

The Spice Legacy of Banda Islands

Indonesia has long been known as 'The Spice Islands'. Of all the spices found in Indonesia, one stands out in particular as being uniquely Indonesian and was arguably one of the most important plants economically... The humble nutmeg tree, from which both Mace & Nutmeg spices are derived.

At one time there was only one island in the whole world that grew nutmeg trees, Banda Island in the Maluku islands. Its flavor and rarity made this 'fine spice' a valuable commodity worth more than gold.



Despite being only 7 miles long and 2 miles wide, Banda found itself between two major world powers, the Dutch and the British, who both wanted to control the product and distribution of the valuable spices.

Eventually a deal was struck between the two powers. The Dutch traded Manhattan Island (modern day New York) in exchange for control of Banda island. Little did the Dutch realize, the British at this time had already successfully started to grow nutmeg in the West Indies.

Nutmeg and mace are still grown in Banda Island today and are still favored for their distinctive taste and aroma, however, fortunately there is no more fighting over Banda. In fact one of the only clues to Banda's violent past is Fort Belgica, a 17th century fort which was built to defend their interests.



East Indies Banda Fine Spiced Negroni Gin pays homage to this history. The mace and nutmeg add a spicy character to this gin which pairs perfectly with Campari and Vermouth in a Negroni cocktail.