

Overview of Changes Between the 2015 and 2021 BJCP Beer Style Guidelines

By Dennis Mitchell and Gordon Strong

Overview

This document describes the more substantive changes between the 2015 and 2021 versions of the BJCP Beer Style Guidelines. The 2021 update was minor in the sense that we did not make many changes to the overall organization of the guidelines, or to the structure and naming of beer styles. While these changes were minor, each individual style description was reviewed, edited, and updated to remove outdated or redundant material. Duplication was eliminated when Aroma and Flavor descriptions matched exactly. Consistent language, grammar, and usage was introduced, and the guidelines read as written with a single voice. The Introduction and Glossary have been expanded, and better cross-referencing of styles was introduced. A completely new Introduction to Specialty Beers section was written.

Let's look at a couple of examples of what we mean by rewriting and editing for simplicity and precision. A line in mouthfeel in the 2015 edition for one style stated "Very light, smooth alcohol warming not a fault if it does not intrude into overall balance." In the 2021 edition, this now reads "Low warmth optional." The three words in the 2021 edition have the same meaning and intent as the 16 words used in the 2015 edition. Another example would be editing "Low yeast-derived fruitiness is acceptable but not required" to "Low esters optional." Again, the meaning is the same but the language is more precise and consistent across the guidelines.

Some more notable updates to the 2021 edition include:

- The Introduction and Glossary have been expanded, and better cross-referencing of styles has been introduced. A completely new Introduction to Specialty Beers section has been written.
- We updated some vital statistics, primarily SRM ranges, after a review for internal consistency between the association of SRM values to approximate colors. Sometimes, the SRM range we stated did not align to the color description, so we made minor adjustments for internal consistency. This was not the result of any scientific analysis.
- The History sections have been updated based on the latest references, and were reviewed by beer historian Ron Pattinson. This document attempts to point out major changes to history sections.
- The Characteristic Ingredients sections have been rewritten to read less like recipes. This document will not discuss these changes since this section of most styles was rewritten or significantly edited.
- For many lager styles, you may notice references to an acceptable sulfur character or acceptable DMS/corny character was removed from the guideline. This is now covered in the "common attributes of all beer styles" section of the beer introduction. This section notes that lagers may have fleeting sulfur notes as long as they are not foul sulfur-based aromas such as rotten eggs. It also notes that styles with large amounts of Pilsner malt may have low DMS. Because this information is assumed, it was removed from individual style guidelines for brevity.
- For styles that allow dry-hopping as a technique, we have removed grassiness as an acceptable characteristic. Our review of modern hopping techniques and evaluation of hoppy beer styles led to this change.

- For German Wheat styles, we now state that a bubblegum character is a fault (it was previously listed as acceptable at low levels). Discussions with German beer experts and evaluations of modern examples of these styles led to this change.
- Throughout the guidelines, some styles previously included references to intensity levels that started with “no” or “none.” For example, “No to low hop aroma.” We have changed these ranges to state that those characteristics are “optional” up to the stated intensity level. For example, “Low esters optional.” Part of this change is to discourage judges from using ranges like “no to moderate” when describing beer, as a perceived characteristic either exists or does not exist. Because this is only a change in how we describe the intensity levels and not the actual acceptable ranges, we do not include these changes in this document.
- Sour Beers received major attention. There are expanded fault and descriptive terms in the Glossary for sour beers, and consistent terminology has been adopted throughout the style descriptions. Brettanomyces is worded to not always imply a funky character. Berliner Weisse allows fruity Brett. Flanders Red and Brown ales allow balanced acetic character. A new Straight Sour Beer style has been added to allow use as a base style in other beers, such as fruited kettle sours.
- Sweet Beers also received attention, with lactose being allowable in specialty styles previously mentioning only fermentable sugars. The definition of sweeteners in beers has been loosened to cover additional products. A Specialty Spice Beer style has been added in a similar manner to the existing Specialty Fruit Beer style.
- There are a few name changes and style moves. Gose moves from Historical to European Sour, reflecting its new popularity. Kellerbier moves to Historical and is rewritten to cover Pils, Helles, Amber, and Dark base versions, and is more of a specialty-type style now. Grape Ale has been added to fruit beer. Italian Grape Ale remains unchanged as an Italian style of beer having originated in Italy. The Trappist Ale category is now named Monastic Ale, and the Trappist Single style is now Belgian Single. Clone Beer has been renamed to Commercial Specialty Beer, and the style description rewritten.
- Some styles moved from web-only Provisional Styles into the main guidelines. New England IPA was renamed Hazy IPA and joins the IPA Category. A new Brut IPA style was added to Specialty IPA. Catharina Sour and New Zealand Pilsner move into the Local Styles section for Brazil and New Zealand, respectively.

How to use this document

In this document, we list each style and try to provide any substantive changes we believe judges or those studying for the exams need to know. This includes changes to accepted intensity levels or the accepted qualities of beer characteristics. Within each style in this guide, if sections of a guidelines are NOT listed, either no changes were made to those sections or any changes did not substantively impact the meaning of text. The abbreviation AAFM means “Aroma, Appearance, Flavor, and Mouthfeel” when discussing changes across all of those sections.

Because most overall impression sections and characteristic ingredient sections were completely or significantly rewritten for consistency and voice, we do not list those changes in this document (since we would be listing them all). Overall, **we strongly encourage judges to read the new guidelines** as time permits. You can send any questions related to styles to styles@bjcp.org.

Document Revision Log

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Introduction to the Guidelines

- Added clarification about what a “classic style” is in regards to specialty beers.
- Added clarifications related to the intended use of the guidelines (i.e., “we are not telling breweries what they should call their products.”)
- Clarification about country of origin and use of locations in style names.
- Added four items to the list of “maxims” for using the style guidelines (items 11-14):
 - 11. Our guidelines are extensible
 - 12. We are not the beer police.
 - 13. Different Formats Exist
 - 14. The BJCP does not run competitions.
- Refined information in the “Format of a style description” section, particularly related to historical information, vital stats, and commercial examples.

Introduction to Beer Styles

- Updated the “common attributes of all beer styles” section related to lagers:
 - Lagers tend to be smooth, clean, and free of esters. Stronger and darker lagers may have light esters that round out the flavor. Pale lagers, especially very fresh ones, may have light but pleasant yeast-derived sulfur notes. Some sulfur notes may be fleeting. These sulfur notes are acceptable, but foul sulfur-based aromas (rotten eggs, sewer gas, etc.) are a fault.
- Updates to Glossary:
 - Added definitions for: Dry-hopped, Juicy, Bubblegum, Kveik, Acetic character, clean sourness, ethyl acetate, indole, LAB, Lacto, Pedio, Ropiness, Sacch, THP, Balanced, Clean, Crisp, Dry, and Harsh
 - American Hops: updated to note modern hops can have a wide range of characteristics including tropical fruit
 - Continental hops: specified that this includes German and Czech landrace hops
 - Changed “Saazer-type hops” to “Traditional German or Czech hops” and added more specificity to the definition. This naming was also changed in styles that references “saazer-type hops.”
 - Added more specificity to the definition of “Brett”
- Added a note encouraging judges to “not be overly pedantic” when associating color names to SRM references.
- Added “south-america” to the region of origin

1. Standard American Beer

1A. American Light Lager

- **Comments:** Added “With little malt or hop flavor, the yeast character often is what most differentiates brands.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Keystone Light
 - **Added:** Grain Belt Premium Light American Lager

1B. American Lager

- **Comments:** Added “With little malt or hop flavor, the yeast character is what most frequently differentiates brands.”
- **Vital Stats:** Adjusted SRM range from 2-4 to 2-3.5.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Added:** Old Style

1C. Cream Ale

- **Appearance:** Changed upper end of color range from “moderate gold” to “light gold.”
- **Flavor:** Specified previously undefined malt character as “generally neutral, possibly grainy or crackery.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Lighter body, smoother, and more carbonated than a Blonde Ale. May seem like a somewhat subtle Kölsch.”
- **Commercial Examples:**
 - **Removed:** Old Style, New Glarus Spotted Cow
 - **Added:** Kiwanda Pre-Prohibition Cream Ale, Sun King Sunlight Cream Ale

1D. American Wheat Beer

- **Aroma:** Added “not typically dry-hopped”
- **History:** Specified that the style was “first produced by Anchor in 1984” before being popularized by Widmer.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Added:** GoodLife Sweet As! Pacific Ale

2. International Lager

2A. International Pale Lager

- **Aroma:** Changed “low levels of yeast character are not a fault” to “Clean fermentation profile.”
- **Entry Instructions:** Added “Entrant may specify regional variations, if desired (Mexican lager, Dutch lager, etc.).”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed ABV from 4.6-6.0% to 4.5-6.0%

2B. International Amber Lager

- **Aroma:** Specified that the malt character can be “occasionally, nutty or biscuity, but never roasty.” Hop aroma intensity changed from optional to “Low, unobtrusive.” Removed “A slight DMS or corny aroma is acceptable.”
- **Flavor:** Added “The beer may seem a touch sweet if the bitterness level is low.”
- **Vital Stats:** Adjusted ABV from 4.6-6.0% to 4.5-6.0%. Adjusted SRM from 7-14 to 6-14.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Capital Winter Skal, Schell’s Oktoberfest
 - **Added:** Abita Amber Lager, Capital Wisconsin Amber Lager, Grain Belt NordEast

2A. International Dark Lager

- **Aroma:** Changed “little to no malt aroma” to “faint malt aroma.” Changed “low levels of yeast character are not a fault” to “Clean fermentation profile.” Removed “A light amount of DMS or corn aroma is not a fault.”

- **Appearance:** Changed upper end of color range from “dark brown” to “very dark brown.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 14-22 to 14-30.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Devils Backbone Old Virginia Dark, Session Blak Dark Lager
 - **Added:** Heineken Dark Lager
 - **Corrected:** Saint Pauli Girl Dark to Saint Pauli Girl Special Dark

3. Czech Lager

3A. Czech Pale Lager

- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Pivovar Kout na Šumavě Koutská 10
 - **Added:** Bernard světlé pivo 10, Primátor Antonín světlé výčepní, Radegast Rázna 10

3B. Czech Premium Pale Lager

- **Appearance:** Adjusted lower end of color range from “gold” to “medium yellow.”
- **Flavor:** Changed diacetyl level from “light to moderate” to “light to moderately-low.”
- **History:** Specified that while Josef Groll is credited with first brewing the beer, “there may have been earlier pale lagers in Bohemia.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Gambrinus Premium, Kout na Šumavě Koutská 12°
 - **Added:** Budvar 33 světlý ležák, Radegast Ryze hořká 12

3C. Czech Amber Lager

- **Comments:** Added “Some versions may be a blend of pale and dark lagers.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Pivovar Vysoký Chlumeč Démon
 - **Added:** Gambrinus Polotmavá 12°, Kozel Semi-Dark, Lobkowicz Démon 13

3D. Czech Dark Lager

- **Aroma:** Modified hop aroma range from “low” to “low to moderate.” Modified ester aroma range from “low” to “low to moderate.”
- **Flavor:** Modified hop flavor range from “moderately-low to none” to “low to moderate.”
- **History:** Clarified that “U Fleků “produces the best-known version.”
- **Vital Stats:** Adjusted SRM from 14-35 to 17-35.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Bohemian Brewery Cherny Bock 4%, Budweiser Budvar B:Dark tmavý ležák, Devils Backbone Morana, Kout na Šumavě Koutský tmavý speciál 14°, Notch Černé Pivo, Pivovar Březnice Herold
 - **Added:** Bernard černý ležák 12°, Budvar tmavý ležák, Herold tmavé silné pivo 13°, Kozel Dark , Krušovice černé, Primátor dark lager

4. Pale Malty European Lager

4A. Munich Helles

- **Appearance:** Changed lower end of color range from “medium yellow” to “pale yellow.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added that Munich Helles is “less crisp” than German Pils. Added “Less body and alcohol than a Festbier.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Bürgerbräu Wolznacher Hell Naturtrüb, Paulaner Premium Lager, Spaten Premium Lager
 - **Added:** Paulaner Münchner Lager, Schönramer Hell, Spaten Münchner Hell
 - **Revised:** Weihenstephaner Original to Weihenstephaner Original Helles

4B. Festbier

- **Appearance:** Changed “Most commercial examples are medium gold in color” to “Most commercial examples are pale gold in color.”
- **Flavor:** Changed “soft sweetness” to “soft malty richness.”
- **Comments:** Added “May be called Helles Märzen.”
- **Style Comparison:** Changed comparison with Munich Helles to “Stronger than a Munich Helles, with a bit more body, and hop and malt flavor.”
- **Vital Stats:** Adjusted SRM from 4-7 to 4-6.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Hofbräu Festbier, Paulaner Wiesn, Schönramer Gold
 - **Added:** Hofbräu Oktoberfestbier, Paulaner Oktoberfest Bier

4C. Helles Bock

- **Flavor:** Added potential malt characteristics of “doughy, bready, or lightly toasty.” Hop flavor intensity range changed from “Moderate to no” to “Low to moderate spicy, herbal, floral, peppery hop flavor optional, but present in the best examples.”
- **History:** Added that the style “may include a wider color and hopping range than is seen in exported products.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Less strong than a pale Doppelbock, but with similar flavors.” Added that it could be a Festbier brewed to bock strength.
- **Vital Stats:** SRM changed from 6-11 to 6-9.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Capital Maibock, Blind Tiger Maibock, Hacker-Pschorr Hubertus Bock
 - **Added:** Chuckanut Maibock, Hofbräu Maibock
 - **Revised:** Mahr’s Bock to Mahr’s Heller Bock

5. Pale Bitter European Lager

5A. German Leichtbier

- **Appearance:** Changed color range from “straw to pale gold” to “pale straw to deep yellow.”
- **History:** Added “targeted towards health or fitness conscious consumers. Increasingly supplanted in the current market by non-alcoholic beers and radlers.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Like a lower-alcohol, lighter-bodied, slightly less aggressive Munich Helles” and “More bitter and flavorful than an American Light Lager.”

- **Vital Stats:** Adjusted SRM from 2-5 to 1.5-4.0.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Beck's Light, Bitburger Light, Mahr's Leicht, Paulaner Münchner Hell Leicht, Paulaner Premium Leicht
 - **Added:** Autenrieder Schlossbräu Leicht, Greif Bräu Leicht, Hohenthanner Tannen Hell Leicht, Müllerbrau Heimer Leicht, Schönramer Surtaler Schankbier, Waldhaus Sommer Bier

5B. Kolsch

- **Aroma:** Removed "Some yeast strains may give a slight winy or sulfury character (this characteristic is also optional, but not a fault)."
- **Flavor:** Specified malt intensity as "medium to medium-low." Added "Finish is soft, dry, and slightly crisp, not sharp or biting." Added "While the balance between the flavor components can vary, none are ever strong." Removed "May have a slightly winy, mineraly, or sulfury accent that accentuates the dryness and flavor balance. A slight wheat taste is rare but not a fault."
- **Mouthfeel:** Changed "Smooth and generally crisp and well-attenuated." to "Smooth and soft, but well-attenuated and not heavy. Not harsh."
- **Comments:** Emphasized that judges should be alert to oxidation as the style does not age well.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Added:** Päckgen Kolsch

5C. German Helles Exportbier

- **Aroma:** Changed range of hop aroma from "low to medium" to "medium-low to medium." Added that malt character may have "light toasty, bready, or doughy notes." Added that "Hops and malt both noticeable, and generally balanced." Removed "A slight sulfury note at the start that dissipates is not a fault, neither is a low background note of DMS."
- **Appearance:** Changed color range from "light gold to deep gold" to "medium yellow to deep gold."
- **Flavor:** Rewritten to: "Moderate, balanced malt and hops with supporting bitterness. Malt and hop flavors similar to aroma (same descriptors and intensities). Medium, noticeable bitterness, full on the palate, with a medium-dry finish. Clean fermentation character. Aftertaste of both malt and hops, generally in balance. Mineral character typically perceived more as a roundness and fullness of flavor, and a dry, flinty sharpness in the finish rather than overt mineral flavors. Background sulfate optional."
- **Mouthfeel:** Changed body range from "medium" to "medium to medium-full." Added "Smooth and mellow on the palate. Very slight warmth may be noted in stronger versions."
- **Comments:** Rewritten to "Also known Dortmund Export, Dortmund, Export, or simply a Dort. Called Export within Germany, and often Dortmund elsewhere, Export is also a beer strength descriptor under German brewing tradition, and could be applied to other styles. Splits the difference between a German Pils and a Munich Helles in several aspects: color, hop-malt balance, finish, bitterness."
- **Style Comparison:** Added "Stronger, drier, but less hoppy than a Czech Premium Pale Lager."
- **Vital Stats:**
 - SRM changed from 4-7 to 4-6
 - OG changed from 1.048-1.056 to 1.050-1.058
 - FG changed from 1.010-1.015 to 1.008-1.015
 - ABV changed from 4.8-6.0% to 5.0-6.0%
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** DAB Original, Dortmund Kronen, Dortmund Union Export, Flensburger Gold, Gordon Biersch Golden Export, Great Lakes Dortmund Gold
 - **Added:** Chuckanut Export Dortmund Lager, DAB Dortmund Export, Dortmund Kronen, Landshuter Edel Hell, Müllerbräu Export Gold, Schönramer Gold

5D. German Pils

- **Aroma:** Changed lower range of hop intensity from “moderately-low” to “moderate.” Changed malt range from “medium-low to low” to “Low to medium.” Removed “May optionally have a very light sulfury note that comes from water as much as yeast.” Removed “One-dimensional examples are inferior to the more complex qualities when all ingredients are sensed. May have a very low background note of DMS.”
- **Appearance:** Changed upper limit of color range from “light gold” to “deep yellow.”
- **Flavor:** Rewritten to: “Initial malt flavor quickly overcome with hop flavor and bitterness, leading into a dry, crisp finish. Malt and hop flavors similar to aroma (same descriptors and intensities). Medium to high bitterness, lingering into the aftertaste along with a touch of malt and hops. Clean fermentation profile. Minerally water can accentuate and lengthen the dry finish. Hops and malt can fade with age, but the beer should always have a bitter balance.”
- **Mouthfeel:** Added: “Should not feel heavy. Not harsh, but may have a flinty, minerally, sharpness in some examples.”
- **Vital Stats:** SRM changed from 2-5 to 2-4.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Left Hand Polestar Pils, Stoudt Pils, Tröegs Sunshine Pils
 - **Added:** ABK Pils Anno 1907, Jever Pilsener, Bierstadt Slow-Pour Pils, Rothaus Pils
 - **Revised:** Paulaner Premium Pils to Paulaner Pils

6. Amber Malty European Lager

6A. Märzen

- **Aroma:** Changed “no hop aroma” to “Very low floral, herbal, or spicy hop aroma optional.”
- **Flavor:** Specified malt intensity range as “moderate to high.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added that Märzen and Czech Amber Lager have a different malt profile.
- **Vital Stats:** Changed ABV range from 5.8-6.3% to 5.6-6.3%.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Buergerliches Ur-Saalfelder
 - **Added:** Hofmark Märzen, Saalfelder Ur-Saalfelder
 - **Revised:** Hacker-Pschorr Original Oktoberfest to Hacker-Pschorr Oktoberfest Märzen. Weltenburg Kloster Anno 1050 to Weltenburger Kloster Anno 1050.

6B. Rauchbier

- **Aroma:** Specified the optional hop character can be “floral or spicy.”
- **Appearance:** Changed color range from “medium amber/light copper to dark brown” to “Deep amber to coppery-brown in color, often a little darker than the underlying Märzen style.”
- **Flavor:** Added “The quality and character of the smoke is important; it should be cleanly smoky.”
- **Comments:** Added note that “The smoke character and intensity varies by maltster and brewery.”
- **History:** Added “While smoked beers certainly were made long ago, the origins of this specific style are unclear but must have been developed after Märzen was created.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Eisenbahn Rauchbier, Kaiserdom Rauchbier, Victory Scarlet Fire Rauchbier
 - **Added:** Cervejaria Bamberg Rauchbier, Göller Rauchbier, Rittmayer Rauchbier

6C. Dunkles Bock

- **Flavor:** Specified the malt intensity range as “medium to medium-high.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Great Lakes Rockefeller Bock, New Glarus Uff-da Bock
 - **Added:** Lindeboom Bock, Schell’s Bock

7. Amber Bitter European Lager

7A. Vienna Lager

- **Aroma and Flavor:** Added that a significantly biscuity malt aroma is inappropriate (this is in addition to the existing mention of caramel or roast character as inappropriate).
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Cuauhtémoc Noche Buena
 - **Added:** Ottakringer Wiener Original, Theresianer Vienna

7B. Altbier

- **Comments:** Clarified that “Stronger sticke and doppelsticke beers should be entered in the 27 Historical Beer style instead.”
- **History:** Updated to: “Developed in the late 19th century in Düsseldorf to use lager techniques to compete with lager. Older German styles were brewed in the area but there is no linkage to modern Altbier.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Less alcohol, less malty richness, and more bitterness than a Dunkles Bock. Drier, richer, and more bitter than a Vienna Lager.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 11-17 to 9-17.

7C. Kellerbier

This style was moved to the Historical Beer category and condensed into a single style description that encompasses both pale and amber versions, while also being expanded to include dark and Pilsner versions.

8. Dark European Lager

8A. Munich Dunkel

- **Aroma:** Specified malt intensity range to be “moderate to high.” Added “The malt character is more malty-rich than sugary or caramelly sweet.”
- **Flavor:** Rewritten to maintain consistency and voice; style characteristics did not substantively change.
- **Mouthfeel:** Added “Smooth lager character.” and “Not warming.”
- **Comments:** Revised to “A traditional Munich style, the dark companion to Helles. Franconian versions are more bitter than ones from Munich.”
- **History:** Added specificity to the style origins: “Developed at Spaten in the 1830s after the development of Munich malt, and seen as a successor to dark regional beers of the time.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 14-28 to 17-28.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Chuckanut Dunkel Lager, Hacker-Pschorr Alt Munich Dark
 - **Added:** Eittinger Urtyp Dunkel, Hacker-Pschorr Münchner Dunkel, Hofbräuhaus Dunkel

8B. Schwarzbier

- **Aroma:** Changed the optional hop aroma intensity from “low” to “moderately-low.”
- **Comments:** Changed “don’t expect strongly roasted, porter-like flavors” to “Strongly roasted, Porter-like flavors are a flaw.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed IBU range from 20-30 to 20-35. Changed SRM range from 17-30 to 19-30.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Einbecker Schwarzbier, Eisenbahn Dunkel
 - **Added:** Chuckanut Schwarz Lager, pFriem Schwarzbier
 - **Revised:** Mönchshof Schwarzbier to Kulmbacher Mönchshof Schwarzbier

9. Strong European Beer

9A. Doppelbock

- **Aroma:** Specified that the dark fruit character in dark versions can be “like plums, dark grapes, or fruit leather.”
- **Appearance:** Differentiated the color range between pale and dark versions.
- **Flavor:** Better differentiated the flavor differences between pale and dark versions.
- **Comments:** Clarified that stronger versions exceeding the listed vital stats are acceptable “provided the balance remains the same.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** EKU 28
 - **Added:** Meinel Doppelbock Hell, Riegele Auris 19, Schönbuch Doppelbock Hell, Staffelberg-Bräu Zwergator
 - **Revised:** Andechser Doppelbock Dunkel to Andechs Doppelbock Dunkel

9B. Eisbock

- **Aroma:** Specified the malt character as “bready, toasty, qualities, with some caramel or faint chocolate, often with dark fruit notes like plums or grapes.” Added “Clean fermentation profile.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 18-30 to 17-30.

9C. Baltic Porter

- **Comments:** Added “The best examples have a deceptive strength that makes them dangerously easy to drink. The character of these beers varies by country of origin, so be careful about generalizing based on a single example. Some beers are truer to their English roots, while others are more of the style first popularized in Poland.”
- **History:** Added “The name Baltic Porter is recent (since the 1990s) and describes the modern collection of beers with a somewhat similar profile from these countries, not historical versions.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Combines the body, maltiness, richness, and smoothness of a Doppelbock, the darker malt character of an English Porter, the roast flavors of a Schwarzbier, and alcohol and fruitiness of and Old Ale.” Removed “Lacks the roasty qualities of stouts in general, more taking on the roasted-but-not-burnt characteristics of a schwarzbier. Quite fruity compared to other porters. Higher alcohol than other porters.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Revised:** Aldaris Porteris to Aldaris Mežpils Porteris; Okocim Porter to Okocim Mistrzowski Porter.

10. German Wheat Beer

10A. Weissbier

- **Aroma:** Specified that the esters and phenols are “typically stronger than the malt.” Added “doughy” as a potential malt characteristic. Changed intensity of optional vanilla aromatics from “light to moderate” to “light.” A bubblegum character is now considered a fault. Specifically added mention of sourness and smoke as faults.
- **Flavor:** Specified malt intensity as “low to moderate” and can include a “doughy” character and is “supported by the slight Pils malt grainy sweetness.” Added “Bubblegum, sourness, or smoke are faults. While the banana-and-clove profile is important, it should not be so strong as to be extreme and unbalanced.” Removed reference to an acceptable faint bubblegum character, as bubblegum is now considered a fault.
- **Comments:** Added “Also known as hefeweizen or weizenbier, particularly outside Bavaria.” and “In Germany, lower-alcohol light (leicht) and non-alcoholic versions are popular.”
- **Style Comparison:** This section was missing from the 2015 edition. Added: “Compared to American Wheat, has a banana and clove yeast character and less bitterness. Compared to a Dunkles Weissbier, has a paler color and less malt richness and flavor.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed OG from 1.044-1.052 to 1.044-1.053. Changed FG from 1.010-1.014 to 1.008-1.014.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Paulaner Hefe-Weizen Naturtrüb
 - **Added:** Distelhäuser Hell Weizen, Hofbräuhaus Münchner Weisse
 - **Revised:** Schneider Weisse Unser Original to Schneider Weisse Original Weissbier

10B. Dunkles Weissbier

- **Aroma:** A bubblegum character is now considered a fault. Specifically added mention of sourness and smoke as faults.
- **Flavor:** Changed from “A roasted malt character is inappropriate.” to “No strongly roasted flavors, but a touch of roasty dryness is allowable.” Added “Bubblegum, sourness, or smoke are faults” and removed reference to an acceptable faint bubblegum character, as bubblegum is now considered a fault.
- **Comments:** Added “Increasingly rare and often being replaced by Kristall and non-alcoholic versions in Germany.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Has a similar yeast character as Roggenbier, but without the rye flavor and increased body.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed OG from 1.044-1.056 to 1.044-1.057. Changed FG from 1.010-1.014 to 1.008-1.014.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Hacker-Pschorr Weisse Dark
 - **Added:** Hirsch Dunkel Weisse
 - **Revised:** Ettaler Weissbier Dunkel to Ettaler Benediktiner Weißbier Dunkel

10C. Weizenbock

Much of the text of this style was reorganized to better differentiate between pale and dark version, but the overall text is substantively the same.

- **Flavor:** Added “Bubblegum, sourness, or smoke are faults.”

- **Comments:** Added “Pale versions, like their doppelbock cousins, have less rich malt complexity and often more hop-forward. However, versions that have significant late hops or are dry-hopped should be entered in 34B Mixed-Style Beer.”
- **History:** Added “Pale versions are a much more recent invention.”
- **Vital Stats:** Added SRM for pale and dark versions: pale (6-9) and dark (10-25)
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Eisenbahn Weizenbock (Dark), Plank Bavarian Heller Weizenbock (Pale)
 - **Added:** Schalchner Weisser Bock (Dark), Ayinger Weizenbock (Pale), Distelhäuser Weizen Bock (Pale), Ladenburger Weizenbock Hell (Pale)
 - **Revised:** Schneider Unser Aventinus to Schneider Weisse Aventinus (Dark)

11. British Bitter

11A. Ordinary Bitter

- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Adnams Southwold Bitter, Young's Bitter
 - **Added:** Bateman's XB, Brakspear Gravity

11B. Best Bitter

- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Coniston Bluebird Bitter, Shepherd Neame Master Brew Kentish Ale, Young's Special
 - **Added:** Salopian Darwin's Origin, Surrey Hills Shere Drop
 - **Revised:** Adnams SSB to Adnams Southwold Bitter

11C. Strong Bitter

- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Highland Orkney Blast, Samuel Smith's Old Brewery Pale Ale, Shepherd Neame Spitfire, West Berkshire Dr. Hexter's Healer, Whitbread Pale Ale, Young's Ram Rod
 - **Added:** Bateman's Triple XB, Robinsons Trooper, Samuel Smith's Organic Pale Ale, Summit Extra Pale Ale

12. Pale Commonwealth Beer

12A. British Golden Ale

- **Flavor:** Added that low diacetyl is optional, an omission from the 2015 version since low diacetyl is listed as optional in aroma.
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Balance of hoppiness between a Blonde Ale and an American Pale Ale.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 2-6 to 2-5.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Fuller's Discovery, Kelham Island Pale Rider, Morland Old Golden Hen
 - **Added:** Adnams Explorer, Spitfire Golden Ale

12B. Australian Sparkling Ale

No substantive changes. Minor edits and rewording for consistency and clarity were made.

12C. English IPA

- **Aroma:** Specified malt character as “Medium-low to medium bready or biscuity malt.”
- **Comments:** Added “The beers were shipped in well-used oak casks, so the style shouldn’t have an oak or Brett character.”
- **History:** Revised and refined the details of the history.
- **Vital Stats:** Changed OG from 1.050-1.075 to 1.050-1.070. Changed FG from 1.010-1.018 to 1.010-1.015.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Freeminer Trafalgar IPA, Ridgeway IPA, Summit True Brit IPA
 - **Added:** Berkshire Lost Sailor IPA, Marston’s Old Empire IPA
 - **Revised:** Meantime India Pale Ale to Meantime London IPA

13. Brown British Beer

13A. Dark Mild

- **Flavor:** Specified a base malt character of “bready, biscuity, or toasty.”
- **Mouthfeel:** Added “Should not be flat, watery, or thin.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 12-25 to 14-25.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Cain’s Dark Mild, Highgate Dark Mild, Brain’s Dark, Rudgate Ruby Mild
 - **Added:** Greene King XX Mild, Hobson’s Champion Mild, Mighty Oak Oscar Wilde

13B. British Brown Ale

- **Vital Stats:** Changed ABV from 4.2-5.4% to 4.2-5.9%.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Wychwood Hobgoblin
 - **Added:** AleSmith Nut Brown Ale, Cigar City Maduro Brown Ale

13C. English Porter

- **Appearance:** Changed low of end of color range from “light brown” to “brown.”
- **History:** Revised and refined the details of the history.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Added:** Bateman’s Salem Porter

14. Scottish Ale

The category introduction was rewritten with additional details and history.

14A. Scottish Light

- **Flavor:** Rewritten for clarity and consistency. Added that “a wide range of caramelized sugar and toasted bread type of flavors are possible, using similar descriptors as the aroma.”
- **Comments:** Refers to new category introduction. Added “Do not mis-perceive the light roasty dryness as smoke; smoke is not present in these beers.”
- **History:** Refers to new category introduction.
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 17-22 to 17-25. Changed ABV from 2.5-3.2% to 2.5-3.3%.
- **Commercial Examples:** **Added:** Belhaven Best

14B. Scottish Heavy

- **Flavor:** Rewritten for clarity and consistency. Added that “a wide range of caramelized sugar and toasted bread type of flavors are possible, using similar descriptors as the aroma.”
- **Comments:** Refers to new category introduction. Added “Do not mis-perceive the light roasty dryness as smoke; smoke is not present in these beers.”
- **History:** Refers to new category introduction.
- **Style Comparison:** Revised to “Similar to other Scottish Ales in flavor profile, lighter in color and stronger than a Scottish Light. Similar in strength to Ordinary Bitter, but with a different flavor profile and balance.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 13-22 to 12-20. Changed ABV from 3.2-3.9% to 3.3-3.9%.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Broughton Greenmantle Ale, Caledonia Smooth, Tennent’s Special Ale

14C. Scottish Export

- **Flavor:** Rewritten for clarity and consistency. Added that “a wide range of caramelized sugar and toasted bread type of flavors are possible, using similar descriptors as the aroma.”
- **Comments:** Refers to new category introduction. Added “Do not mis-perceive the light roasty dryness as smoke; smoke is not present in these beers.”
- **History:** Refers to new category introduction.
- **Style Comparison:** Revised to “Stronger than other Scottish Ales, but with a similar flavor profile. Similar in strength to Best Bitter and Strong Bitter, but with a different flavor profile and balance.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 13.22 to 12-20.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Broughton Exciseman’s Ale, Orkney Dark Island, Pelican MacPelican’s Scottish Style Ale, Weasel Boy Plaid Ferret Scottish Ale
 - **Added:** Broughton Wee Jock 80 Shilling, Caledonian Edinburgh Castle, McEwan’s 80/-, McEwan’s Export, Traquair Bear Ale

15. Irish Beer

15A. Irish Red Ale

- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Caffrey’s Irish Ale, Samuel Adams Irish Red
 - **Added:** Murphy’s Irish Red
 - **Revised:** Porterhouse Red Ale to Porterhouse Nitro Red Ale

15B. Irish Stout

- **Vital Stats:** Changed ABV from 4.0-4.5% to 3.8-5.0%.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Harpoon Boston Irish Stout, Porterhouse Wrasslers 4X
 - **Added:** Belhaven Black Stout, Porterhouse Irish Stout

15C. Irish Extra Stout

- **Comments:** Revised to “Traditionally a stronger, bottled product with a range of equally valid possible interpretations, varying most frequently in roast flavor and sweetness. Most traditional Irish commercial examples are in the 5.6 to 6.0% ABV range.”

- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 25-40 to 30-40. Changed ABV from 5.5-6.5% to 5.0-6.5%.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Added:** Porterhouse XXXX
 - **Revised:** Guinness Extra Stout (US version) to Guinness Extra Stout

16. Dark British Beer

16A. Sweet Stout

- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Samuel Adams Cream Stout
 - **Added:** Firestone Nitro Merlin Milk Stout
 - **Revised:** Marston's Oyster Stout to Marston's Pearl Jet Stout

16B. Oatmeal Stout

- **Mouthfeel:** Added "stronger versions may be lightly warming."
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Broughton Scottish Oatmeal Stout, Figueroa Mountain Stagecoach Stout
 - **Added:** Broughton Stout Jock, Summit Oatmeal Stout
 - **Revised:** Young's Oatmeal Stout to Young's London Stout

16C. Tropical Stout

- **Aroma:** Added note that roasted malt character should not be burnt. Added burnt sugars as a potential aromatic.
- **Flavor:** Specified hop bitterness range of "medium-low to medium." Added "No burnt malt flavor or harsh bite in the finish." Added molasses, or burnt sugar as optional flavor characteristics.
- **Comments:** Added note that "Tropical implies that the beer originated in and is popular in the tropics, not that it has characteristics of tropical fruit from hops or fruit."
- **History:** Revised and refined the details of the history.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Added:** Bahamian Strong Back Stout

16D. Foreign Extra Stout

- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Ridgeway Foreign Export Stout, Southwark Old Stout
 - **Added:** La Cumbre Malpais Stout, Pelican Tsunami Export Stout,
 - **Revised:** The Kernel Export Stout to The Kernel Export Stout London 1890

17. Strong British Ale

Added to the category introduction: "Covers the style space above bitters, milds, and brown ales while excluding porters and stouts."

17A. British Strong Ale

- **Appearance:** Adjusted start of color range from "deep gold" to "amber."
- **History:** Revised and refined details.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** J.W. Lees Manchester Star, Young's Winter Warmer
 - **Added:** J.W. Lees Moonraker, McEwan's Champion, Shepherd Neame 1698

17B. Old Ale

- **Appearance:** Adjusted start of color range from "light amber" to "deep amber."
- **Flavor:** Removed "Some wood-aged or blended versions may have a lactic or Brettanomyces character; but this is optional and should not be too strong."
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Burton Bridge Olde Expensive, Gale's Prize Old Ale
 - **Added:** Avery Old Jubilation, Berlina Old Ale

17C. Wee Heavy

- **Aroma:** Rewritten for clarity and consistency but the overall characteristics of the style did not change. Specified "a wide range of supportive caramelized sugar and toasty bread type aromas are possible (toasted breadcrumbs, ladyfingers, English biscuits, graham crackers, nougat, butterscotch, etc.)."
- **Flavor:** Rewritten for clarity and consistency but the overall characteristics of the style did not change.
- **Comments:** Added "A range of strengths is allowable; not all versions are very strong."
- **History:** Updated to "Descended from Edinburgh Ales, a stronger malty beer brewed in a range of strengths, similar to Burton Ale (although at half the hopping rate). Modern versions have two main variants, a more modest 5% ABV beer and the more widely known 8-9% ABV beer. As gravities decreased over times, some of the variations ceased to be produced."
- **Style Comparison:** Added distinction that Wee Heavy is often darker and more caramelly than the English Barley Wine.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Gordon Highland Scotch Ale, Inveralmond Blackfriar
 - **Added:** Broughton Old Jock, The Duck-Rabbit Wee Heavy Scotch-Style Ale

17D. English Barley Wine

- **Appearance:** Changed lower end of color range from "rich gold" to "golden amber."
- **Flavor:** Revised for clarity. Added note that "The hop aroma, flavor, and bitterness can vary wildly."
- **History:** Updated to "A modern descendent of the strongest Burton Ales. Bass No. 1 was first called a barley wine in 1872. Traditionally a darker beer until Tennant (now Whitbread) first produced Gold Label, a gold-colored version in 1951. The original style that inspired derivative variations in Belgium, the United States, and elsewhere in the world."
- **Style Comparison:** Added "Not as caramelly and often not as sweet as a Wee Heavy."
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Adnams Tally-Ho
 - **Added:** Hogs Back A over T

18. Pale American Ale

18A. Blonde Ale

- **Aroma:** Specified that malt character is “generally neutral or grainy.” Added “Clean fermentation profile.”
- **Flavor:** Added “Clean fermentation profile.”
- **Comments:** Rewritten to “Oxidized versions can develop caramel or honey notes, which should not be mistaken for similar malt-derived flavors. Sometimes known as Golden Ale or simply a Gold.”
- **History:** Added “First believed to be produced in 1987 at Catamount.” Removed “Regional variations exist (many US West Coast brewpub examples are more assertive, like pale ales) but in most areas this beer is designed as the least challenging beer in their lineup.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Perhaps similar to some maltier examples of Kölsch.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Pelican Kiwanda Cream Ale
 - **Added:** Firestone Walker 805, Real Ale Firemans #4 Blonde Ale

18B. American Pale Ale

- **Aroma:** Specified upper end of hop intensity as “moderately-high” instead of “strong.” Specified that malt character is “neutral to grainy.”
- **Comments:** Added “Modern American versions are often just lower gravity IPAs.”
- **History:** Added “Sierra Nevada Pale Ale was first made in 1980 and helped popularize the style.”
- **Characteristic Ingredients:** Simplified for clarity.
- **Style Comparison:** Added “More bitter and hoppy than a Blonde Ale.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Ballast Point Grunion Pale Ale, Firestone Walker Pale 31, Tröegs Pale Ale, Stone Pale Ale
 - **Added:** Deschutes Mirror Pond Pale Ale, Half Acre Daisy Cutter Pale Ale, La Cumbre Acclimated APA, Stone Pale Ale 2.0

19. Amber and Brown American Beer

19A. American Amber Ale

- **Appearance:** Adjusted lower end of color range from “amber” to “deep amber.” Added “sometimes with a reddish hue.”
- **Flavor:** Specified a hop bitterness range of “moderate to moderately-high.” Added “Dark or roasted malt flavors absent.”
- **History:** Added more detail to history: “Mendocino Red Tail Ale was first made in 1983, and was known regionally as a Red Ale. This served as the progenitor of Double Reds (American Strong Ale), Red IPAs, and other hoppy, caramelly beers.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Deschutes Cinder Cone Red, Kona Lavaman Red Ale, Rogue American Amber Ale
 - **Added:** Anderson Valley Boont Amber Ale, Bell’s Amber Ale, Saint Arnold Amber Ale
 - **Revised:** North Coast Ruedrich’s Red Seal Ale to North Coast Red Seal Ale

19B. California Common

- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 10-14 to 9-14.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Flying Dog Old Scratch Amber Lager, Schlafly Pi Common

19C. American Brown Ale

- **Aroma:** Removed “The malt and hops are generally balanced.”
- **Flavor:** Added “The malt and hops are generally equal in intensity, but the balance can vary in either direction. Should not have a roasted character suggestive of a Porter or Stout.”
- **Mouthfeel:** Added “Stronger versions may be lightly warming.”
- **History:** Added year first judged at GABF (1992). Removed reference to Texas Brown Ales.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Anchor Brekle’s Brown, Cigar City Maduro Brown Ale
 - **Added:** Avery Ellie’s Brown Ale

20. American Porter and Stout

20A. American Porter

- **Aroma:** Revised to specify that the roast malt character is primary with an optional background malt character with caramel, toffee or malty-sweetness. Added “Should not seem sharp, acrid, or acidic. The malt-hop balance can vary, but it should always have a roasted malt aroma.”
- **Flavor:** Specified that a “sweet caramel or malty richness in support” can be present. Added “Should not have an acidic bite.”
- **Comments:** Added “Sometimes called Robust Porter, becoming increasingly hard to find.”
- **History:** Specified that style was first introduced in 1974.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Boulevard Bully! Porter, Founders Porter
 - **Added:** Bell’s Porter

20B. American Stout

- **Aroma:** Added “Should not seem sharp, acrid, or acidic.”
- **Comments:** Added “Becoming increasingly hard to find.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** North Coast Old No. 38, Rogue Shakespeare Stout
 - **Added:** Bell’s Kalamazoo Stout, Trillium Secret Stairs

20C. Imperial Stout

- **Aroma and Flavor:** Completely rewritten for clarity and consistency but the style characteristics are substantively the same as before. Specified that hops are often English or American in character.
- **Comments:** Added “Sometimes known as Russian Imperial Stout or RIS.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Cigar City Marshal Zhukov’s Imperial Stout (American)
 - **Added:** Oskar Blues Ten Fidy (American), 2SP Brewing Co The Russian (English), Thornbridge Saint Petersburg (English)

21. IPA

21A. American IPA

- **Aroma:** Removed reference to “minimal” grassiness being acceptable as grassiness from dry hopping is now considered a fault. Changed the description of the malt character from being “in the background” to “supports the hop presentation”
- **Appearance:** Changed reference to haziness to “light haze allowable.”
- **Flavor:** Removed “May be slightly sulfury, but most examples do not exhibit this character.”
- **Comments:** Rewritten to emphasize entry instructions for different variants and styles related to American IPA. For example, “an India Pale Lager (IPL) can be entered as an American IPA if it has a similar character, otherwise 34B Mixed-Style Beer.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Alpine Duet, Lagunitas IPA, Stone IPA
 - **Added:** Cigar City Jai Alai, Maine Lunch

21B. Specialty IPA

Revised introduction to emphasize that Specialty IPA is a competition entry category and not a distinct beer style. Added this note about entering Specialty IPAs and about Classic-style IPAs with added ingredients: “The Specialty IPA category is not intended for Classic-style IPAs with added ingredients (such as fruit, spice, wood, smoke, grains, or sugars) – these should be entered in the appropriate Specialty-Type beer category (Fruit Beer, SHV Beer, etc.). The Specialty IPA styles are considered Classic Styles for entering in Specialty-Type category purposes. Classic-style IPAs with unique or special hops should still be entered in the appropriate Classic-style IPA style.”

Also specified placement for Session IPA and Double IPA: “A Session IPA is a 21B Specialty IPA with a base style of 21A American IPA with Session strength. A Double IPA is Category 22A not 21B.”

21B. Specialty IPA: Belgian IPA

- **Aroma:** Specified that hop character is often associated with either New World hops or Continental hops. Revised that the optional phenol character can include spice and pepper characteristics and not just clove.
- **Flavor:** Specified that hop character is often associated with either New World hops or Continental hops.
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 5-15 to 5-8.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Epic Brainless IPA, Stone Cali-Belgique

21B. Specialty IPA: Black IPA

- **History:** Added note that the style “was a popular fad in the early 2010s before fading into obscurity in the US.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Deschutes Hop in the Dark CDA, Rogue Dad’s Little Helper, Southern Tier Iniquity, Widmer Pitch Black IPA
 - **Added:** Duck-Rabbit Hoppy Bunny ABA, Stone Sublimely Self-Righteous Black IPA

21B. Specialty IPA: Brown IPA

- **Comments:** Revised to “separated from American Brown Ale to better differentiate stronger, highly hopped examples from more balanced, standard-strength beers.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Has less of a roasted flavor than Black IPA, but more chocolate flavors than a Red IPA.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 11-19 to 18-35.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Grand Teton Bitch Creek

21B. Specialty IPA: Red IPA

- **Style Comparison:** Rewritten to “A stronger, hoppier, more bitter version of American Amber Ale. Not as malty and sweet as an American Strong Ale. Drier, less alcohol, and not as malty as American Barleywine. Less chocolate and caramel than Brown IPA, but otherwise similar balance.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 11-19 to 11-17.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Green Flash Hop Head Red Double Red IPA (double), Midnight Sun Sockeye Red, Sierra Nevada Flipside Red IPA, Summit Horizon Red IPA, Odell Runoff Red IPA
 - **Added:** Avery Hog Heaven, Cigar City Tocobaga Red IPA, Modern Times Blazing World, Tröegs Nugget Nectar

21B. Specialty IPA: Rye IPA

- **Aroma:** Removed reference to “minimal” grassiness being acceptable as grassiness from dry hopping is now considered a fault.
- **Flavor:** Increased the range of potential rye character from “light” to “low to moderate.” Otherwise revised and edited for clarity and consistency; style characteristics did not substantively change.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Arcadia Sky High Rye, Bear Republic Hop Rod Rye, Great Lakes Rye of the Tiger

21B. Specialty IPA: White IPA

- **Aroma:** Added “Low neutral, grainy, or bready malt. Light alcohol aroma optional.”
- **Comments:** Added “Spice impression may come from Belgian yeast, spice additions, or both.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 5-8 to 5-6.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Blue Point White IPA, Deschutes Chainbreaker IPA, Harpoon The Long Thaw
 - **Added:** Lagunitas A Little Sumpin' Sumpin' Ale

21B. Specialty IPA: Brut IPA

This is a new style in the 2021 guidelines.

21C. Hazy IPA

This is a new style in the 2021 guidelines.

22. Strong American Ale

22A. Double IPA

- **Aroma and Flavor:** Removed reference to “minimal” grassiness being acceptable as grassiness from dry hopping is now considered a fault.
- **Comments:** Rewritten to “Rarely called Imperial IPA. Many modern versions have multiple dry-hop additions.”
- **History:** Added “Russian River Pliny the Elder, first brewed in 2000, helped popularize the style.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed IBU from 60-120 to 60-100.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Avery Maharaja, Firestone Walker Double Jack, Three Floyds Dreadnaught, Stone Ruination IPA
 - **Added:** Columbus Brewing Bohdi, Stone Ruination Double IPA 2.0, Wicked Weed Freak of Nature

22A. American Strong Ale

- **History:** Simplified section and removed unnecessary examples.
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Maltier and fuller-bodied than a Red IPA.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 7-19 to 7-18.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Bear Republic Red Rocket Ale, Terrapin Big Hoppy Monster
 - **Added:** Arrogant Bastard Ale, Fat Head’s Bone Head, Oskar Blues G’Knight

22A. American Barleywine

- **Comments:** Added “Recently many US breweries seem to have discontinued their Barleywines, made them barrel-aged, or rebranded them as some form of IPA.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 10-19 to 9-18.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Avery Hog Heaven Barleywine, Great Divide Old Ruffian, Rogue Old Crustacean, Victory Old Horizontal
 - **Added:** Bell’s Third Coast Old Ale, East End Gratitude, Hair of the Dog Doggie Claws

22C. Wheatwine

- **Flavor:** Removed “Some oxidative or vinous flavors may be present, as are light alcohol notes that are clean and smooth but complex. A complementary, supportive oak character is welcome, but not required.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 8-15 to 6-14.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Rubicon Winter Wheat Wine, Smuttynose Wheat Wine, Portsmouth Wheat Wine
 - **Added:** The Bruery White Oak, Castelain Winter Ale, Perennial Heart of Gold
 - **Revised:** Two Brothers Bare Trees Weiss Wine to Two Brothers Bare Tree

23. European Sour Ale

23A. Berliner Weisse

- **Flavor:** Added that THP is not acceptable.
- **Comments:** Added note that “Aged examples can show a cider, honey, hay, or gentle wildflower character, and sometimes increased acidity.” Added note that “Fruited or Spiced versions should be entered as 29A Fruit Beer, as 30A Spice, Herb, or Vegetable Beer, or as 29B Fruit and Spice Beer.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Compared to Straight Sour Beer and Catharina Sour, is lower gravity and may contain Brett.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Nodding Head Berliner Weisse, The Bruery Hottenroth
 - **Added:** Brauerei Meierei Weiße, Lemke Berlin Budike Weisse, Schell's Brewing Company Schelltheiss, Urban Chestnut Ku'damm
 - **Revised:** Berliner Berliner Weisse to Berliner Berg Berliner Weisse

23B. Flanders Red Ale

- **Aroma:** Changed “The sour aroma ranges from balanced to intense” to “The sour aroma ranges from moderate to high.” Specified that “low to moderate levels of acetic acid are acceptable if balanced with the malt.”
- **Flavor:** Specified malt intensity range from “complementary to prominent” to “Moderate to moderately-high.” Modified description of sourness to “Complex, moderate to high sourness, accentuated by the esters; should not be a simple lactic sourness.” Specified that “low to moderate levels of acetic acid are acceptable if balanced with the malt.” Added: “Acids and tannins can enhance the perception of bitterness, and provide balance and structure. Some versions are sweetened, or blended to be sweet; allow for a wide range of sweetness levels, which can soften the acidic bite and acetic perception.”
- **Comments:** Added note that “The “wine-like” observation should not be taken too literally; it may suggest a high-acid French Burgundy to some, but it is clearly not identical.” Added note that “Fruited versions should be entered as a 29A Fruit Beer.”
- **History:** Added that “Belgian brewers consider Flanders Red and Oud Bruin to be of the same style family, but the distinction was first made when Michael Jackson first defined beer styles, since the flavor profiles are distinctly different. Many modern examples are influenced by the popularity of Rodenbach Grand Cru.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added that Flanders Red Ale often has more acetic profile than Oud Bruin.
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 10-16 to 10-17.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Added:** New Belgium La Folie
 - **Revised:** Cuvée des Jacobins Rouge to Cuvée des Jacobins, Rodenbach Klassiek to Rodenbach Classic

23C. Oud Bruin

- **Flavor:** Added “Blending and sweetening may produce a range of finishes, and balances.”
- **Mouthfeel:** Added “Stronger versions can be noticeably warming.”
- **Comments:** Specified that “Fruited versions should be entered as a 29A Fruit Beer.”
- **History:** Added: “Belgian brewers consider Flanders Red and Oud Bruin to be of the same style family, but the distinction was first made when Michael Jackson first defined beer styles, since the flavor profiles are distinctly different. Many modern examples are influenced by the popularity of Liefmans Goudenband. Unrelated to the dark, sweet Dutch lager of the same name.”

- **Style Comparison:** Added “In modern times, Oud Bruin also tends to be higher in alcohol than is typically seen in Flanders Red Ales. Differs from Lambic in that they are not spontaneously fermented, and don’t contain wheat.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 15-22 to 17-22.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Riva Vondel
 - **Added:** pFriem Oud Bruin
 - **Revised:** Petrus Oud Bruin to Petrus Roodbruin, Vanderghinste Bellegems Bruin to VanderGhinste Roodbruin

23D. Lambic

- **Aroma:** Added “The fruit character can take on a light citrus fruit, citrus rind, pome fruit, or rhubarb quality, getting more complex with age. Malt can have a light bready, grainy, honey, or wheat-like quality, if noticeable.”
- **Comments:** Added “Lambic sweetened with raw sugar at service time is known as Faro.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 3-7 to 3-6.

23E. Gueuze

- **Aroma:** Specified that funkiness can be “moderate to strong.” Specified intensity of fruitiness as “light to moderate.” Added description of malt character: “Malt is supportive, and can be lightly bready, grainy, honey, or wheat-like, if noticeable.”
- **Flavor:** Added “The beer should not be one dimensionally sour; a balanced, moderately sour presentation is classic, with the funky and fruity notes providing complexity. May be aged.”
- **History:** Added “Same basic history as Lambic, but involves blending, which may be performed outside the brewery. Some of the best examples are produced by blenders, who ferment, age, blend, and package the final product.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 3-7 to 5-6. Changed OG from 1.040-1.060 to 1.040-1.054.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Boon Oude Gueuze Mariage Parfait, De Cam Gueuze, De Cam/Drei Fonteynen Millennium Gueuze, Drie Fonteynen Oud Gueuze, Mort Subite (Unfiltered) Gueuze, Oud Beersel Oude Gueuze
 - **Added:** 3 Fonteynen Oud Gueuze
 - **Revised:** Boon Oude Gueuze to Oude Gueuze Boon, Cantillon Gueuze to Cantillon Classic Gueuze 100% Lambic, Girardin Gueuze (Black Label) to Girardin Gueuze 1882 (Black Label)

23F. Fruit Lambic

- **Overall Impression:** Specified that the beer is typically a Gueuze with fruit added.
- **AAFm:** The Aroma, Flavor, and Mouthfeel sections were edited to reflect that the beer is typically a Gueuze with fruit added and should reflect the perceptions of a Gueuze but with the addition of a fermented fruit character.
- **Comments:** Added “The variety of fruit can sometimes be hard to identify since fermented and aged fruit is often perceived differently than the more recognizable fresh fruit. Fruit can bring acidity and tannins, in addition to flavor and aroma; understanding the fermented character of added fruit helps with judging the style.”

- **Commercial Examples**

- **Removed:** Boon Framboise Mariage Parfait, Boon Kriek Mariage Parfait, Cantillon Kriek, Cantillon Lou Pepe Kriek, Cantillon Rose de Gambrinus, Cantillon St. Lamvinus, De Cam Oude Kriek, Drie Fonteynen Kriek, Girardin Kriek, Oud Beersel Kriek, Mort Subite Kriek
- **Added:** 3 Fonteynen Schaerbeekse
- **Revised:** Boon Oude Kriek to Oude Kriek Boon,

23G. Gose

This style moved from the Historical Beer category to category 23.

- **Flavor:** Specified intensity of sourness at “medium-low to medium-high.” Changed hop bitterness level from “low” to “very low.” Specified “No THP.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Döllnitzer Ritterguts Gose
 - **Added:** Original Ritterguts Gose, Westbrook Gose

24. Belgian Ale

24A. Witbier

- **Appearance:** Changed upper end of color range from “light gold” to “deep yellow.”
- **Comments:** Added “Historical versions may have had some lactic sourness but this is absent in fresh modern versions.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Wittekerke

24B. Belgian Pale Ale

- **Aroma:** Added that characteristics may include “darker stone fruit like plums.”
- **Comments:** Added that the beer is referred to as “A Spéciale Belge Ale (Belgian Special Ale) in Belgium.”
- **History:** Updated to “Created after a competition in 1904 to create a regional specialty beer to compete with imported British ales and continental lagers. De Koninck of Antwerp is the best-known modern example, making the beer since 1913.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Revised:** De Koninck to De Koninck Bolleke, Palm Speciale to Palm

24C. Bière de Garde

- **AAFM:** Added specificity to distinguish between paler and darker versions.
- **History:** Added: Although documented to exist in the 1800s, Jenlain is the prototypical modern amber lager version first bottled in the 1940s.”
- **Style Comparison:** Revised: “Calling this a farmhouse beer invites comparisons to Saison, which has a completely different balance – Bière de Garde is malty and smooth, while Saison is hoppy and bitter. Actually has more of a similarity in malt profile to a Bock.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** St. Amand (brown)
 - **Added:** Two Brothers Domaine Dupage
 - Revised: Ch’Ti (brown and blond) to Ch’Ti Blonde, Jenlain (amber and blond) to Ambrée, La Choulette (all 3 versions) to La Choulette Brune,

25. Strong Belgian Ale

25A. Belgian Blond Ale

- **Aroma:** Specified missing upper ends of intensity ranges for malt (“light to moderate”) and yeast character (“subtle to moderate”). Added that a “Light perfumy alcohol and suggestions of a light malty sweetness can give a slight honey- or sugar-like character.”
- **Flavor:** Specified that “the malt [is] slightly more prominent in the balance.” Specified yeast intensity level of “moderate to low.”
- **History:** Added: “Despite claims of links back to 1200, the beer style was created after World War II and first popularized by Leffe.”
- **Vital Stats:** Changed SRM from 4-7 to 4-6.
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Added:** Corsendonk Blond

25B. Saison

- **Aroma:** Specified spice intensity range as “low to moderately-high.”
- **Comments:** Added: “Brettanomyces is not typical for this style; Saisons with Brett should be entered in the 28A Brett Beer style. A Grisette is a well-known type of Saison popular with miners; enter Grisette as 25B Saison, Session Strength, Comment: Grisette with wheat as the character grain.”
- **Entry Instructions:** Added “The entrant may identify character grains used.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Fantôme Saison, Saison Regal
 - **Revised:** Ellezelloise Saison to Ellezelloise Saison 2000, Saison Dupont Vieille Provision to Saison Dupont, Boulevard Tank 7 Farmhouse Ale to Boulevard Tank 7

25C. Belgian golden Strong Ale

- **Aroma:** Specified ester intensity range as “moderate to high.”
- **History:** Added “Originally a darker beer, it achieved its modern form by the 1970s.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Dulle Teve, Piraat

26. Monastic Ale

Category title changed from Triappist Ale to Monastic Ale and a new category introduction was written.

26A. Belgian Single

Name changed from Trappist Single to Belgian Single.

- **Aroma:** Specified that phenols are usually “black pepper or clove.”
- **Flavor:** Specified ester intensity as “moderate.” Specified bitterness range as “medium to high.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Achel 5° Blond
 - **Added:** Chimay Gold, La Trappe Puur, Russian River Redemption

26B. Belgian Dubbel

- **Aroma:** Specified malt intensity range as “moderate to moderately strong.” Specified phenol range as “low to moderate.”

- **Flavor:** Edited hop bitter intensity range from “medium-low” to “medium-low to medium.”
- **Mouthfeel:** Edited body range from “medium-full” to “medium to medium-full.”
- **Comments:** Added “. Can taste somewhat sweet due to restrained bitterness, but the beers are actually fairly dry.”
- **History:** Updated: “While dark and strong beers were produced long before, modern Dubbel traces back to the double brown or strong beer first produced at Westmalle in 1922 when the brewery was re-established after World War I. Other examples date from post-World War II.”
- **Style Comparison:** Added “Perhaps similar to a Dunkles Bock but with a Belgian yeast and sugar character.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Affligem Dubbel, Grimbergen Double,
 - **Added:** Chimay Red, Corsendonk Bruin
 - **Revised:** Chimay Première to Chimay Red, Corsendonk Pater to Corsendonk Bruin, Trappistes Rochefort 6 to Rochefort 6

26C. Belgian Tripel

- **Style Comparison:** Added “Should not seem like a blond Barleywine.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Affligem Tripel, Unibroue La Fin Du Monde, Watou Tripel
 - **Revised:** Chimay Cinq Cents to Chimay Tripel

26D. Belgian Dark Strong Ale

- **History:** Updated: Westvleteren started making their version just before World War II, with Chimay and Rochefort adding their examples just after. Other monastic breweries created products towards the end of the 20th century, but some secular breweries began producing similar beers starting around 1960.”
- **Commercial Examples**
 - **Removed:** Gouden Carolus Grand Cru of the Emperor, Rochefort 8
 - **Revised:** Chimay Grande Réserve to Chimay Blue

27. Historical Beer

Added to the category introduction: Historical Beer can be a minor style, currently commercially produced or not, that is not present in the Style Guidelines as a Classic Style. It could be that we haven’t heard of it, that we never see it in competition, or that we have insufficient data to prepare a reasonable set of judging guidelines. If it is a style with a name that is or was actually used, then it likely goes into this category. This style is not for experimental beers that were never produced, or for other Classic Styles with added Specialty-Type ingredients. Any Historical Beer listed in this category or contained on the Provisional Style list is considered a Classic Style for purposes of entering in Specialty-Type beer categories with added ingredients (fruit, spice, wood, smoke, etc.). This means a Historical Style beer can be used as a base style for Specialty-Type beers without automatically making the beer Experimental. The BJCP welcomes well-researched submissions of Historical Styles that may be appropriate for our Provisional Styles list on our website, or for a future inclusion in these Guidelines.

None of the guidelines for historical styles substantively changed in the 2021 version. As with other styles, minor edits and rewording for consistency and clarity were made. Kellerbier, which was category 7C in the 2015 guidelines, was moved to the Historical Beer category and condensed into a single style description that encompasses both pale and amber versions.

INTRODUCTION TO SPECIALTY-TYPE BEER

The introduction was largely re-written to provide clarity based on feedback from competition organizers, judges, and entrants. We encourage all judges and entrants to revisit and reread this introduction when entering or judging specialty-type beers. Some major highlights:

- When a Base Style for Specialty-Type Beers is required, either a Classic Style or a broad style family (e.g., IPA, Blond Ale, Stout) may be used. In general, Specialty-Type beers may not be used as a Base Style for other Specialty-Type beers unless the Entry Instructions for the style specifically allow it. A few Specialty-Type Beer styles do not require a Base Style to be declared – read the Entry Instructions section of each style description carefully.
- Placing a beer with a single Specialty-Type Ingredient and a Classic Base Style is obvious. Selecting the best style for a beer with a combination of Specialty-Type Ingredients takes some thought. When selecting a style in which to enter your Specialty-Type Beer, look for the best fit from the possible alternatives where the combination of ingredients is allowed. Select a style representing the dominant ingredient, or if the ingredients are equally balanced, select the first Specialty-Type style where it qualifies.
- Judges should be aware that a creative element exists in brewing these styles, and that strange-sounding combinations should not be prejudiced. Keep an open mind because some unusual flavor pairings can be surprisingly delicious. Unusual does not necessarily mean better, however. Taste should always be the final deciding factor, not perceived creativity, difficulty in brewing, or rarity of ingredients.
- The old proverb about not missing the forest for the trees is quite applicable. Do not judge these styles as rigidly as Classic Styles, as you might miss the successful synergy of ingredients.
- Judges do not need to taste every individual Specialty-Type Ingredient (such as spices) when multiple are declared. Often it is the resulting combination that contributes to a greater character, so allow for these ingredients to be used in varying intensities to produce a more pleasant tasting experience.
- Not every beer will fit a style perfectly. Some beers with multiple ingredients could be entered as several styles. Be lenient when evaluating these beers. Reward those beers that are well-made and are pleasant to drink rather than lecturing the entrant about where they should have entered it.
- If an entrant declares a potential allergen in the beer, do not deduct points if you cannot perceive it.

28. American Wild Ale

Added information to the category introduction: “The use of the word American does not mean that the beer has to be based on a Classic Style American beer style, or that the methods are solely practiced in the United States. Base styles in this category do not have to be Classic Styles at all (although they can be); something like, “blond ale, 7%” would be fine, since the underlying style is often lost under the fermentation character.

The styles in this category are differentiated by the types of yeast and bacteria used – see the preamble to each style for more information. We use the conversational shorthand terms used in the brewing industry: Brett for *Brettanomyces*, Sacch for *Saccharomyces*, Lacto for *Lactobacillus*, and Pedio for *Pediococcus*. See the Glossary for additional information. The Wild Specialty Beer style is for beers for other styles within this category when Specialty-Type Ingredients are added. Background levels of oak may be used in all styles within this category, but beers aged in other woods with unique flavors or barrels that contained other alcohol products must be entered in the Wild Specialty Beer style.”

28A. Brett Beer

Added style note: “Intended for beer with or without oak aging that has been fermented with Sacch and Brett, or with Brett only.”

28B. Mixed-Fermentation Sour Beer

Added style note: “Intended for beer fermented with any combination of Sacch, Lacto, Pedio, and Brett (or additional yeast or bacteria), with or without oak aging (except if the beer fits instead in 28A or 28D).”

28C. Wild Specialty Beer

Added style note: “Intended for variations of a Base Style beer from style 28A, 28B, or 28D. These variations may include the addition of one or more Specialty-Type Ingredients; aging in non-traditional wood varieties that impart a significant and identifiable wood character (e.g., Spanish Cedar, Amburana); or aging in barrels previously containing another alcohol (e.g., spirits, wine, cider).”

28B. Straight Sour Beer

This is a new style in the 2021 guidelines.

29. Fruit Beer

29A. Fruit Beer

Added judging note that “The description of the beer is critical for evaluation; judges should think more about the declared concept than trying to detect each individual ingredient. Balance, drinkability, and execution of the theme are the most important deciding factors.”

Added clarifications on placement of beers into this style: “Fruit Beers based on a Classic Style should be entered in this style, except Lambic – there is a special style for Fruit Lambic (23F). Fruited sour or mixed fermentation beers without a Classic Style base should be entered in the 28C Wild Specialty Beer. Fruited versions of sour Classic Style beers (e.g., Flanders Red, Oud Bruin, Gose, Berliner Weisse) should be entered in 29A Fruit Beer. Fruit-based versions of Classic Styles where spices are an inherent part of the Classic Style’s definition (e.g., Witbier, Gose) do not count as a Spice Beer for entering purposes.”

29B. Fruit and Spice Beer

Added judging note that “The description of the beer is critical for evaluation; judges should think more about the declared concept than trying to detect each individual ingredient. Balance, drinkability, and execution of the theme are the most important deciding factors.”

29C. Specialty Fruit Beer

Clarified that this style “is a Fruit Beer with some additional ingredients, such as fermentable sugars (e.g., honey, brown sugar, invert sugar), sweeteners (e.g., lactose), adjuncts, alternative grains, or other special ingredients added, or some additional process applied. A Specialty Fruit Beer can use any style within the Fruit Beer category as a base style (currently, 29A, 29B, or 29D).”

28C. Grape Ale

This is a new style in the 2021 guidelines.

30. Spiced Beer

30A. Spice, Herb, or Vegetable Beer

Added judging note that “The description of the beer is critical for evaluation; judges should think more about the declared concept than trying to detect each individual ingredient. Balance, drinkability, and execution of the theme are the most important deciding factors.”

30B. Autumn Seasonal Beer

Simplified style description. Added note that “Using the sensory profile of products that suggest the harvest season, like pumpkin pie, apple pie, or candied yams, balanced with a supportive, often malty base beer. The description of the beer is critical for evaluation; judges should think more about the declared concept than trying to detect each individual ingredient. Balance, drinkability, and execution of the theme are the most important deciding factors.”

30C. Winter Seasonal Beer

Simplified style description. Added note that “Using the sensory profile of products that suggest the holiday season, such as Christmas cookies, gingerbread, English-type Christmas pudding, rum cakes, eggnog, evergreen trees, potpourri, or mulling spices, balanced with a supportive, often malty, warming, and darker base beer. The description of the beer is critical for evaluation; judges should think more about the declared concept than trying to detect each individual ingredient. Balance, drinkability, and execution of the theme are the most important deciding factors.”

30D. Specialty Spices Beer

This is a new style in the 2021 guidelines. A Specialty Spice Beer is a 30A Spice, Herb, or Vegetable (SHV) Beer with some additional ingredients, such as fermentable sugars (e.g., honey, brown sugar, invert sugar, maple syrup), sweeteners (e.g., lactose), adjuncts, alternative grains, or other special ingredients added, or some additional process applied. 30B Autumn and 30C Winter Seasonal Beers already allow additional ingredients, and should not be used as a base in this style.

31. Alternative Fermentables Beer

31A. Alternative Grain Beer

In aroma, added that “some [grains] may have a relatively neutral character.” In flavor, added that “Some grains add an additional grainy, bready, or nutty flavor, while others simply enhance the flavor of the base beer. Some grains add a dryness to the finish.” Added comment that “The additional grain should be apparent somewhere in the sensory profile.”

31B. Alternative Sugar Beer

Clarified the style introduction that “unfermentable sugars (e.g., lactose), sugar alcohols (e.g., sorbitol), and any other sweetener (natural or artificial) that affects the flavor profile” are appropriate for this style. Added note that “The beers may or may not have any residual sweetness; it depends on the type of sugar, but flavor contributions are expected.”

32. Smoked Beer

32A. Classic Style Smoked Beer

Added a style introduction to clarify how to use this category: “Intended for smoked versions of Classic Style beers, except if the Classic Style beer has smoke as an inherent part of its definition (of course, that beer should be entered in its base style, such as Rauchbier).”

32B. Specialty Smoked Beer

Added note that this style ingredients the “same as 32A Classic Style Smoked Beer with the possible addition of specialty ingredients (e.g., fruits, spices, vegetables, honey) in noticeable quantities.”

33. Wood Beer

None of the guidelines for Wood Beer styles substantively changed in the 2021 version. As with other styles, minor edits and rewording for consistency and clarity were made.

34. Specialty Beer

34A. Commercial Specialty Beer

Changed the name from Clone Beer to Commercial Specialty Beer. Clarified that this style is meant for beers that are reproductions or interpretations of specific commercial beers that don't fit within defined style guidelines. Added the note that: “Past versions of the Style Guidelines included a Belgian Specialty Ale style; this style fits that general purpose, as well as allowing non-Belgian entries of similar intent.”

34B. Mixed-Style Beer

Clarified that this style is meant for beers that are either:

- “A combination of Existing Styles that are not defined previously in the guidelines, including combination of Specialty-Type Beers not otherwise allowable elsewhere.
- A variation of an Existing Style using a non-traditional method or process (e.g., dry-hopping, ‘eis’-ing, stein bier) for that style.
- A variation of an Existing Style using a non-traditional ingredient (e.g., yeast with a non-traditional profile, hops with a different character than described in the Base Style).
- Out-of-spec variations of an Existing Style (e.g., ‘imperial’ versions, ‘session’ versions, overly-sweet versions, etc.).

This style is intended for beers that can't be entered in previously-listed styles first, including (and especially) the declared Base Style of beer. However, if the unusual method, process, or ingredient results in a beer that now fits within another defined style, the beer should be entered there. Note that some styles already allow for different strengths (e.g., IPAs, Saisons), so those variations should be entered as the appropriate Base Style. Bear in mind that a poorly-made, faulted beer should not be used to define a new style. Drinkability should always be maintained, while allowing for creative new concepts.”

34C. Experimental Beer

Added note that “With the broad definition for previous styles, this style should be rarely used.”