

Historical Beers Worth Reviving
Ames Brewers League
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All beers have a history behind them, contributing the unique ingredients and brewing techniques that make them individual. The brewing and drinking of beer has a nearly 5000 year history that includes ancient cultures from the middle east to the northern reaches of Scandinavia. Brewing has changed from a household activity to an industry in that time. Historical beers are closely linked to the indigenous botany of the area of origin and the state of technology of the era. Many things we take for granted, say hops, are a relatively new in the history of beer. Hildegard of Bingen was the first to mention the use of hops in between 1098-1179, (when beer brewing was already 4000 years old) but they didn't come into wide spread use for another 300 to 500 years in the emerging industrial brewing centers of Europe and Briton. In the absence of hops a substance known as gruit, probably consisting of sweet gale, rosemary, bog myrtle, juniper and yarrow, was used as a herbal preservative. The introduction of hops is just one example of the many ways beer has evolved. There are many nearly forgotten beers that have been recently revived by adventurous brewers with a keen interest in the roots of our current day beer styles. Here are four historical beer recipes from brewers with a sense of history.

Thomas Jefferson Ale, by Nick Funnell of Dock Street Brewing

Basically a weizenbock, described as "a smooth bock with a tang" from the wheat malt. The beer is based on Mr. Fennell's research of the Monticello log books from 1772 to the mid 1820's. Anheuser-Busch has given \$20,000 to the Thomas Jefferson Foundation to restore the cellar at Jefferson's Monticello, Va.

10 # pilsner malt
5 # wheat malt
1 # crystal malt
¼ # chocolate malt
1.5 oz East Kent Goldings
Wyeast 1388

Single infusion mash at 155 to 158°F. Mash out at 170 °F and sparge to collect 6.5 gallons. Boil for 90 minutes, adding half the hops at the beginning of the boil and the other half 5 minutes before the end of the boil. Primary

Midus Touch Ale, by Sam Calagione from Dog Fish Head Brewery

This homebrew recipe is based on the archeological findings from drinking vessels found in the tomb of King Midas. Methods of molecular archaeology have revived this beer, which dates back to 700 BC. Dog Fish Head brewer Sam Calagione created this beer based on a University of Pennsylvania archeologists findings obtained from a drinking vessel found in the tomb of King Midas near the ancient Phrygian capital of Gordion in central Turkey. This is not a weak drink, look for a starting Gravity of 1.078. The drink is a combination of Barley beer, Honey mead and grape wine. Learn more about the history of this beer at: http://www.museum.upenn.edu/new/research/Exp_Rese_Disc/Mediterranean/Midas/intro.shtml

Ingredients

6.0 # two row pale malt
3.0 # honey (do not boil)
2.0 # Alexander's Muscat grape concentrate (do not boil)
0.5 teaspoon dry saffron (boil 15 minutes)
2.0 AAU Willamette hops (bittering hop) (0.50 oz. of 5.0% alpha acid)
2.5 AAU Willamette hops (flavor hop) (0.50 oz. of 5.0% alpha acid)
1 tsp. Irish moss
White Labs WLP500 (Trappist) or Wyeast 3787 (Trappist) yeast
0.75 cup of corn sugar (for priming)

Step by step

Heat 2.5 gallons of water to a boil, add malt syrup and powder and return to a boil. Add Willamette hops, Irish moss and boil for 60 minutes. Add 0.50 ounce of Willamette hops and the Saffron for last 15 minutes of the boil. Add honey at the end of the boil after you turn off the heat. Let stand for 5 minutes to sanitize the honey.

Strain out the hops, add wort to two gallons cool water in a sanitary fermenter, then add the Muscat concentrate and top off to 5.5 gallons. Cool the wort to 80° F, aerate the beer and pitch your yeast. (For a high-gravity fermentation such as this, be sure to make a yeast starter.) Allow the beer to cool to 68–70° F, and ferment for 10 to 14 days. Bottle your beer, age for three to four weeks and enjoy!

[Mighty Sahti and Nosedrops, article by Horst Dornbusch, recipe by Mark Naski](#)

Sahti is an ancient Finnish ale spiced with juniper. Sahti is a hazy, unfiltered, coppery ale, usually between 6–9% alcohol, with a buttery to tangy aroma and a winey to spicy palate. It is a beer with genuine pagan roots. So, if you are thinking of a spiced holiday brew for this year's festive season, consider making it a sahti. Mr. Dornbusch has written an outstanding article considering the historical and cultural aspects of this unique beer at the link listed. Learn more at <http://www.byo.com/feature/840.html>

Ingredients for 5 US gallons or 19 Liters Each:

OG (Mighty Sahti) 1.095
OG (Nosedrops) 1.045
18.5 lb (6.5 kg) English pale ale malt extract
2.2 lb (1 kg) Munich malt of approximately 10 °L
approx. 3 oz (80 g) Juniper berries
2.25 oz (65 g) Any noble hops with about 4% AA
Juniper twigs (or cedar or fir)
Wyeast 1084 Irish Ale Yeast (or a similar yeast with a fruity and smooth character).

Process:

Mash in at 120 °F (approximately 50 °C). Add juniper berries and the hops to the mash. Raise the mash temperature slowly over 90 minutes to the boiling point. Boil the mash for 10 minutes. Place a few juniper twigs on top of the false bottom of the lauter tun to cover it with a single layer. Ladle the mash into the lauter tun. Start sparging. Sparge the first 5 gallons into one container for Mighty Sahti. Sparge the second 5 gallons into a separate container for nosedrops.

At the end of the sparge, raise the temperature of both worts to 180 °F (approximately 80 °C) and hold it there for about 20 minutes to sterilize them. But do not boil them! Let cool to about 70 °F

(approximately 20 °C) and add yeast. After 3 days of fermentation, siphon the Nosedrops into jugs or bottles and store in a cool place at 35 °F (approximately 2 °C) to cause the fermentation to stop and to ensure that the Nosedrops taste slightly sweet. Ferment the Men's Sahti for a total of about 7 days. Siphon Men's Sahti into jugs or bottles and store in cool place (best at around 40 °F, approximately 5 °C). Serve either sahti cold. Pour gently to avoid rousing the yeast sediment.

1744 London Porter, by Terry Foster

Porter was first brewed in 1722 in London by a fellow Ralph Harwood at the Blue Last in Shoreditch, East London. Those early porters were said to be highly hopped and translucent brown, rather than plack, and that they required long storage before drinking. Also Brown malt, kilned over wood fire was used before the wide spread acceptance of pale base malts. Terry Foster has revived this 1744 porter recipe from the Town and Country Brewer. The results are perported to be outstanding, producing a well balanced beer with full-bodied, biscuity Flavor and a very drinkable 8% alcohol level. You may have to go out of your way to get the Crisp Brown malt, but it will be worth the trouble.

OG: 1.075, FG: 1.018, Color: 127 SRM, Bittering Units: 60

Ingredients for 5 US gallons or 19 Liters:

10.7 # 2-row pale malt

1.5 # crystal malt 80L

0.8 # English black malt

2.0 # Crisp Brown malt

1.3 oz Magnum hops ~ 12.4AA (Bittering)

1.0 oz EK Golding (Flavor)

1.0 oz EK Golding (Aroma)

WLP002 English Ale yeast

Crack Grains. Single-Step infusion Mash: 4.75 gallons of 168°F, target temp 152°F for 50 min. Mash out with boiling water to get mash up to 170°F, allow to rest for 10 min. After conversion Lauter and sparge with 170°F water. Collect about 7.0 gallons of runoff and bring to a full and vigorous boil. Total boil time of 120 minutes: Boil bittering hops for 90 min, flavor hops for 15 min, and aroma hops at the end of the boil. Cool to 70°F and direct into a sanitized fermenter. Oxygenate the cooled wort well. Add an active yeast culture and ferment for 4 to 6 days in the primary. Then transfer into a secondary fermenter, chill to 55 to 60°F if possible and age for two weeks. When secondary aging is complete, prime with sugar, bottle or keg. Let condition at temperatures above 60°F until clear and carbonated.