

USA Beer Styles

Past and Present



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- Current “Craft” Trends



American Brewing and Beer Styles

In the Beginning...A Little History

- **Brewing new to N. America <500 years**
- **Based upon European brewing traditions**
- **Prior to mid-1800s English Ales were favored**
 - **Dominant brewing culture of the time**
 - **Refrigeration difficult**
 - **Majority of inhabitants were of English extraction**
- **Vegetables sometimes used: beets, peas**



American Styles

The Lager Revolution

- **1842 Pilsner created, rapidly popularized in Europe**
- **German immigration to the U.S. highest in mid-1800s.**
 - **They brought brewing traditions with them**
 - **Many settled in Midwest**
- **As a result, lager brewing rapidly adopted in the U.S.**



American Styles

The Lager Revolution...continued

- **German Immigration continued**
- **Until 1920, "American Brewer" published in German**
- **New beers created:**
 - **American Lager**
 - **Steam Beer**



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The Lager Revolution...continued

American Lager

- About 30% corn or rice
- Rest 6-row American malt
- Adjunct initially used to:
 - Improve clarity (protein dilution)
 - Reduce cost
 - Ration goods/materials during WW I
- ~77% of US beer consumption



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The Lager Revolution...continued

American-Style Lager

- Flavors should be subtle and complex, no one ingredient dominating
- Malt sweetness = light to mild
- Hop bitterness, flavor and aroma negligible to very light
- Light, fruity esters acceptable
- Carbon dioxide is a primary flavor attribute/characteristic



American Lager

ABV 3.8-5.3%

SRM 2-4

IBU 5-15

O.G. 10-12°P

■ Typical appearance and flavor characteristics:

- A very light shade of yellow (pale/straw)
- Slightly aromatic
- Thin body/mouthfeel
- Notes of cereals, corn, very little hop character
- Quick and unobtrusive finish

- Bottom fermented
- Up to 40% adjunct use: Corn, Rice, Sugar
- Most consumed beer style in the world (“International Lager”)
- Very few American craft light lagers
- Light Lager: Highly attenuated, practically no residual extract
- Examples – Budweiser, Miller, Coors



American Styles

Producing American Adjunct Lagers

- Challenging w/out cereal cooker
- Might use flaked maize (pre-gelatinized)
- 6-row malt
- Convert pretty low: < 150 F ($< 66^{\circ}\text{C}$)
- Hop very modestly: 15 IBUs at most
- Lager fermentation, finishing required!

Another possibility . . .



American Styles

Classic American Pilsner

"A substantial Pilsner that can stand up to the classic European Pilsners, but exhibiting the native American grains and water available to German brewers who initially brewed it in the USA. Refreshing, but with the underlying malt and hops that stand out when compared to modern American light lagers. The maize presents a unique grainy sweetness that is indicative of the style."



Classic American Pilsner

ABV 4.5-6%

SRM 3-6

IBU 25-40

O.G. 11.5-15°P

- **Typical appearance and flavor characteristics:**
 - **A pale golden color**
 - **Slightly aromatic**
 - **Smooth and unobtrusive finish**
 - **Bottom fermented**
 - **Six-row malted barley**
 - **Adjunct: 20% - 30% flaked maize to dilute the excessive protein levels**
 - **Native American hops such as Clusters or traditional noble German hops. Modern Hallertau crosses (Ultra, Liberty, Crystal, etc.) are also appropriate**
 - **Find more at www.bjcp.org**



Cream Ale

ABV 4.4-5.7%

SRM 2-4

IBU 10-22

O.G. 11.5-14°P

- **Typical appearance and flavor characteristics:**
 - **A pale golden color**
 - **Slightly aromatic (sweetness)**
 - **Smooth and full-bodied**
 - **Six-row malted barley**
 - **Adaptation of American light lager**
 - **Ale fermentation, cold conditioned**
 - **Certainly includes adjuncts**
 - **Light DMS, corn character mentioned**
 - **Find more at www.bjcp.org**



American Styles

Steam Beer

- NEW uniquely American style
- Popular between 1850 and 1920
- At least 27 breweries made 'steam style'
- Lager beer produced without refrigeration.
 - German immigrants brought yeast
 - Improvised brewing methods
 - To achieve cooling, shallow troughs used



American Styles

Steam Beer

- Anchor Brewing Company joined the party late: 1894
- Only producer of the style after prohibition, late 1933.
- Trademark on brand



American Styles

Producing 'Steam Style Beer'

- You cannot call a beer "Steam Beer" (Anchor Brg. Co. Trademark)
- "*California Common Beer*"
- Light amber to dark amber in color
- Medium bodied
- Impression of balance, drinkability
- Noticeable caramel-type malt in flavor and often in aroma
- Low to medium-low fruity esters.
- Hop flavor, aroma low to med-low
- Bitterness medium to medium-high
- No diacetyl, chill haze



'California Common'

ABV 4-5.4%

SRM 12-17

IBU 35-45

O.G. 12-14°P

■ Typical appearance and flavor characteristics:

- Bottom fermented
- Pale, 2-row base malt
- Crystal/Caramel malt universal, ~10%
- Other character/specialty malts possible
- "Typical" hop varieties: Northern Brewer, Cascade
- Mash Temp: 150-153°F range (66-67°C)
- Lager yeast, ferment at 55 - 58°F (13-14°C)
- California lager, warm at 60-65°F (16-18°C)
- Today, traditional carbonation . . .
- *Comparable class: American Amber Lager*



American Styles

20th Century American Brewing: ...Earlier in the Century

- Prohibition damaged brewing industry
- Many breweries closed, others weakened
- 1950s & 60s: transportation, communication, and bulk refrigeration create mass market – loss of regional brewers
- Americanization: uniform products (“typical American lager”) – “National” Brands dominate
- Low point 1970s:
 - Regional beers (Coors) are exciting!
 - Imported beers are exciting!



American Styles

20th Century American Brewing:

...Later in the Century - *the rise of Craft Brewing*

- Homebrewing re-legalized in 1979
- Originally powered by homebrewers and “beer enthusiasts”
- Experiments in beer flavor & style
- Created American craft brewing
- In 1970’s, less than 100 breweries, now approximately 4000 breweries
- USA – now “the mecca of extremes”
- A huge amount of diversity (> 10,000 different beers)
- A wide variety of beer styles, strengths, colors, textures and brewing methods
- *Beers emphasizing hop flavors and aromas have become leading beer styles*



American Styles

Craft Brewing: Key Characteristics

- **Inspired by classic styles**
- **U.S. Craft Brewers:**
 - **Explore classic European styles**
 - **Create new American interpretations**
- **Primarily ales (rather than largely traditional lagers)**
- **Less bound by tradition**
- **Exuberant use of hops**
- **Punchy, resinous American hops common**
 - **Cascade, Liberty and others**
- **Tend to be "stronger" than classic versions**
- **Seasonality important**
- **Emphasis on big flavors**
- **Rapidly evolving**
- **Focus on local ingredients and sensibilities**



American Styles

Craft Brewing

- **Commercial craft brewing started in Northern California and the Pacific Northwest, around hop growing regions in Yakima and Oregon**
- **West coast craft brewers were the first to use hops more aggressively. Now it is a nationwide standard.**
- **California brewers pushed the evolution of sour beers**
- **Midwest region was starting point for whiskey barrel aged beers (access to Kentucky whiskey producers)**
- **Many international styles have been Americanized with higher hop rates or US grown hops.**



American Styles

Craft Brewing

- **American ingredients for classics**
 - American Pale ale
 - American Brown Ale
 - Barleywine
 - Kolsch
- **Revivals closer to the original than current European beers**
 - IPA
 - Porter
- **Borrow from Europe (traditional), make unique**
 - Wheat ale
 - Smoked porter
 - Fruit beers



American Styles

■ American-style lagers

- “Regular” Lager
- Light Lager
- Amber Lager
- Dark Lager
- Malt Liquor
- Rye Lager

■ American Hybrid Styles

- California Common
- Cream Ale
- American Blonde

■ American-style ales

- American Pale Ale
- Rye Ale
- American IPA
- Double / Imperial IPA
- American Amber / Red Ale
- American Brown Ale
- American Barley Wine
- American Wheat Ale
- American Stout
- American Wild Ale
- Barrel Fermented/Sour
- Barrel Aged
- Specialty Ingredients



American Styles

A Reference to Current Events...

Top 5 Craft Beer Styles in 2014:

1. I.P.A.
2. Seasonal Beers
3. Pale Ale
4. Variety
5. Amber Ale



American Styles

American Pale Ale

Origin: Around 1980, as American brewers tried to satisfy their thirst for hops.

Location: Britain, esp. England; now US micros, too.

Flavor: Fresh hops + nutty maltiness, crisp finish.

Aroma: Malty, slight fruity/estery, but w/ American (Cascade) hops in the foreground.

Balance: Medium body; crisp bitter finish.

Seasonality: Year-round.

Great with: Wide range of foods: classic with a burger!



American Pale Ale

ABV 4.5-6.2%

SRM 5-14

IBU 28-45

O.G. 11-15°P

■ Typical appearance and flavor characteristics:

- Deep gold to copper in color – Can have a slight haze from hop usage
- Malt notes – Bready or toasty. Caramel character should be low.
- American aroma hops (grapefruit, citrus, tropical fruit, pine, resin, floral)
- High level of drinkability, more CO₂ than English ales
- The style that started the craft beer movement
- An American interpretation of English Pale Ale with higher hop usage and American ingredients
- Typically uses clean California Ale yeast – Low ester
- Examples – Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, Deschutes Mirror Pond, Three Floyds Zombie Dust



American IPA

ABV 5.5-7.5%

SRM 6-15

IBU 40-70

O.G. 13-18°P

Typical appearance and flavor characteristics:

- Stronger and more hop bitterness than a normal pale ale
 - extreme hop aromas (grapefruit, citrus, tropical fruit, pine, resin, floral)
 - Malt notes – bready, nutty, toasty, low caramel notes
 - Moderate to full-bodied with clean yeast character
 - In the finish, a sustained and lingering bitter sensation
 - Imperial IPA: very complex aromas, esp. strong hop flavors and aromas, embedded in a powerfully malty body, intense mouthfeel, extreme bitterness
- The most popular craft beer style in the US
 - Variations – Black IPA, White IPA, Session IPA, Double IPA
 - Examples – Ballast Point Sculpin, Lagunitas IPA, Bell's Two Hearted, Dogfish Head 60 min, Russian River Blind Pig



American Amber Ale

(a.k.a. American Red Ale)

ABV 4.5-6.2%

SRM 10-17

IBU 25-40

O.G. 11-15°P

Typical appearance and flavor characteristics:

- Light to intense amber to reddish color
 - Distinct caramel notes, tinged with floral hop aromas
 - Can show low roasted malt notes, like cocoa
 - Full, rounded body
 - Distinct bitterness in the finish
 - Similar to APA, but with more caramel character and overall balance
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- Very popular in the 1990's and early 2000's
 - Originated in Pacific Northwest
 - Can be brewed to Imperial Strength
 - Examples – Ballast Point Calico, Coronado Mermaid's Red, Bell's Amber, Anderson Valley Boont Amber



American Styles

American Craft Brewing:

■ Bleeding Edge

- Coffee Beer
- Honey Beer
- Imperial IPA
- Barrel-aged beers (several subcategories)
- Sour fermentations



American Styles

American “Double / Imperial”:

- Phrases “double” and “imperial” are interchangeable
- “*Amplified*” examples of lower-strength styles
- Most common are Double/Imperial Stout, IPA, Red. These are official BA recognized styles, but other styles can be “doubled”
- Extreme examples at 18% or higher – Dogfish 120 Min. I.P.A., Dogfish World Wide Stout
- Sam Adams Utopias at 27%



American Styles

Double/Imperial IPA:

Origin: About 1990. Pure wretched excess

Location: U.S. micro-brewers, especially California

Flavor: Plenty of malt, but massively hoppy

Aroma: Huge hit of American hops + a nice backup of rich caramelly malt

Balance: Rich and bold, but always ultra hoppy; dries out as it ages

Seasonality: Year-round

Great with: Too hoppy for most food; perfect w/ sweet desserts like carrot cake.



American Styles

ABV 7.5 - 12.5%

SRM 6 - 10

IBU 65 - 100

O.G. 19.5 - 23.5°P

Imperial or Double India Pale Ale

- *Intense* hop bitterness, flavor and aroma (Any variety, not harsh)
- Alcohol content very high
- Notable Golden to amber in color
- Moderate-high esters
- Medium to high malt character
- Medium-high to full body



American Styles

STYLE COMPARISON

Imperial IPA

OG: 19.5-23.5°P

FG: 5-7°P

ABV: 7.5-12.5%

IBU: 65-100

SRM: 6-10

Imperial Red Ale

19.5-23.5°P

5-7°P

7.9-12.5%

65-100

10-15



American Styles

Specialty Beers:

- Influenced by tradition, specialized ingredients and brewer creativity
- Pumpkin Ale brewed as long as 200 years ago, very popular seasonal beer.
- Chili beers evolved in the Southwest, add heat to the sensory experience
- Barrel aged beers are very popular, varying from Bourbon barrel aged stouts to wine barrel aged sour Saisons



American Styles

Current Trends:

- **Barrel-Aged Beers**
 - Used Bourbon barrels, mostly
 - Strong, dark beers like barley wine, stout, imperial stout
 - Sour beers also - usually in wine barrels
- **Hyper-Beers**
 - Super-gravity beers up to 25% alcohol
 - As much as \$100/bottle!
 - Sam Adams Millennium, Dogfish 120 Minute
- **Dry-Hopped Beers**
 - Addition of hops at end-of-fermentation/maturation
 - Creates unique aroma qualities
 - Very distinct “grassy/green/piney/resinous” notes imparted
 - Varietal dependent
- **Wet-Hopped Ales**
 - Fresh-picked hops used without drying



American Styles

Current Trends:

- **Single-Varietal Hop Ales**
 - Single (usually new or uncommon) variety used
 - Typically around harvest
- **New Belgian-American Ales**
 - Inspired by artistic freedom, styles of Belgium
 - But uniquely American
 - Wild microorganisms...sometimes
- **Blended Beers**
 - Old w/ new
 - Barrel-aged w/ fresh
 - Belgian w/ American
 - Creating NEW and ever changing products



American Styles

Current Trends:

- **Fruit Bombs**
 - Strong beers with large amounts of fruit
 - Inspired by Belgians, but U.S. character
- **Sessionable Beers**
 - How to get great flavor with <5% alcohol?
- **Specialty Seasonal Lines**
 - Limited-editions in special packaging
 - More exotic styles, higher prices



American Styles

American Craft Brewing...

- This *is* the frontier
- Huge opportunities
- Unique time in beer culture internationally
- Creativity on styles
- Have fun!

