You Can Brew It!

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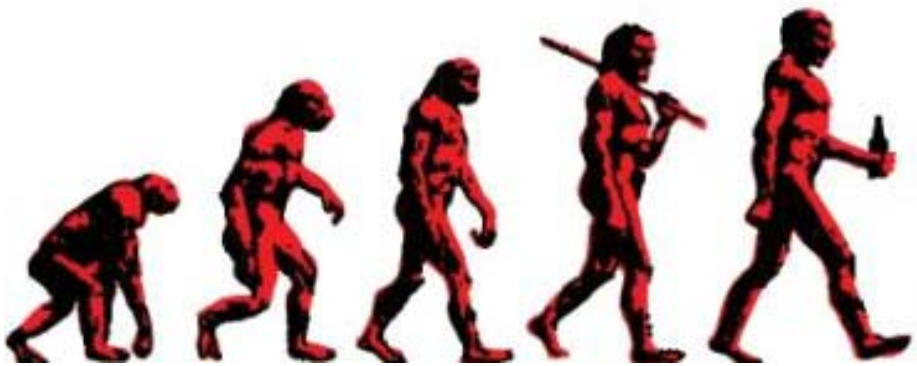
http://youcanbrewit.webs.com/ (website will not work on ANL computer because of overzealous blocker)

The History of Beer in 5 Parts



i.e. – How Home Brewing Became So Popular

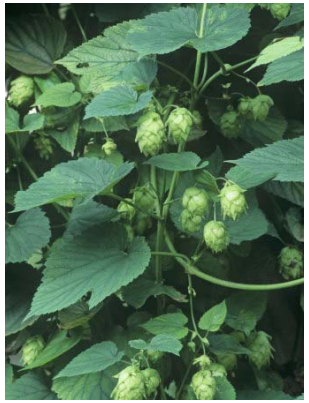
Beer: A Short History Pt.1

Beer is the world's oldest and most widely consumed alcoholic beverage and the third most popular drink overall after water and tea.

Beer dates back to the early Neolithic period, or 9000 BC. The invention of bread and beer has been argued to be responsible for humanity's ability to develop technology and build civilization!

Beer: A Short History Pt. 2

For most of its history, beer was a dark, sweet drink that had problems with shelf life. From ancient times through the middle ages, beer had to be consumed fresh as aged beers usually became sour and/or spoiled.



Between the years 1079 and 1400, brewers in most European countries discovered that hops, a vine-like plant, produced flower cones that made beer less sweet and also had preservative qualities when added to beer.

Beer: A Short History Pt. 3

American beer started as an offshoot of the beers brought over by immigrants from northern and western Europe. It did not take long for the American colonies and eventually the United States to establish a brewing tradition.

Prohibition would have a devastating effect on this heritage.

Beer: A Short History Pt. 4

At the high water mark before prohibition, there were over 4,131 breweries in the U.S.

Within a year of prohibition's end, 756 breweries were back in operation. Corporate mergers and competition made that number steadily dwindle.

By 1980 there were only 80 U.S. breweries being operated by just 51 different companies.

Beer: A Short History Pt. 5

When prohibition was repealed, home wine-making was legalized, but a clerical error omitted the words "and/or beer" from the new law.

In 1978 Congress passed a bill repealing Federal restrictions on the home brewing of beer.

The home brew revolution that followed lead to a great increase in brew pubs and small craft breweries. There are now 4,000 breweries in the U.S. with nearly 1,000 more in the planning stages!

Beer Styles To Brew At Home

Ales and Lagers

Ales

Ales are the oldest form of beer. A beer is called an ale when the yeast that ferments it is a “top fermenting” yeast that works best at warm temperatures – generally between 60 and 80 degrees.

Ales are very flavorful, often fruity, and can range from simple to very complex.

The alcohol by volume (ABV) of home brewed ales ***normally*** ranges from 3% to 13% depending on the style of beer being brewed.

Lagers

Lagers are a relatively young style of beer, invented by German brewers in the Middle Ages. A beer is called a lager when the yeast that ferments it is a “bottom fermenting” yeast that works best at cooler temperatures – generally between 45 and 55 degrees.

Lagers are very crisp and clean, and quite refreshing.

The alcohol by volume (ABV) of home brewed lagers ***normally*** ranges from 4% to 8% depending on the style of beer being brewed.

Brewing A Batch

- Its not as hard as you think

Basic Equipment Needed On Brew Day

- 5+ gallon stainless steel pot
- Large mesh strainer
- Plastic fermentation bucket w/lid
- Airlock
- Thermometer
- Hydrometer
- Cleanser and Sanitizer

Basic Ingredients Needed

- 6 + gallons of water

  (no chlorinated water, no distilled water, avoid treated “soft water”)

- Base Fermentables (malt extract)

Fresh LME is OK

Fresh DME is better

Basic Ingredients Needed

- Pelletized hops (fresher is better)

- Yeast

Fresh dry yeast is OK

Fresh liquid yeast is better

Ingredient Kit

Other Ingredients Needed?

- Specialty/Steeping Grains
  - add color or flavor complexity
- Adjunct Fermentables
  - sugar / molasses / maple syrup / honey / etc
- Fruit
  - cherry, raspberry, blueberry, apricot, peach
- Spices
  - coriander & orange peel?
  - cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice?

The Basic Brewing Process

1. Place 3 gallons of water into brew pot.
2. If you are using specialty grains, hang grain bag in pot.
3. Turn on the heat and watch temp. (remove grain bag at 170 degrees)
4. Once grain bag is removed, take pot off heat and stir in malt extract. Return to heat.
5. Bring to boil and hold there for 60 minutes (or as recipe prescribes).
6. Add hops as recipe calls for them.

The Basic Brewing Process

7. After 60 minutes, remove from heat and cool to 70 degrees with ice bath.
8. Pour the “wort” through strainer into plastic fermenter bucket.
9. Take a gravity reading w/hydrometer & add water as needed to hit target.
10. Pitch the yeast into the fermenter.
11. Seal fermenter bucket with lid and attach airlock.
12. When fermentation is complete, record final gravity and bottle beer.

This is what you want to see within the first 24 hours…but within the first 8 hours is better

Airlock activity

"Krausen" forming

This is what a completed beer looks like in the fermenter after a week or so!

Basic Equipment Needed On Bottling Day

- Hydrometer
- Small sauce pan (1 qt)
- Bottling bucket
- Racking cane / auto siphon / tubing
- Bottle filler / tubing
- Bottles / caps
- Capper

General Rules To Live By

- RDWHAHB – i.e. be patient!
- Sanitation is the most important part of making good beer.
- Freshness of ingredients is also crucial.
- Keep lots of notes so you can repeat a good beer.

Resources – Equipment/Ingredients

For online or telephone ordering of supplies and/or equipment, I recommend:

Northern Brewer – www.northernbrewer.com
Midwest Homebrew Supply – www.midwestsupplies.com
More Beer – www.morebeer.com

To avoid shipping costs, buy locally whenever possible. I use the **Brew and Grow** store in Bolingbrook, located at 181 W. Crossroads Pkwy.

Resources – Peer to Peer Help

There is a wealth of information and free advice available online at:
Homebrewtalk – *www.homebrewtalk.com*
Beer Advocate - *www.beeradvocate.com*

There are also local home brewing clubs such as **Brewers Of South Suburbia** (www.bossbeer.org) that have monthly meetings. Joining a club is a great way to network and learn from other more experienced brewers.

Resources – Online Brewing Tools

http://www.brewtoad.com

Click on the recipe calculator and use powerful brewing/recipe software for free.

www.bjcp.org

Click on the style guidelines link to see beer style guidelines, descriptions, and specifications.

http://www.rooftopbrew.net/abv.php

Use this free calculator to determine the strength of your finished beer.

Resources – Books and Magazines

Books I Recommend:

- *Homebrewing for Dummies*
- *The Complete Joy of Homebrewing*
- *Brewing Classic Styles*

Magazines I Recommend:

- *Zymurgy* (the journal of the AHA)
- *Brew Your Own*