

FOREVER NIGELLA

Or a short love letter to our own dear N, who can now be admired in this week's pull-out section, on Channel 4 (Thursdays) and in her new book *Forever Summer* (Chatto & Windus), for writing in that volume in its first paragraph: 'I shop and cook much as I eat, with greedy opportunism.' OK, gal, this year's culinary candour award is yours... The cerulean blue picture below, by Petrina Tinslay, is Nigella's watermelon, feta and black olive salad.

• **STEEP** a small red onion cut into half-moons in the juice of at least two limes; chunk watermelon and feta into triangles, tear in sprigs of parsley, add chopped mint, then pour the onions and their puce juice over, add oil, olives and black pepper and disarrange a little, sexily, naturally...



A WELCOME SHOT OF THE BLUES

Sequel to the seriously...pink vodka: the unseriously blue gin, imagin, no capital letters please, also from Facile & Co, the Swedish spirits firm. (Swedish... gin? We'll adjust to the concept, but it may take a while.) Not merely the usual juniper flavouring, but a dozen other herbs and spices, so we can start designing non-neon cocktails – what would happen with Angostura Bitters? Mauve gin rather than pink? And blue gin with lime slices – would that be a parakeet?

MUST-HAVES FROM THE GODDESS'S CUPBOARD

Ras-el Hanout spice blend, for Nigella's Moroccan roast lamb, tamarind paste for her fish curry (and, for next week's chicken, zahtar spices). From Sainsbury's Special Selection; or tel: 0800 068 2348 (www.seasonedpioneers.co.uk).

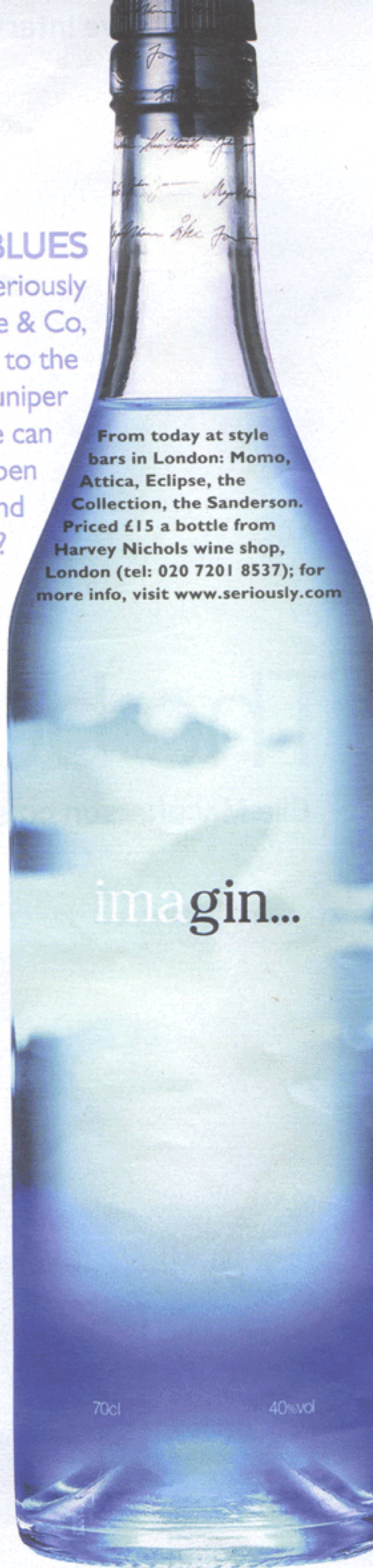


THE EGG-LAYER'S TALE

We fans of rare-breed and uncommon chickens – feathered artworks with diva temperaments – are always willing to welcome wider distribution of the organic egg. In this case, it's the bantam-laid Chaucer Gold, small but yolkily formed, from Stonegate's family-run farm in Kent. As laid in mobile field arks (chicken houses, that is) moved about farm pastures; and sold through selected branches of Waitrose. And to crack from them: eggs fried with shallots and white wine vinegar, borrowed by Rick Stein from Elizabeth David for his new series and book *Food Heroes* (BBC Worldwide, £20), by which he means the best food producers and importers in the UK. He lists among his heroes 15 suppliers of smashing eggs – maybe at their most interesting where a very local product, such as Yorkshire Farmhouse Freedom Eggs, is available through nearby branches of Sainsbury's, Tesco and Morrison. Raise local, eat local – but no need to drive to the farm gate.



Bonterra Zinfandel 1997, Mendocino County (Sainsbury's, £8.99) is a robust outdoorsy red, aromatic and powerful enough to stand up to marinades and charcoal – and it's organic.



From today at style bars in London: Momo, Attica, Eclipse, the Collection, the Sanderson. Priced £15 a bottle from Harvey Nichols wine shop, London (tel: 020 7201 8537); for more info, visit www.seriously.com

imagin...

70cl 40%vol