

BReW'iN' with BRiESS

...a bi-monthly newsletter from the specialty maltsters...

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1998



VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1



BRING ON THE BOCK!

If East Coast ice storms and El Nino flooding have you down, cheer up! Now is the perfect time to think spring by brewing up a batch of bock beer.

Long associated with spring, bock beers are full-bodied lagers distinguished by a malty sweetness (naturally making them a Briess favorite!). A common bock is a dark beer, and some are accented by a chocolate flavor that lasts long into the after-taste. Because bock beers are made with a high quantity of dark malts, they require long aging processes for the flavors to properly blend. As a result, aging times for bocks can be as long as 90-plus days -- much longer than the 28 to 36 days needed for normal lager beers.

Thus the need to fire up your brew kettle immediately in order to enjoy a pint come this spring!

Bock beers enjoy a long and rather colorful history. Born in the Northern region of Germany, in Einbeck, bocks were first brewed as strong, cold-conditioned brown ales from barley and wheat. A long keeper, they were shipped via wagon train to the likes of Hamburg and Munich, and via ship to places like Amsterdam to the west and Jerusalem to the east. It's believed that the Bavarian dialect in Munich eventually mangled the name Einbeck to ein Bock. Also in Munich, bock underwent a series of transformations from a strong ale into a strong lager, which is what we know as bock beer today.



A delightful result of bock's longevity is the number of distinct styles available to bock lovers today:

Traditional Bock (OG 1.066 - 1.074, ABV 6 - 7.5%) -- Deep copper to dark brown. Malty sweetness dominates the palate with some toasted chocolate malt character. Medium- to full-bodied.

Helles Bock (OG 1.066 - 1.068, ABV 6 - 7%) -- Pale to amber. Malty sweetness in both flavor and aroma; low hop flavor and bitterness. Medium bodied.

Maibock (OG 1.066 - 1.068, ABV 6-8%) -- Pale to light. Malty sweetness and aroma balanced by medium bitterness and low to medium hop flavor. Medium bodied.

Doppelbock (OG 1.074 - 1.080, ABV 6.5 - 8%) -- Deep copper to dark brown. Intense malty character in aroma and flavor, offset somewhat by a noticeable alcohol flavor. Very full bodied. Doppelbocks are often quite sweet with complex chocolate and caramel flavors.

Eisbock (OG 1.092 - 1.116, ABV 7.2-12%) -- Deep copper to black. A stronger version of Doppelbock with rich and intense malt flavors and aroma balanced by high alcohol content and taste.

Triple Bock (OG 1.176 - 1.180, ABV 17-18)

-- Even stronger in all characteristics.

So, get ready to salute the arrival of spring with a fresh batch of bock beer. Try this recipe provided by Kirby Nelson, Capital Brewery in Middleton, Wis. Our Mary Anne Gruber says Kirby is known for making some "super good beer!"

2-Row 55.0-70.0% range

Carapils® 5.0%

Munich 10°L 10.0%-15.0% range

Caramel 60°L 12.5%

Chocolate 2.0%

Shoot for 16 Plato (1.064 OG) and a bittering in the low/mid 20's using Noble type hops or U.S. derivatives thereof. Remember, a hoppy flavor interferes with the maltiness -- that's not what bock is about!

(Contributors include Briess Technical Sales Representative Penny Pickart.)

BLESSED BE BOCK

According to John Zutz, organizer of the Milwaukee Beer Fest which features the "Blessing of the Bock," bock beer originally became associated with spring because it offered much needed nutrition for Lenten fasting Christians. To learn more bock lore over a tasty mug of bock, bring \$20 and your ID to the 10th annual Milwaukee Beer Fest which will be held on Sunday, March 22, from noon to 4 p.m. at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Union Ballroom at 2200 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee. All proceeds benefit non-profit orgs. Last year more than 24 breweries and 800 visitors participated.

FAQ FACTS!

(FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS)

Q *Is it true that bock beer is available in spring because it's beer drained from the "bottom of the barrel" when brewers empty their cellars?*

A Take heart, bock beer lovers. When you tip a mug of bock beer you're not sipping on leftovers. Bock style beers may be associated with spring and the Christian events of Lent and Easter, but that has nothing to do with a brewer's spring cleaning schedule. As is the case with many special occasions, the arrival of spring is celebrated with a special beer - bock. Just how that tradition came to be has been discussed over many a pint of the dark, robust stuff. All that aside, however, you'll be happy to know that bock beer is brewed and enjoyed year 'round in a variety of styles. Spring and

autumn styles are lighter brews, more likely Maibock, Helles Bock, Traditional Bock and Weizenbock (which is actually an ale brewed with wheat malt). In the winter months, fuller bodied Doppelbocks and Triple Bocks are crowd pleasers.

Bock style beers originated centuries ago in Germany (see the cover story in this issue). Today, the commonly accepted style criteria for bock remains true to the style that has been defined in Germany for the last hundred years or so. Specifically, a certain minimum gravity is required before the label "bock" or "doppelbock" can be displayed by a beer.

(Send questions to: Brewin' With Briess, PO Box 226, Chilton, WI 53014-0226.)

HAPPENINGS AT BRIESS...

In the not-too-distant future you may look twice when your shipment of Briess malts arrive. That's because we've fired up a new bagging system which we believe will result in shipping and storing benefits all the way from our roasters to your mash tun.

The main difference is the switch to heat sealed bags which means even fresher Briess malts for you! As a result, the bags will be a little wider and more stout. A side benefit of the different shape is better stackability and, because the bottom of the bag has a wider base, each bag will stand on end easier. But, in keeping with Briess tradition, our new bags will be made of the same recyclable brown-colored paper you're familiar with. The bags will also be imprinted the same and product information will continue to be coded on the top of each bag. In the future, the top of the bag will include an easy-open tear string.

We hope you find these changes beneficial. As always, if you have any suggestions or comments, call our Technical Services Department at (920) 849-7711 or visit our website at www.briess.com.

Cheers for now!

P.S. See you at "Atlanta's Brewing: The New World of Craft Beer," the annual IBS show, on April 5-8 in Atlanta, Ga. We'll be in Booth #1055.

BRIESS = MALT

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