

TAVERN ON THE POINT

Welcome

Beer Terminology



Acetaldehyde

Green apple aroma, a byproduct of fermentation.

Additive

Enzymes, preservatives and antioxidants which are added to simplify the brewing process or prolong shelf life.

Adjunct

Fermentable material used as a substitute for traditional grains, to make beer lighter-bodied or cheaper.

Aerobic

An organism, such as top fermenting ale yeast, that needs oxygen to metabolize.

Alcohol

Ethyl alcohol or ethanol. An intoxicating by-product of fermentation, which is caused by yeast acting on sugars in the malt. Alcohol content is expressed as a percentage of volume or weight.

Alcohol by weight

Amount of alcohol in beer measured in terms of the percentage weight of alcohol per volume of beer, i.e., 3.2% alcohol by weights equals 3.2 grams of alcohol per 100 centiliters of beer. (It is approximately 20% less than alcohol by volume.)

Alcohol by volume

Amount of alcohol in beer in terms of percentage volume of alcohol per volume of beer.

Alcoholic

Warming taste of ethanol and higher alcohol's.

Beer Terminology



Ale

Beers distinguished by use of top fermenting yeast strains, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. The top fermenting yeast perform at warmer temperatures than do yeast's used to brew lager beer, and their byproducts are more evident in taste and aroma. Fruitiness and esters are often part of an ale's character.

All-malt

A relatively new term in America. "All malt" refers to a beer made exclusively with barley malt and without adjuncts.

Amber

Any top or bottom fermented beer having an amber color, that is, between pale and dark.

Anaerobic

An organism, such as a bottom-fermenting lager yeast, that is able to metabolize without oxygen present.

Aroma Hops

Varieties of hop chosen to impart bouquet. (See Hops)

Astringent

A drying, puckering taste; tannic; can be derived from boiling the grains, long mashes, over sparging or sparging with hard water.

Beer Terminology



Attenuation

Extent to which yeast consumes fermentable sugars (converting them into alcohol and carbon dioxide).

Bacterial

A general term covering off-flavors such as moldy, musty, woody, lactic acid, vinegar, or microbiological spoilage.

Balling Degrees

Scale indicating density of sugars in wort. Devised by C J N Balling.

Barley

A cereal grain that is malted for use in the grist that becomes the mash in the brewing of beer.

Barrel

A unit of measurement used by brewers in some countries. In Britain, a barrel holds 36 imperial gallons (1 imperial gallon = 4.5 liters), or 1.63 hectoliters. In the United States, a barrel holds 31.5 US gallons (1 US gallon = 3.8 liters), or 1.17 hectoliters.

Beer

Name given alcohol-containing beverages produced by fermenting grain, specifically malt, and flavored with hops.

Bitter

Bitterness of hops or malt husks; sensation on back of tongue.

Beer Terminology



Bitterness

The perception of a bitter flavor, in beer from iso-alpha-acid in solution (derived from hops). It is measured in International Bitterness Units (IBU).

Black malt

Partially malted barley roasted at high temperatures. Black malt gives a dark color and roasted flavor to beer.

Body

Thickness and mouth-filling property of a beer described as "full or thin bodied".

Bottle-conditioning

Secondary fermentation and maturation in the bottle, creating complex aromas and flavors.

Bottom-fermenting yeast

One of the two types of yeast used in brewing. Bottom-fermenting yeast works well at low temperatures and ferments more sugars leaving a crisp, clean taste and then settles to the bottom of the tank. Also referred to as "lager yeast".

Brewhouse

The collective equipment used to make beer.

Brew Kettle

The vessel in which wort from the mash is boiled with hops. Also called a copper.

Brewpub

Pub that makes its own beer and sells at least 50% of it on premises. Also known in Britain as a home-brew house and in Germany as a house brewery.

Bright Beer Tank

See conditioning tank.

Beer Terminology



Bung

The stopper in the hole in a keg or cask through which the keg or cask is filled and emptied. The hole may also be referred to as a bung or bunghole. Real beer must use a wooden bung.

Butterscotch

See diacetyl.

Cabbagelike

Aroma and taste of cooked vegetables; often a result of wort spoilage bacteria killed by alcohol in fermentation.

CAMRA

The CAMpaign for Real Ale. An organization in England that was founded in 1971 to preserve the production of cask-conditioned beers and ales.

Carbonation

Sparkle caused by carbon dioxide, either created during fermentation or injected later.

Caramel

A cooked sugar that is used to add color and alcohol content to beer. It is often used in place of more expensive malted barley.

Caramel malt

A sweet, coppery-colored malt. Caramel or crystal malt imparts both color and flavor to beer. Caramel malt has a high concentration of unfermentable sugars that sweeten the beer and, contribute to headretention.

Cask

A closed, barrel-shaped container for beer. They come in various sizes and are now usually made of metal. The bung in a cask of "Real" beer or ale must be made of wood to allow the pressure to be relived, as the fermentation of the beer, in the cask, continues.

Beer Terminology



Cask-conditioning

Secondary fermentation and maturation in the cask at the point of sale. Creates light carbonation.

Chlorophenolic

A plasticlike aroma; caused by chemical combination of chlorine and organic compounds.

Chill haze

Cloudiness caused by precipitation of protein-tannin compound at low temperatures, does not affect flavor.

Chill proof

Beer treated to allow it to withstand cold temperatures without clouding.

Clovelike

Spicy character reminiscent of cloves; characteristic of some wheat beers, or if excessive, may derive from wild yeast.

Conditioning

Period of maturation intended to impart "condition" (natural carbonation). Warm conditioning further develops the complex of flavors. Cold conditioning imparts a clean, round taste.

Conditioning Tank

A vessel in which beer is placed after primary fermentation where the beer matures, clarifies and, is naturally carbonated through secondary fermentation. Also called bright beer tank, serving tank and, secondary tank.

Contract Beer

Beer made by one brewery and then marketed by a company calling itself a brewery. The latter uses the brewing facilities of the former.

Beer Terminology



EBC

European Brewing Convention. An EBC scale is used to indicate colors in malts and beers.

Enzymes

Catalysts that are found naturally in the grain. When heated in mash, they convert the starches of the malted barley into maltose, a sugar used in solution and fermented to make beer.

Ester

Volatile flavor compound naturally created in fermentation. Often fruity, flowery or spicy.

Estery

Aroma or flavor reminiscent of flowers or fruits.

Fahrenheit (degrees)

$F = ((C \times 9) / 5) + 32$.

Fermentation

Conversion of sugars into ethyl alcohol and carbon dioxide, through the action of yeast.

Final specific gravity

Specific gravity of a beer when fermentation is complete (that is, all fermentable sugars have been fermented).

Fining

An aid to clarification: a substance that attracts particles that would otherwise remain suspended in the brew.

Beer Terminology



Filter

The removal of designated impurities by passing the wort through a medium, sometimes made of diatomaceous earth (made up of the microscopic skeletal remains of marine animals). Yeast in suspension is often targeted for removal.

Fruity/Estery

Flavor and aroma of bananas, strawberries, apples, or other fruit; from high temperature fermentation and certain yeast strains.

Grainy

Tastes like cereal or raw grain.

Gravity

See specific gravity.

Grist

Brewers' term for milled grains, or the combination of milled grains to be used in a particular brew. Derives from the verb to grind. Also sometimes applied to hops.

Hand Pump

A device for dispensing draft beer using a pump operated by hand. The use of a hand pump allows the cask-conditioned beer to be served without the use of pressurized carbon dioxide.

Hang

Lingering bitterness or harshness.

Hard Cider

A fermented beverage made from apples.

Heat Exchanger

A mechanical device used to rapidly reduce the temperature of the wort.

Beer Terminology



Hefe

A German word meaning "yeast". Used mostly in conjunction with wheat (weiss) beers to denote that the beer is bottled or kegged with the yeast in suspension (hefe-weiss). These beers are cloudy, frothy and, very refreshing.

Hogshead

Cask holding 54 imperial gallons (243 liters).

Hop back

Sieve-like vessel used to strain out the petals of the hop flowers. Known as a hop jack in the United States.

Hops

Herb added to boiling wort or fermenting beer to impart a bitter aroma and flavor.

Hoppy

Aroma of hops, does not include hop bitterness.

Infusion

Simplest form of mash, in which grains are soaked in water. May be at a single temperature, or with upward or (occasionally) downward changes.

IBU

International Bitterness units. A system of indicating the hop bitterness in finished beer.

Beer Terminology



Keg

One-half barrel, or 15.5 U. S. gallons. A half keg or, 7.75 U. S. gallons, is referred to as a pony-keg.

Krusening

The addition of a small proportion of partly fermented wort to a brew during lagering. Stimulates secondary fermentation and imparts a crisp, spritzy character.

Lager

Beers produced with bottom fermenting yeast strains, *Saccharomyces uvarum* (or *carlsbergensis*) at colder fermentation temperatures than ales. This cooler environment inhibits the natural production of esters and other byproducts, creating a crisper tasting product.

Lagering

From the German word for storage. Refers to maturation for several weeks or months at cold temperatures (close to 0C /32F) to settle residual yeast, impart carbonation and make for clean round flavors.

Lauter

To run the wort from the mash tun. From the German word to clarify. A lauter tun is a separate vessel to do this job. It uses a system of sharp rakes to achieve a very intensive extraction of malt sugars.

Lauter Tun

See mash tun.

Length

The amount of wort brewed each time the brew house is in operation.

Light-Struck

Skunklike smell; from exposure to light.

Beer Terminology



Liquor

The brewer's word for water used in the brewing process, as included in the mash or, used to sparge the grains after mashing.

Malt (ing)

The process by which barley is steeped in water, germinated, then kilned to convert insoluble starch to soluble substances and sugar. The foundation ingredient of beer.

Malt Extract

The condensed wort from a mash, consisting of maltose, dextrins and, other dissolved solids. Either as a syrup or powdered sugar, it is used by brewers, in solutions of water and extract, to reconstitute wort for fermentation.

Malt Liquor

A legal term used in the U.S. to designate a fermented beverage of relatively high alcohol content (7%-8% by volume).

Mash

(Verb) To release malt sugars by soaking the grains in water. (Noun) The resultant mixture.

Mash Tun

A tank where grist is soaked in water and heated in order to convert the starch to sugar and extract the sugars and other solubles from the grist.

Maltose

A water soluble, fermentable sugar contained in malt.

Beer Terminology



Mead

Meads are produced by the fermentation of honey, water, yeast and optional ingredients such as fruit, herbs, and/or spices. According to final gravity, they are categorized as: dry (0.996 to 1009); medium (1010 to 1019); or sweet (1020 or higher). Wine, champagne, sherry, mead, ale or lager yeasts may be used.

Medicinal

Chemical or phenolic character; can be the result of wild yeast, contact with plastic, or sanitizer residue.

Metallic

Tastes tinny, bloodlike or coinlike; may come from bottle caps.

Microbrewery

Small brewery generally producing less than 15,000 barrels per year. Sales primarily off premises.

Mouthfeel

A sensation derived from the consistency or viscosity of a beer, described, for example as thin or full.

Musty

Moldy, mildewy character; can be the result of cork or bacterial infection.

Original gravity

A measurement of the density of fermentable sugars in a mixture of malt and water with which a brewer begins a given batch.

Oxidized

Stale flavor of wet cardboard, paper, rotten pineapple, or sherry, as a result of oxygen as the beer ages or is exposed to high temperatures.

Beer Terminology



Pasteurization

Heating of beer to 60-79(C/140-174F to stabilize it microbiologically. Flash-pasteurization is applied very briefly, for 15-60 seconds by heating the beer as it passes through the pipe. Alternately, the bottled beer can be passed on a conveyor belt through a heated tunnel. This more gradual process takes at least 20 minutes and sometimes much longer.

Phenolic

Flavor and aroma of medicine, plastic, Band-Aids, smoke, or cloves; caused by wild yeast or bacteria, or sanitizer residue.

Pitch

To add yeast to wort.

Plato, degrees

Expresses the specific gravity as the weight of extract in a 100 gram solution at 64F (17.5C). Refinement of the Balling scale.

Priming

The addition of sugar at the maturation stage to promote a secondary fermentation.

Pub

An establishment that serves beer and sometimes other alcoholic beverages for consumption on premise. The term originated in England and is the shortened form of "public house".

Publican

The owner or manager of a pub.

Beer Terminology



Regional specialty brewery

A brewery that produces more than 15,000 barrels of beer annually, with its largest selling product a specialty beer.

Reinheitsgebot

"Purity Law" originating in Bavaria in 1516 and now applied to all German brewers making beer for consumption in their own country. It requires that only malted grains, hops, yeast and water may be used in the brewing.

Saccharomyces cerevisiae

See Top-fermenting yeast.

Saccharomyces uvarum

See Bottom-fermenting yeast.

Saccharomyces carlsbergensis

See Bottom-fermenting yeast.

Salty

Flavor like table salt; experienced on the side of the tongue.

Secondary fermentation

Stage of fermentation occurring in a closed container from several weeks to several months.

Shelf life

Describes the number of days a beer will retain it's peak drinkability. The shelf life for commercially produced beers is usually a maximum of four months.

Solventlike

Reminiscent of acetone or lacquer thinner; caused by high fermentation temperatures.

Sour/Acidic

Vinegarlike or lemonlike; can be caused by bacterial infection.

Specific gravity

A measure of the density of a liquid or solid compared to that of water ((1.000 at 39F (4C)).



Beer Terminology

Sparge

To spray grist with hot water in order to remove soluble sugars (maltose). This takes place at the end of the mash.

Squares

Brewers' term for a square fermenting vessel.

Sweet

Taste like sugar; experienced on the front of the tongue.

Sulfurlike

Reminiscent of rotten eggs or burnt matches; a by-product of some yeast's.

Tart

Taste sensation caused by acidic flavors.

Terminal gravity

Synonym for final specific gravity.

Top-fermenting yeast

One of the two types of yeast used in brewing. Top-fermenting yeast works better at warmer temperatures and are able to tolerate higher alcohol concentrations than bottom-fermenting yeast. It is unable to ferment some sugars, and results in a fruitier, sweeter beer. Also known as "ale yeast".

Tun

Any large vessels used in brewing. In America, "tub" is often preferred.

Beer Terminology



Units of bitterness

See IBU.

Vinous

Reminiscent of wine.

Winy

Sherrylike flavor; can be caused by warm fermentation or oxidation in very old beer.

Wort

The solution of grain sugars strained from the mash tun. At this stage, regarded as "sweet wort", later as brewed wort, fermenting wort and finally beer.

Wort Chiller

See heat exchanger.

Yeast

A micro-organism of the fungus family. Genus *Saccharomyces*.

Yeasty

Yeastlike flavor; a result of yeast in suspension or beer sitting too long on sediment.