



# Hideous Absinthe: A History of the Devil in a Bottle

*Jad Adams*

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## Hideous Absinthe: A History of the Devil in a Bottle Jad Adams

*Hideous Absinthe* boldly combines the art, literature, science, and social history of the nineteenth century to produce the story of a drink that came to symbolize both the high points of art and the depths of degeneration.

Jad Adams looks at the myths of absinthe and examines its influence on the artistic movements of the nineteenth century. He considers the work of Degas, Manet, and Picasso, who painted what are now considered masterpieces depicting absinthe drinkers. He examines the mystery of van Gogh's absinthe addiction and asks whether absinthe truly did contribute to the poetic vision of Verlaine, Rimbaud, and other writers.

Adams looks back at absinthe's contribution to the hedonistic culture of the French Second Empire and to Toulouse-Lautrec's Paris of the 1890s and details the outraged English reaction to absinthe in the context of resistance to French art. Absinthe was seen as a foreign poison undermining the national resolve just as the decadence of Oscar Wilde and his circle was seen to undermine national culture.

The story continues through thrill-seeking American and English absinthe drinkers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Copublished with I.B. Tauris.

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