natural Yoghurt liqueur. New products also extend in to other categories such as Bols Vodka, Bols Brandy and Damrak Gin.

In 2007, the Bols Bartending Academy, Europe's largest bartending school, opened in Amsterdam, providing inspiration and education to both bartenders and consumers. 3,000 professionals a year are trained here.
In the same year, the House of Bols Cocktail & Genever Experience opened in the heart of Amsterdam, welcoming over 50,000 visitors a year from all over the world. The House of Bols offers visitors a spectacular interactive tour into the world of cocktails, the Dutch spirit genever and the world's oldest distilled spirits brand, Bols.