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How to Make Beer

By Jason Ditto

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Making beer is easy, inexpensive, and most of all, fun. With the rise in popularity of homebrewing, there are a wide variety of top quality ingredients available.

You can literally make hundreds of styles of beer that will taste great and impress your friends. Getting started making beer will only cost you a small amount of money, depending on your level of interest. Most beer making kits range from only \$60 to \$200 and make great, unique gifts.

How to Make Beer

Making Beer is just like cooking. Each recipe requires different ingredients and techniques. This page is an attempt to go over the basics of homebrewing in order to give you an understanding of how beer is made.

First of all, beer is made from 4 basic ingredients: water, malt (malted barley), hops, and yeast.

Water

Water is the most abundant ingredient in any style of beer. When making beer at home try to use filtered water instead of plain tap water. If your water doesn't taste good from the tap, you probably won't like it in your beer either. Do not use distilled water because it has been depleted of its oxygen.

Malt

Malted barley is barley grain that has been carefully soaked in water until it sprouts and then dried. This malting process develops the necessary sugars and soluble starches needed for fermentation.

How to Make Beer

The malt is then taken through a process called mashing which extracts the sugars and starches from the grain. Although advanced homebrewers can accomplish this step at home, most will buy the malted barley already mashed in a product called malt extract.

Hops

Hops are green flowers that grow on a vine and look similar to pine cones. They perform several roles in the beer making process. Most notably are the taste and aroma they impart on a beer.

Since not all of the sugars will ferment, the malt will cause the beer to be really sweet. Hops will balance out the sweetness by adding a degree of bitterness. Hops will also add a distinctive aroma to the finished brew.

Yeast

Yeast is the catalyst that makes it all happen. In short, yeast is a living organism that feeds off of the sugars in the malt. The yeast will convert the sugars to alcohol and carbon dioxide in a process called fermentation.

There are many strains of yeasts (even in the air we breathe). In order to get the results needed for making beer, a specially cultured beer yeast is required. The yeast will also impart taste and mouthfeel qualities to the beer.

The Beer Making Process

To summarize, the malt, hops, and water are boiled for a period of time. This mixture is called wort (pronounced wert). Then the wort is poured into fermenter and allowed to cool.

Next, the prepared yeast is pitched into the fermenter and an airlock is placed over the opening. Now it's the yeast's job to do its thing.

The yeast will multiply like crazy as it consumes the sugars in the brew. After a period of time, usually within 7 to 10 days, the yeast will have consumed all that it can and fall to the bottom of the fermenter.

Finally, the beer is bottled and set aside for a couple of weeks to mature and carbonate.

Making beer at home really is a fantastic hobby and can be a great social activity. Have some friends over and let them try your new brew. Better yet, get them involved and see who can make the best batches. Have blind taste tests with your buddies. Most of all, have fun!

Jason Ditto
Author of the

website about the enjoyment of coffee, tea, wine and beer.

Best Recipes: Root Beer Float Milkshake

By Donna Monday

Make this cool, frosty Root Beer Float Milkshake for a real walk down memory lane. Did you enjoy root beer float as a kid? Maybe you drank them in high school when you went out to eat with your friends at the local burger hang out?

Maybe you've never even had a root beer float but you've heard about them and want to try one. Well, here's a great recipe on how to make a classic root beer float that will have your taste buds rockin around the clock!

Root Beer Float Milkshake Root beer 3 tablespoons chocolate syrup 2 – 3 scoops vanilla ice cream

Directions

Blend all ingredients until smooth.

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Donna Monday

Easy to make - fun to drink

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