

ALES

Ale was the original — and only — beer until the 1500s. Brewed with top-fermenting yeast — which works at warmer temperatures, takes less time than bottom-fermenting lager yeast and often imparts a fruitier flavor — ales greet the thirsty beer drinker in a wide variety of colors, palates and strengths.

Ales are not always darker and heavier than lagers. The malt, not the type of yeast, determines these attributes.

INDIA PALE ALE — A crisp, dry beer with intense hop bitterness. *Example:* BASS

ENGLISH PALE ALE — Medium-bodied with golden to copper color, high hop bitterness and moderate to strong fruity flavors and aroma.

GOLDEN ALE — Pale golden, delicate aroma, light to medium body, lightly hopped.

AMBER ALE — Medium copper-amber color, smooth and velvety, with a slight sweetness from roasted malt.

There are only two types of beer: ales and lagers. There are, however, hundreds of styles.

BROWN ALE — Medium-bodied, deep copper to brown in color, with a dry to sweet maltiness and very

IRISH DRY STOUT — Characterized by a creamy head and an initial malt and caramel flavor that “finishes” with a dry-roasted bitterness. Balanced malt and hop with a roasted barley character. *Example:* GUINNESS

SWEET/TROPICAL STOUT — Also referred to as milk or cream stouts, sweet stouts have less hop bitterness and more malt than dry stouts. *Example:* DRAGON STOUT

PORTER — Medium- to dark-brown beers (from the use of black or roasted malt), ranging in flavor from bitter to sweet and from strong to suggestively mild.

IMPERIAL STOUT — Dark copper to black with alcohol content exceeding 8 percent and a rich, malty flavor and aroma balanced with assertive hopping and fruity-ester characteristics.

OATMEAL STOUT — Medium- to full-bodied beers that include oatmeal in their grists, resulting in a pleasant, full flavor that’s rich without being grainy.

LAMBIC — Effervescent beers that use the wild yeasts from northern Belgium. Often spiced with fruit such as raspberry or cherry to make an excellent dessert drink.

BARLEYWINE — Full-bodied, tawny copper to dark brown in color, with high residual malty sweetness and extraordinary alcohol content.

beer—(def.) 1. Generic name for alcoholic beverages made from a cereal

LAGERS

Originally brewed in cool caves by Bavarian monks in the 1500s, lagers gained wide circulation around 1840 with the advent of refrigeration. Lagers are made with bottom-fermenting yeast, which works at cooler temperatures and requires longer fermentation time.

Lagers are usually golden in color, and lighter in flavor and aroma. Typical lagers require 0 weeks or more of conditioning compared to 2 weeks brewing time for many ales.

CONTINENTAL (EUROPEAN) LAGER — Straw-colored, medium to full body, dry, mild bitterness. *Example:* HARP

PILSNER — Light straw golden color, well-hopped, with a dense, rich head. *Example:* PILSNER URQUELL

AMERICAN STANDARD — Very light in color and body, highly carbonated, with a clean, crisp taste. Sometimes contains rice, corn or other grain or sugar adjuncts.

AMBER LAGER — Reddish amber color, delicate malty taste and aroma.

VIENNA (OKTOBERFEST) LAGER — Reddish brown or copper color, with light to medium body, slight malt sweetness and clean hop bitterness.

BOCK, DOPPLEBOCK, EISBOCK — All-malt, full-bodied beers with dark colorings and high alcohol content.

GERMAN DARK — Chocolate-like, roasted malt aroma that dominates the clean, crisp, moderate hop bitterness.

WHEAT (WEISS) BEER — German-style beer fermented with a unique combination of yeast and lactic acid to produce a highly attenuated, very light-bodied beer with high carbonation and low hop flavors. Although usually a lager, can also be brewed as an ale depending on type of yeast used.



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BROWN ALE — Medium-bodied, deep copper to brown in color, with a dry to sweet maltiness and very little hop flavor or aroma.

SCOTCH ALE — A traditional, rich beer with a malty, caramel-like character, may even be faintly smoky.

HOW BEER CREATED CIVILIZATION

Could beer have been the reason for civilization itself? Some anthropologists think so. Beer, after all, is simply a combination of malt (barley or wheat) and hops, plus yeast and water. And we do know that at some point our hunter-gatherer ancestors ceased their wanderings and turned to agriculture, when they began harvesting just the type of cereal grains that produce this delightful beverage.

The four basic ingredients of beer are: malt (barley or wheat), hops, yeast and water. Malt is wheat or barley that has been germinated—i.e., allowed to sprout.



If beer was the reason man became civilized, our ancestors would have had Plato’s deepest gratitude. “He was a wise man,” said the wisest of men, “who invented beer.”

What we do know is that beer is older than civilization. A pictograph from ancient Sumeria shows a woman soaking bread for several days to produce a beer-like beverage which made those who consumed it “exhilarated and blissful.” And by 2000 B.C. beer drinkers in ancient Babylon had 16 varieties from which to choose.

Not to be outdone by the pagans, Christian monks in cloistered monasteries developed the brewing process to an art form, and for their labors rationed themselves as much as a gallon a day. In fact, we actually have a record of the value our forbearers placed on beer. According to the ship’s log of the Mayflower, the reason our Pilgrim fathers landed on Plymouth Rock, instead of continuing farther south to a warmer climate, was because the ship was running dangerously short on beer.

It seems only fitting that Americans, such lovers of this magical beverage in all its many styles, tastes, colors and aromas, should trace their very beginnings to a call for beer.