

peppermint liqueur Menthe-Pastille that would become its flagship product.

Five generations later and Emile's descendants are still at the company's helm and Menthe-Pastille is still its leading line. (Even early 20th-century posters advertising the liqueur have become famous — they feature work by artists such as the 'father of advertising' Leonetto Cappiello and Eugène Iogé.)

Today, Giffard produces 60 liqueurs at its distillery in Avrillé in France's Loire Valley, as well as 90 syrups at its state-of-the-art factory in nearby Saint-Léger-des-Bois. All just a hop, skip and jump away from the centre of Angers where Emile converted his pharmacy into Giffard's first distillery.

Family ownership is a cornerstone of Giffard's success. The company is owned and operated by Emile's great-grandchildren, brother and sister co-CEOs Bruno and Edith Giffard, who took over the company from their father. They will, in turn, pass the baton to Edith's son, Pierre Jouanneau-Giffard (chief operating officer), and Bruno's daughter, Emilie Giffard (sales and brand development manager UK and North Europe). Together, they strive to balance the company's artisanal mindset with sustainable practices and the demands of modern large-scale production.

Giffard creates most of its liqueurs by macerating fruit, herbs or spices in distilled alcohol. It is a "carefully observed process requiring a lot of tasting", explains Bruno.



Family affair: Edith Giffard, Pierre Jouanneau-Giffard, Emilie Giffard and Bruno Giffard, Giffard Classic Crème Banane Liqueur (left) and the Premium Liqueur de Banane du Brésil

Abricot de Roussillon, which sit above the Crème Banane and Giffard Apricot in the Classic range".

With most of its sales in the on-trade, Giffard has also been able to plug into the no/low trend and rising demand for good-tasting, alcohol-free cocktails. Giffard international marketing director Romain Burgevin says: "We

distribute to more than 60 countries, with the biggest focus on catering to bartender requirements. Although liqueurs are in the Giffard DNA, we began [increasing] syrups production in 1992. They boomed around 2002, with the first overseas sales for syrups in the German on-premise, and sales are increasing each year."

'Being close to our market is key'

Giffard's syrups range was created for professional bartenders and this has really paid off. "It's a big advantage to be able

as close as possible to our market and users." Working with the best ingredients has been part of Giffard's ethos since Emile selected the perfect English peppermint — Mitcham — for Menthe-Pastille. But keeping things sustainable and local is important too, so 10 years ago Giffard partnered with a local farmer to grow the peppermint for its flagship product close to the Avrillé distillery.

In fact, Giffard sources as many ingredients as possible within a short radius. The blackcurrants for its Crème de Cassis are harvested within 50km of the distillery — according to Bruno, it is the "best region in the world for cassis" — while its syrups are made using sugar refined from sugar beet grown in northern France. "Ensuring sugar beet is sourced locally, reduces food miles and the carbon footprint, while supporting the local economy," says Bruno.

Other sustainability initiatives include reducing Giffard's bottles size to save 100g of glass per bottle, and dramatic reductions