



**CRAFT
BEER**.COM

**THE BREWERS ASSOCIATION GUIDE
TO AMERICAN CRAFT BEER**

With enticing aromas of malt and hops, and an unlimited range of color, texture and personality, craft beer offers a wealth of sensations matched by no other drink. Craft beer inspires such passion that in just a few short decades, brewers and enthusiasts have transformed American beer from a sea of mass-market beers to a vibrant scene bursting with creativity and bold, exciting flavors. Today, the United States has the liveliest beer culture on earth, with more breweries, beers and enthusiasm than anywhere else. Welcome to the very tasty world of American craft beer.

This guide is a short course in how to understand and appreciate great beer. We'll introduce you to some of the many ingredients in craft beer, and how, with the brewer's help, they contribute to the fabulous variety of aromas, flavors and textures found in beer. We'll also look at some of the specialized terminology used to describe beer, and discuss the best approaches for presenting and enjoying it. We'll wind up with a whirlwind tour of some of the many styles of craft beers and the classics that inspired them.

A bit of knowledge—presented here in this booklet—will help you get the most from every glass of craft beer. If you sell, serve or just love it, you need to help spread the word. The future of craft beer depends on educated and enthusiastic advocates. So get reading. School was never this much fun!



WHAT IS A CRAFT BEER?

The Brewers Association defines American craft brewers as small, independent and traditional. Small means brewing less than 6 million barrels per year, the federal limit for the small brewers excise tax exemption. Independent means that less than 25% of the brewery is owned by a non-craft brewer. Traditional refers to a focus on beers that are made entirely or mostly from malt, and not diluted with adjuncts like corn or rice.

But beyond that, craft brewers consider themselves artists; each beer is an opportunity to create a unique and pleasurable experience. American craft brewers look to the great brewing traditions of the world as inspiration. Some strive for authenticity; others have a much more free-spirited approach. Together, they are reinventing beer in a way that has never been seen before.

THE AMAZING SENSATIONS OF GREAT BEER

AN ILLUSTRATED GLOSSARY

Craft beer is a delightfully varied and complex beverage. Here are some things to consider the next time you have a favorite beer in your hand.

AROMA

Just what it says—the many different scents coming out of the liquid.

TASTE

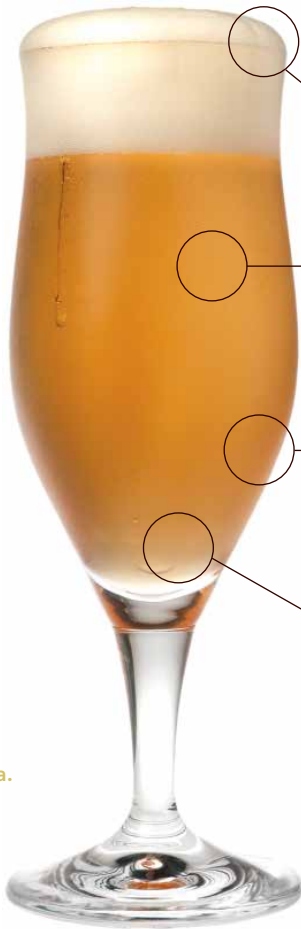
These are the flavors on your tongue: sweet, sour, bitter, salty, umami.

FLAVOR

A term encompassing both taste and aroma.

MOUTHFEEL

Various textures: fullness, creaminess, astringency.



HEAD

Tiny bubbles filled with carbon dioxide, held together by malt proteins.

CLARITY

Some beers are best presented clear, but other types are purposefully hazy or cloudy.

COLOR

From pale straw to inky black, beer color comes from various shades of kilned or roasted malt.

CARBONATION

Fizziness from carbon dioxide gas given off by yeast during fermentation.

BALANCE

Interplay between malt sweetness, hop bitterness, roastiness and other flavors.

BEER BY THE NUMBERS

Various characteristics of beer can be summarized numerically. As these are sometimes used on labels and other sources of information, it is helpful to understand the more common ones.

ALCOHOL Measured in percent by volume, alcohol content varies from 2 percent to more than 25 percent, with the majority of craft beer in the 4 percent to 6 percent range.

GRAVITY The amount of dissolved malt sugars and other solids in the liquid before it is fermented into beer. Two systems: Degrees (°)Plato, which indicates a percentage (most beers are between 10 and 16 °P); and Original Gravity (OG), which is the English system that is a ratio compared to pure water (most beers are between 1.040 and 1.065 OG). Final Gravity (FG) is the measurement, after fermentation, indicating residual sugar still present in the finished product.

BITTERNESS Expressed in International Bittering Units. Beer ranges from 6 to over 100 IBU, with most beers in the 15–50 range. Most of the time, hops provide the bitterness.

COLOR In the US; measurements are expressed on a scale called SRM (Standard Reference Method). For most enthusiast purposes, verbal descriptions are sufficient.



BREWING AND BEER FLAVOR VOCABULARY

More than any other beverage, the character of beer is determined by the many choices in recipe, ingredients and process made by the brewer. This is one of the reasons for the huge range of colors, flavors, aromas and other qualities that can be found in beer.

Let's start with ingredients. Even something as basic as water has an effect, although these days, any good water source can be adapted to brew excellent beer. Barley, a cereal grain, is beer's main ingredient, but only after it has been sprouted and kilned dry, a process that turns it into malt. There are dozens of different types of malt, from super-pale to espresso-black. Malt is responsible for all those great flavors we love in beer: bready, malty, nutty, caramel, toffee, toasty, roasty, chocolate, coffee and more. Other grains like wheat or oats, which may be malted or not, are sometimes used in special types of beer. Mainstream lagers get their light body from corn or rice, which contribute little flavor of their own.

Hops are the papery, cone-like flowers of a climbing vine. For more than one thousand years, hops have provided their bitter counterpoint to the sweetness of malt. Hops have beautiful aromas as well: floral, herbal, spicy, grassy, citrus, pine and more.

Specialty beers may incorporate other ingredients. Fruit, spices, exotic sugar, chile peppers, honey, pumpkin, smoked malt and more have all made their way into beer.

Yeast is not an ingredient in beer, but these single-cell organisms do the hard work of turning sugars into alcohol and carbon dioxide gas, the source of beer's fizz. Yeast also yields a range of appetizing aromas like fruity and spicy notes. Hundreds of different yeast strains are used in breweries; some are specific to particular beer styles.

In addition to ingredients, other decisions a brewer makes affect the beer in important ways. Small differences in time, temperature and technique can make profound differences in a beer's personality. Just a few degrees difference in fermentation temperature, for example, can have a huge impact on the aroma of a beer.

THE STAGES OF BREWING



MALTING

Turns raw barley (or wheat) into malt by sprouting and then drying. Malt is available in dozens of different shades and flavors, which differ depending on the degree to which the malt is kilned or roasted.



MASHING

A cooking process that uses enzymes in malt to convert starches into fermentable sugars. The sugar-rich liquid, called "wort," is run off into the brew kettle.



BOILING

This sterilizes the sugary wort, and allows bitterness from the hops to be incorporated. After about an hour it is chilled quickly and moved to the fermenter.



APPRECIATING BEER

Getting the most out of every beer means involving all your senses and concentrating on the aromas, flavors and other sensations each beer offers. It can be a life-long quest, but a small effort will quickly pay big rewards.

To start, we need a beautifully presented beer, in a very clean glass, at the proper temperature, poured with a nice creamy head of foam, and with some headspace to allow the aromas to collect. A stemmed glass with an incurved rim (like a wine glass) is best for critical tasting.

Before anything else, check the aroma. Several short sniffs work better than one long one. Try to describe specific aromas; make some notes if you wish. Sometimes the memories triggered by particular scents can be enough to help us identify them. Look especially for malt and hops. Are there bready, nutty or caramel notes? Or does the malt tend toward cocoa or espresso? Are there floral, herbal or spicy notes from the hops, yeast or other source? Can you detect fruitiness or spicy notes from the yeast?

Now, check the appearance. Note the color and clarity. Is the head tight and creamy? Long lasting or vanishing quickly?

Then, take a sip. Note the sweetness and level of carbonation. Pay attention as the bitterness builds. How is the mouthfeel: full, dry, heavy, oily? Think about the balance. What are the main flavors that counter each other and keep the beer centered? As the flavors fade, focus on the aftertaste. Is it clean, smooth, dry, bitter? Think of a taste as a little movie that's constantly changing, rather than a single snapshot.



FERMENTATION

Yeast is added and begins vigorously consuming sugar and making alcohol and carbon dioxide gas. This stage can take anywhere from a few days to several weeks.



CONDITIONING

The fermented beer undergoes aging to reduce unwanted byproducts of fermentation and acquire a smooth, mature flavor. Beyond this, most beer is not meant to age.



PACKAGING

The finished beer is packaged in bottles, cans, kegs or casks. Carbonation may be natural or forced.

PRESENTING BEER

Beer relies on us to present it at its very best. This requires attention to a few important points such as glassware, temperature, pouring method and more. Getting it right really does make a difference and is well worth the effort.

Temperature matters. Although this can sometimes be difficult to achieve, each style of beer tastes best at a certain temperature. In general, pale lagers should be served coldest, at 38° to 40°F (3 to 5°C). Dark lagers can be a little warmer at 45° to 50°F (7 to 10°C). English-inspired ales can be at cellar temperatures of 50° to 55°F (10 to 13°C). More specific serving temperatures are given with style descriptions later in this book.

Through the ages, an endless variety of different drinking vessels has been used for beer, ranging from delicate tapered flutes to huge crockery mugs. Most classic styles have specific historical vessels associated with them. These can be a lot of fun to drink from, but don't always present beer at its best.

Pale lagers do work well in the tall, tapered "Pilsener" glass. The outward taper helps support the head as well. The common tapered "shaker pint" glass does little to enhance beer's flavor or aroma. A glass with an inwardly curved rim (like a wine glass) enhances aroma. A "tulip" glass enhances aroma and supports the head. Strong beers should be served in smaller glasses according to their alcoholic strength. Brandy snifters make great glasses for these intense sipping beers.

Whatever the glass, it should be absolutely clean. A patch of bubbles clinging to the side of a glass is a telltale sign the glass is not "beer clean," as bubbles won't stick to clean glass. Improperly rinsed soap or sanitizer can kill the head and cause off-aromas.

Draught systems require meticulous maintenance. Spoilage bacteria can contaminate beer lines and cause sour, buttery aromas or haze in beer. A rigorous program of cleaning is absolutely necessary to serve beer in great condition. See [DraughtQuality.org](#).

GLASSWARE



GLASS	ML	Oz
A "Nonick" Imperial Pint	600	20
B American "Shaker" Pint	470	16
C Stemmed Abbey Goblet	330	11
D Large Tulip Glass	500	17
E Small Tulip or Snifter	330	11
F Irish Imperial Pint	600	20
G French "Jelly" Glass	360	12
H Weissbier "Vase"	500	17
I Classic Pilsner Flute	360	12
J Handled Glass Stein	500	17
K Stemmed "Pokal"	330	11

BEER STYLES

As should be clear by now, beer comes in an amazing range of colors, strengths and flavors. Understanding the big picture of styles goes a long way to making sense out of the amazing array of choices available today on the American craft beer scene.

A style is a collection of sensory, historical, technological and other characteristics that describe a particular type of beer. Most classic styles originated in Europe, although America has a few of its own. American craft brewers vary in their attitude toward styles. Some embrace authentic versions of the classics, while others use styles as inspiration but reinterpret them based on available methods, materials or the statement they want to make. Some brewers ignore styles altogether and prefer to brew beers that stand on their own, with no stylistic reference at all. These are all valid approaches. Diversity is part of the joy of American craft beer.

The beer world is most often divided into ales and lagers. Each of these great traditions has its own history and range of products, but the main distinguishing feature is fermentation temperature. Lager beer uses a type of yeast adapted to cold and does its work on the bottom of the fermenter, hence the term “bottom-fermented” beer. At colder temperatures—45° to 50°F (5 to 10°C) for fermentation and near freezing for conditioning—yeast produces little of its own flavor. As a result, lagers tend to emphasize the clean pure flavors and aromas of malt and hops. Ales, on the other hand, are fermented and conditioned most often between 60° and 70°F (16° to 21°C). At these warmer temperatures, ale yeast works on the surface, giving rise to the term “top-fermented.” At these temperatures, ale yeast produces a host of complex fruity, spicy aromas that give ales their complex bouquet.







ABOUT THE CHARTS

The next six pages list a number of the classic beer styles as well as some American reinventions of them and some exciting new trends in brewing.

Most of the columns are self-explanatory. Here's a key to the symbols that describe a few of beer's qualities.


The inner and outer circles indicate minimum and maximum for those qualities.


STYLE	ABOUT	ABV	QUALITIES	FLAVORS
				
COLOR/GLASSWARE The range is shown by graduated color in the shape of the preferred glassware.				
				
				

COLOR/GLASSWARE The range is shown by graduated color in the shape of the preferred glassware.

HOP IMPACT The color of the green circle indicates the intensity of hop bitterness and/or aroma.

BODY The color of the brown circle indicates fullness and/or sweetness.

Less Bitter  More Bitter





Less Bold  More Bold

CLASSIC ENGLISH, IRISH AND SCOTTISH STYLE ALES

Ale has been brewed in the British Isles for at least 2,000 years. Today the focus is on quaffable session beers, although stronger styles exist. Top-fermentation gives spicy and fruity aromas; nutty, woody notes are also common. Hop character comes through in paler beers; English hops may add grassy, spicy or floral notes.

THE PALE ALE FAMILY

Pale is a relative term. When these beers emerged long ago, they were pale relative to the common black beers then widely drunk.

STYLE	ABOUT	ABV	QUALITIES	FLAVORS
PALE ALE	A large family of golden-to-amber ales; traditionally applied to bottled beer, but may be draught.	3.5-4.2	  	Brisk English hop nose with some fruitiness on top of bready, nutty or lightly caramelly malt. Bitter; dry, crisp, often mineral finish.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ORDINARY BITTER • BEST BITTER • ESB 	Terms for draught (Real Ale) versions of pale ale, but may be bottled. Often made in several strengths.	3.0-5.8	  	Soft to serious hop aromas plus fruitiness on top of malty, nutty woody flavors. Often light-bodied, with a dry, crisp finish.
INDIA PALE ALE	Originally an exported type of pale ale, generally stronger, paler and hoppier than those above.	5.0-7.0	  	Moderately to massively hoppy. Bready, caramelly malt character with fruity and/or nutty flavors. Crisp, bitter finish.








BROWN AND BLACK ALES

Brown beers are the descendants of the ancient English unhopped ales featuring toasted and/or roasted malts and hopping that varies from light to fairly bitter.

MILD ALE	Lower alcohol session beer.	3.2-4.0	  	Crisp and dry with delicate roasty/malty aroma.
BROWN ALE	Amber-to-brown beers with malty personalities.	4.0-5.5	  	Light nutty maltiness with hints of toast. Crisp to medium-bodied. Lightly hopped.
PORTER	The original black beer of England, of which stout was a stronger variation.	4.5-6.5	  	Soft roastiness in nose. Lightly or firmly hopped, dryish or slightly rich. Paler than stout.
STOUT	Varieties include: dry Irish stout, sweet London stout and oatmeal stout.	4.0-5.0	  	Roasted malt always dominates the nose. Flavor may be sweet, creamy, dry and/or bitter.
RUSSIAN IMPERIAL STOUT	High-gravity black beer once popular in the Imperial court of Russia.	7.0-12.0	  	Massively roasty, often with considerable hopping. Intense, sipping-style beer.

STRONG BRITISH-STYLE ALES

Varying in strength, bitterness and color, these are all rich, full-bodied and suitable for fireside sipping.

STRONG ALE	A loosely defined group of strong amber-to-brown ales.	7.0-11.0	  	Light to strong caramel, often with hints of toast, leather, wood. Varying hoppiness.
OLD ALE	Strong beers that have been aged, often in wood, then blended with fresh beer.	6.0-9.0	  	Like the style above, but possibly with wood-aged character that may be earthy, barnyard, even a touch tart.
BARLEY WINE	Broad term for very strong ale. Intense, sippable.	8.4-12.0	  	Plenty of caramel, dried fruit, nuts, toast, leather, and usually, hops.

SCOTTISH AND IRISH ALE

IRISH RED ALE	Very malt focused with less emphasis on bitterness.	4.0-6.0	  	Caramel and toffee notes common. Roasted barley addition will create dryer finish.
SCOTCH ALE (WEE HEAVY)	This strong mahogany-colored beer is the Scots' unique specialty.	6.2-8.0	  	A huge malty nose, often with hints of roastiness. A full, sweet palate with very little hops.

AMERICAN CRAFT-BREWED ALES

Although originally inspired by European—especially British—ales, American craft brewed ales have become very much their own thing. Compared to their European cousins, they are usually maltier and more aggressively hopped. Hop aroma character in US versions is also untraditional, featuring citrus, pine and floral notes.



STYLE	ABOUT	ABV	QUALITIES	FLAVORS
AMERICAN PALE ALE	Robust, amber colored ales, usually with a generous dose of a classic American hop like Cascade.	4.5-5.5		Lightly to strongly malty (toasted caramel), more than counter balanced by the citrusy, resinous, floral character of American hops.
AMERICAN INDIA PALE ALE (IPA)	Another pale ale, this one invariably stronger, paler and more hoppy than its pale ale cousin.	6.3-7.5		Light-to-moderate maltiness nearly overwhelmed by resinous, grapefruity American hops.
AMBER ALE	Moderate strength ale, not consciously based on any particular classic style. A wide range of interpretations are possible.	4.5-6.0		Usually a fair amount of a caramelly maltiness. May be lightly to moderately hopped, usually with American hop varieties.
RED ALE	A deep amber style that has become stronger and more bitter in the last few years.	4.5-6.0		Usually a burnt sugar quality, from crystal malt, which may be balanced with discreet or enthusiastic amounts of hops.
AMERICAN BROWN ALE	Deeper, richer, and generally far more hoppy than its English inspiration.	4.0-6.4		Very rich caramelliness with a fair amount of toasty, even lightly roasty aromas. May be moderately to highly hopped.
AMERICAN PORTER & STOUT	Parker ales that feature varying degrees of color (brown to black porter) (brown to black stout) and varying degrees of roast and bitterness.	4.5-8.8		Lots of variety, but always plenty of roastiness, sometimes a touch caramelly, and balanced to one degree or another by American hops.
IMPERIAL OR DOUBLE INDIA PALE ALE	Although the original meaning was connected to stout, "Imperial" has been used for more than a century to designate a strong, bold beer.	7.5-10.5		Simple idea. Just take an IPA and brew it a good deal stronger. Breathakingly bitter, dripping with resinous hop aromas and highly alcoholic, these are beers for special occasions.
OTHER IMPERIALS	See above.	7.5-11.0		Craft brewers have adapted the idea to red, porter, pilsener, brown ale, blonde ale and just about everything else.
AMERICAN BARLEY WINE	A showcase of malt and American hops delivering maximum flavor and aroma impact.	8.0-12+		Massive quantities of caramelly, burnt-sugar malt more than balanced by fresh, citrusy resinous American hops.

KEY

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Less Bitter More Bitter

BODY The color of the brown circle indicates fullness and/or sweetness.










Less Bold More Bold

BELGIAN & FRENCH-INSPIRED ALES

These brewing traditions offer a huge range of strengths, colors and flavors, and many beers do not fit any preconceived style. Strong or weak, light or dark, sour or sweet, there are always highly distinctive yeasts adding aromas of pepper, fruit, spice and much more. Spices such as orange peel and coriander may be used.










CLASSIC BELGIAN-STYLE ALES

Complex, yet approachable ales featuring high alcohol combined with a high degree of drinkability.

STYLE	ABOUT	ABV	QUALITIES	FLAVORS
ABBEY DUBBEL	A slightly strong reddish-brown ale, whose body is thinned by the use of sugar in the recipe.	6.5-7.5	  	A strong, lightly hopped, deep amber ale with a dry to modest body. Complex caramel, raisin, fruity flavors. Crisp finish.
ABBEY TRIPEL (AND STRONG GOLDEN)	A strong and sophisticated group of beers with Trappist origins in the mid-twentieth century.	7.0-11.0	  	Strong golden ales with sugar added for drinkability. Lightly to moderately hopped, with fruity, honeyish aromas. Lighter in color than dubbel.
BELGIAN STRONG DARK	Wide category defined simply by its title, often with monastic connections.	7.0-11.0	  	A wide variety of deep rich flavors: Chocolate, raisins, caramel, burnt sugar. Rarely any hop character.







WITBIER & FARMHOUSE ALES

Belgium and Northern France have a long tradition of simple, earthy beers, sometimes brewed in small breweries in remote villages or farms, but often (especially with witbier) on a larger scale as well. Some contain wheat and other unmalted adjunct grains.

WITBIER WHITE ALE	An ancient type of white ale made from malt, oats and a large proportion of unmalted wheat.	4.8-5.2	  	Witbier is light, but elegantly fruity, with a creamy milkshake texture. Spiced with coriander, orange peel and other spices. Low bitterness.
SAISON	A softly hazy ale said to originate from farmhouse breweries of Northwest Belgium.	4.5-8.0	  	Dry, crisp, and complex with plenty of fruitiness, hints of earth, and often refreshing hop aroma and bitterness.
BIÈRE DE GARDE	Rustic interpretations of blondes and bocks originating in Northern France. Earthy and more malt than saison.	4.5-8.0	  	Blonde to amber in color, these are well-balanced beers, a bit malty and slightly sweet, with low to moderate hopping.

SOUR & WILD-FERMENTED ALES

Although the classics are limited to a certain areas of Belgium, adventurous craft brewers are working with yeasts and other microbes to produce beers with many of the same characteristics.

LAMBIC (SPONTANEOUSLY-FERMENTED ALE) GUEUZE	An ancient family of sour beers fermented with wild yeasts and bacteria. Gueuze, the most common form, is a bottled blend of young and old lambics. Fruit is often added.	5.0-6.3	  	Pale, often hazy and unbelievably aromatic with earthy, fruity and barnyard notes and almost no hop bitterness or aroma. Lambics are always bone dry and very refreshing, although they vary from softly to seriously sour.
FLEMISH OUD BRUIN SOUR RED AND BROWN ALES	Classic ruby-colored ales aged up to two years in oak then blended with unaged beer.	4.8-5.2	  	Fully tart or sweet-and-sour, often with vinegary aromas on top of caramelly, burnt sugar flavors and profound fruitiness.

AMERICAN BELGO STYLE ALES

While some Belgian-inspired beers clearly do fit into neat categories, many do not. It is an almost defining characteristic of Belgian brewing that its brewers do not want to be constrained by the boundaries of what they see as arbitrary style definitions. Look for boundary-breaking reinterpretations of styles like witbier and saison, or creatively constructed beers in any shade, strength or approach brewed to suit the season, the mood or for absolutely no reason at all.







OTHER ALES & HYBRIDS

These beers come from several different traditions. Despite their focus on lagers, the German tradition does encompass a few top-fermented styles. Many of them are justly famous. As with all the other traditional styles, American craft brewers have created their own unique versions of these classics, and they are well worth seeking out.







WHEAT BASED ALES

Wheat, in malted form is used in 40 – 60 percent of the recipe. This adds a smooth, slight citrusy tang, a dry palate and a very creamy texture.

STYLE	ABOUT	ABV	QUALITIES	FLAVORS
BAVARIAN HEFEWEISSE WEIZEN/WEISSBIER	Pale or amber, weissbier is almost always packaged with yeast (Hefe) in the bottle, although filtered (Kristal) versions exist.	4.9-5.5	  	This classic from Southern Germany features a unique yeast that adds fruity bubblegum and banana notes along with characteristic clove aromas. No hop character. Dark versions available.
WEIZENBOCK	Strong deep-amber version of hefeweisse.	6.9-9.3	  	Smooth and rich, with a spicy banana bread aroma and toasted caramel finish. No hop character.
BERLINER WEISSE	A light session beer once drunk in huge quantities in Berlin, and still brewed there.	2.8-3.4	  	Very crisp and tart, with some creaminess from the wheat. Usually served with flavored syrup added.
AMERICAN WHEAT ALE	Originating in the Pacific Northwest, these hazy, wheat ales are fermented with normal ale yeast.	3.5-5.5	  	Crisp and refreshing, with light to moderate hopping. Wheat adds a soft, creamy texture. Fruit versions are also popular.






RHINE VALLEY ALES

This pair of crisp, everyday session beers attests to the diversity and ancient brewing traditions in the North of Germany. There are top-fermented warm, then cold-conditioned, which makes them intermediate between ales and lagers.

KÖLSCH	A highly drinkable golden-colored ale from the German city of Cologne (Köln).	4.8-5.3	  	Kölsch is a well-balanced beer with a delicate, fruity aroma, clean, soft maltiness and subtle hopping.
DÜSSELDORFER ALTBIER	A darker session ale from Düsseldorf. "Alt" means "old," a reference to the antiquity of top-fermenting beers in Germany.	4.3-5.5	  	A refreshing copper colored beer. May be more or less malty, but Alt is always assertively hopped. The stronger seasonal version is called <i>Sticke</i> .


NORTH AMERICAN HYBRID ALES


Hybrid ales are those that share lager and ale characteristics and include a couple of beers that were popular a century ago, although new creations continue to appear on the scene.

CREAM ALE	Originally a blend of stock (pale) ale and lager popular in the Eastern US, cream ale usually offers more flavor than mass-market lagers.	4.8-5.3	  	A very light bodied ale, usually with a touch of sweetness and a kiss of hops. Craft versions offer a slightly more robust flavor than mainstream versions.
CALIFORNIA COMMON BEER (originally known as "Steam Beer")	"Steam" is now the trademark of the Anchor Brewing Company, the last surviving maker of the style that was once widespread in the West.	4.3-5.5	  	A hybrid fermented with lager yeast, but at warmer ale temperatures. It has a rich, lightly caramelly maltiness backed by firm hopping. It is topped off with soft, fruity aromas.

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 **BODY** The color of the brown circle indicates fullness and/or sweetness.

Less Bitter  More Bitter



Less Bold  More Bold

CLASSIC LAGER STYLES

Lager beer developed in Southern Germany about the sixteenth century. A particular yeast adapted to cold temperatures, working on the bottom of the beer gave rise to the term "bottom fermented." Extended cold-aging gives a smooth, clean flavor profile and emphasizes the malt and hops that are the traditional ingredients.

PALE LAGERS

This is a family of beers that share a pale color and lager heritage, but that differ in their hop/malt balance and in the personalities of the aroma hops used. US craft versions tend to stick pretty close to the original models, but are often slightly bolder in all their flavor aspects.

STYLE	ABOUT	ABV	QUALITIES	FLAVORS
BOHEMIAN (CZECH) PILSENER	The first pale lager, now widely imitated around the world.	4.0-5.0	 	Fresh maltiness, hints of caramel, plus plenty of aroma and bitterness from the spicy Czech hop, Saaz.
GERMAN PILSENER/PILS	Crisp, austere pale lagers widespread across Germany and now worldwide.	4.0-5.0	 	Clean, breadly maltiness balanced and perfumed with German noble hops like the herbal Hallertau.
DORTMUNDER EXPORT	A slightly stronger pale lager now all but vanished in its homeland.	5.0-6.0	 	Clean maltiness evenly balanced by dry hoppiness. Crisp finish, sometimes with mineral notes.

AMBER LAGERS

A category encompassing a number of specialties, mostly with the emphasis on malt. Amber lagers tend to be especially versatile beers to pair with food.

OKTOBERFEST	Common Fall season for many of today's U.S. Craft Brewers. Growing paler in recent years, per public taste.	5.0-6.0	 	Clean malt, modestly caramelly, just barely balanced by a touch of noble hops. Some Oktoberfests are still authentic Märzens (darker, heavier).
MÄRZEN	Originally a Bavarian copper-colored export-strength lager from Germany.	5.3-5.9	 	Rich, creamy maltiness barely balanced by hops, with a smooth but slightly toasty finish.
VIENNA	The original amber-colored lager, created in Austria, but uncommon there now.	4.8-5.4	 	Malty aroma with modest body and clean crisp finish, hints of hops. Lighter than Oktoberfest/Märzen.
AMERICAN AMBER LAGER	Craft-brewed versions of classic full-flavored all-malt lagers.	4.8-5.4	 	Big, caramel-accented flavor balanced by plenty of noble hop aroma.

DARK LAGERS

A small family of malty beers with varying caramel/toasty/roasty profiles and subtle hopping. Dark lagers were much more popular a hundred years ago, although they still have their following.

MUNICH DUNKEL	The original Bavarian-style lager beer. Dunkel simply means "dark."	4.5-5.0	 	Smooth, soft and malty lager, with a big, sweetish body and a gentle roasty finish, with very little hops.
SCHWARZBIER	Famed in the towns of Kulmbach and Köstritz, this roasty-malty lager is in many respects a German version of Porter.	3.8-5.0	 	Nice roasty-malty nose, moderate body and an enjoyable chocolatey bittersweet finish.

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Less Bold  More Bold

BOCK (STRONG LAGERS)

These strong, springtime lagers were originally conceived as a dodge around the fasting rules of Lent, the traditional Christian penance period, or so the story goes. Bocks are always strong and malty, and the stronger, darker ones are often fairly sweet.

STYLE	ABOUT	ABV	QUALITIES	FLAVORS
HELLER BOCK OR MAIBOCK	An amber-colored strong lager, now the most common form of bock.	6.0-8.0	  	Strong amber lagers with a smooth malty flavor profile, and sometimes a hint of hops as well.
BOCK (DARK)	A deep ruby-colored strong lager.	6.3-7.5	  	Super malty aroma and flavor nearly balanced by roastiness and a tiny touch of hops. Rich caramel malt.
DOPPELBOCK	An extra-strong dark lager (although blonde versions exist).	6.5-8.0	  	Massive caramel aroma, often with a gentle toasty bittersweet finish.



SPECIALTY BEERS

Beyond the classic style categories is a whole other range of possibilities. Some are based on historical rarities, but most are just examples of pure American ingenuity. These go beyond the range of familiar flavors and aromas in beer and forge off into unexplored territory. Despite their boldness, they can be as subtle and enjoyable as any beers.

FRUIT BEER

This is a variable style, which can be whatever the brewer wants it to be. Raspberries, cherries, apricots and blueberries are the most common, but many variations are possible.

HONEY BEER

Honey is added to the wort, which somewhat counter-intuitively creates a dry, crisp beer with honey aromas.

PUMPKIN BEER

A popular fall seasonal, pumpkin is added in the mash, but most of the flavor is from the familiar mix of spices found in pie.

CHILE BEER

From subtle tickle to a serious burn, there are many ways to make a chile beer, but all include peppers in the brew or fermenter.

HERB/SPICE BEER

This includes a whole spice cupboard of possibilities. Perhaps the most popular is the spiced holiday beer, often loosely based on English "wassail" traditions. These are typically strong, dark and have a complex, "spice cake" nose.

SMOKED BEER

In ages past, most beer had some smokiness and the tradition continues in the Franconia region of Northern Bavaria. American craft brewers have their own ideas, including smoked porter and Scotch ale made with peat-smoked malt.

BARREL-AGED BEERS

Most typically, a barley wine or strong stout is aged for a few months in a spirit, wine or new Bourbon barrel, where it picks up delicious, creamy vanilla and toasted coconut aromas. The beer also may be influenced by resident microflora existing in the barrel. Many other possibilities exist.

BEER FAQ

IS DARK BEER HEAVIER OR HIGHER IN ALCOHOL THAN PALE? The color of a beer is determined by how much dark-colored malt is added to a recipe, and this has nothing to do with the beer's overall strength. While there are heavy dark beers, many dark beers are as crisp and light on the palate as pale beers.

WHAT IS REAL ALE? This is the English method of serving ale in which live, fermenting beer is put in casks (or bottles) and allowed to carbonate naturally. Many American craft breweries are producing them. Real ales should be served at cellar temperatures of 50°–55°F (10°–13°C), and should be lightly carbonated, but not flat.

WHAT DOES "BOTTLE CONDITIONED" MEAN? These are beers that have live yeast in the bottle, and have undergone a secondary fermentation right in the bottle, which naturally produces carbonation. While the yeast is not harmful, it is best to pour carefully to avoid disturbing the yeast if a crystal clear beer is desired.

SHOULD BEER BE AGED? Most beer should be consumed as fresh as possible. However, some stronger beers may age gracefully. Beers over 7 percent alcohol may be aged a year or two; stronger beers may still be tasty after a decade or more. Cool, dark conditions are best.

HOW MANY KINDS OF BEER ARE THERE? Well, the Brewers Association has more than 100 (when you count the subcategories) for its World Beer Cup and GABF competitions. When you consider that each brewer brings something unique to every beer, the possibilities are endless!

WHAT'S THAT LEMON DOING IN MY BEER? A slice of lemon is often served on the glass rim of a Hefeweisse; sometimes an orange slice decorates a witbier. These are mainly there to liven up the presentation. Not everybody likes fruit in their beer. If you don't want it, be sure to order it "without."

WHICH IS BETTER WITH FOOD, WINE OR BEER? Beer excels in a number of categories that wine struggles with. From salad to soup, from cheese to chocolate, there's no food that the amazing variety of craft beer can't match.

IS IT OK TO DRINK GOOD BEER RIGHT OUT OF THE BOTTLE? Well, we wouldn't want to tell you what to do, but if you do, you'll be missing out on much of the delicious aroma and flavor that makes craft beer so great. Maybe that's why wine is always drunk from a glass.



FURTHER RESOURCES

For more information on the exciting world of craft beer, please visit **CraftBeer.com**. The site offers recipes, beer and food pairings, brewery news, a culinary curriculum, an events calendar and much more.

The Brewers Association Guide to American Craft Beer and Food is a handy 12-page booklet detailing the basics of beer and food pairing, and includes a popular chart detailing 28 styles with pairing guidelines for main dishes, cheeses and desserts.

Brewers Publications (BP) offers over 40 titles that outline styles, enhance brewing education and further the homebrewing hobby.

One of BP's most popular titles, *How to Brew* by John Palmer, introduces brewing in an easy step-by-step review that covers the essentials of making good beer.

The Best of American Beer and Food by Lucy Saunders captures the creative energy of chefs, craft brewers and other food artisans who cook with beer and pair flavorful beers with hand-crafted food.

Randy Mosher's book, *Tasting Beer*, is the most comprehensive book on the sensory aspects of beer appreciation. Find these books and more at **BrewersPublications.com**.

For the ultimate beer sampling experience, visit the **Great American Beer Festival**®. Held every fall in Denver, Colo., it is the world's best and biggest celebration of craft beer. GreatAmericanBeerFestival.com.

Nothing furthers your understanding of craft beer more than brewing your own. Join the **American Homebrewers Association**® and receive *Zymurgy*® magazine, the best resource for the homebrewer and beer lover, plus access to eZymurgy, *Zymurgy* apps and more. HomebrewersAssociation.org.

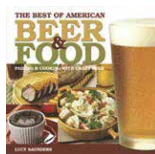
Support small and independent craft brewers! Join the network of beer enthusiasts at **CraftBeer.com/SYLB**.

The Brewers Association's Draught Beer Quality Manual and the website **DraughtQuality.org** cover topics including line cleaning, draught system components and design, gas dispense and balance, proper pouring and sanitation, and facts about growlers.

To place an American Craft Beer Guide order, go to members.brewersassociation.org/store or call 303-447-0816.

10 pack \$10 for members/ \$12 for non-members

50 pack \$45 for members / \$55 for non-members





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