

Start your mixer journey with Barker & Quin

 By Evan-Lee Courie

14 Sep 2020

Inspiration can be found in unexpected places. For oenologist (someone who studies the science of wine and winemaking) Hanneli van der Merwe, it came on a business trip to Europe in November 2015 where corporate entertaining led to a personal discovery of the tasty world of craft gin and designer tonics.



Hanneli van der Merwe

Since becoming the first woman to obtain a PhD in Oenology from the University of Stellenbosch, Hanneli had been thirsting for a new adventure. This led to the creation of Barker & Quin.

She shares more about Barker & Quin, the tonic water that complements the emerging gin industry in South Africa.

■ *When and how was the brand born?*

Barker & Quin was born in August 2016. I had this idea to create a natural tonic water for the South African market after enjoying many gin and tonics in Portugal at the end of 2016.

The start was to create a tonic water from scratch in the kitchen. This inspired her colleague Chris Wium so much that he decided to join her and together they started the company Two Green Lemons PTY Ltd, who today owns the brand, Barker and Quin.



Two Green Lemons leads the charge on sophisticated, alcohol-free sippers

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■ *How did you come up with the name?*

The name has three layers to it. Firstly the name is a word play on Bark and Quinine. Quinine is the main ingredient of tonic water and is extracted from the bark of a tree. A story was then built around this name. The story is set around the

true story of the sailor John Ross who shipwrecked in Natal on the Eastern Coast of South Africa in the late 1700's.

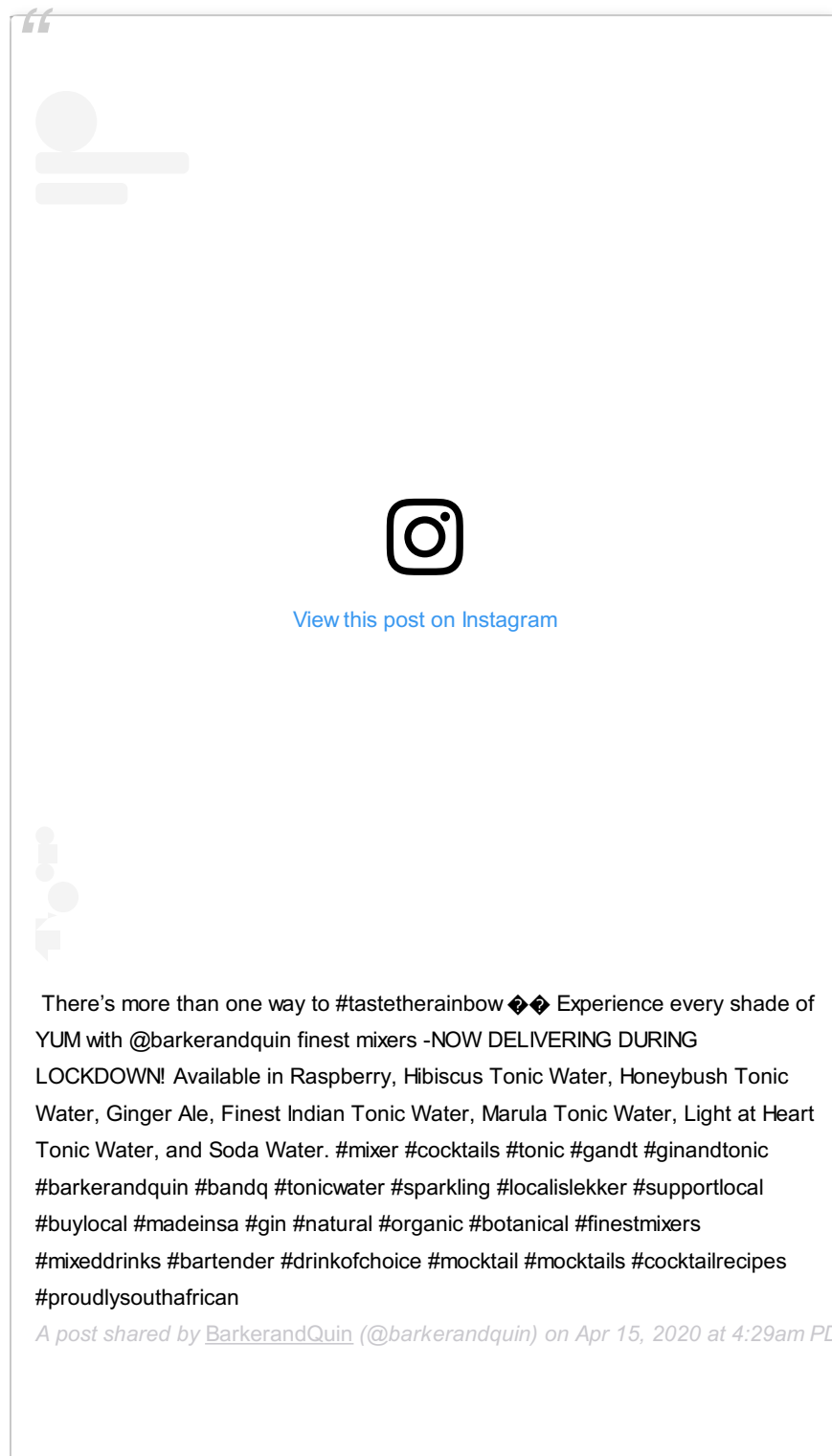
We embellished a little bit of this story and added that Barker, a fox terrier and Quin, a parrot was his eyes and ears in the jungle. In the true version of the story, John Ross rebuilt his ship with the help of the Zulus that were native in this part of South Africa (also depicted on the label) and sailed back to Scotland.

📌 **What's your vision for the brand?**

Our vision is to become South Africa's leading premium tonic water brand or premium mixers brand.

📌 **Tell us about your product offering.**

We offer five different tonic water flavours. The Indian and Light at Heart tonic water is the ones to pick when you want to drink a serious classic Gin and Tonic which brings out the flavour of the Gin.



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Our other three other flavours are Hibiscus, Honeybush and Marula, which can be used in any gin with which it pairs well, bearing in mind that these ones definitely bring some serious flavour to the table.

We also offer four other mixers these days, Club Soda, Gingerale, Raspberry and Cape Lemon. Each of these can be mixed with spirits like Rum, Brandy, Whiskey, Gin and Vodka.

■ ***Are the products locally manufactured/produced in South Africa? What has your experience been like?***

We produce locally and we are very happy with all our fantastic suppliers and industry partners.

■ ***Do you have any new products lined up?***

We are forever tinkering, but on the Barker and Quin products we are very happy with the portfolio. We do create products for other 3rd parties and this never ends.

■ ***How long have your products been in the market?***

We have been selling our products for four years and we are forever grateful for the South African market that supports us with such fervor.



■ ***What are some of the challenges of getting your products out there?***

Logistics always leave room for improvement but overall there are no constraints on trading in our lovely country.

▣ ***How can consumers get their hands on your products?***

Barker and Quin can be purchased through all the major retailers and off-consumption stores as well as online through our [website](#) and Takealot.

ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

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