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An Early American Recipe For Making HOME BREW

Almost anyone who can read this page can learn how to make good beer at home. The method is simple and the ingredients are few. The equipment is easy and fairly inexpensive to obtain.

You will need a ten-gallon crock which is unchipped and uncracked. One basic rule for brewing is that all equipment be perfectly clean. You will need a supply of very good water. If necessary, buy bottled spring water. Tap water with chemicals added will make very poor beer.

The ingredients of each batch are as follows:

1 can hop-flavored malt (light or dark)

5 pounds of sugar

7 ½ gallons of water

1 cake of yeast

In a large kettle use a few quarts of the water to dissolve the malt and sugar over a low heat. Do not permit the mixture to become more than luke warm. Then in a cup of this mixture crumble and dissolve the yeast. Add the dissolved yeast to the kettle and stir until evenly mixed.

Make sure the crock is perfectly clean. Rinse it several times with hot water to bring it to room temperature. Place the crock in an elevated (table-high) position where it will not be subjected to drafts or sudden changes of temperature.

Pour contents of kettle into crock and add the balance of the water slowly, stirring to make the mixture even. When all of the water has been added the crock should be covered with a freshly laundered dishtowel or cloth to keep any dust or impurities from falling into the mixture.

In a period of a few hours (at room temperature...about 70 degrees) the 'head' will begin to rise. In a period of about three days it will rise 4 or 5 inches, then fall back and finally disappear. When it has settled back into the mixture, or after three full days, whichever is less, the mixture is siphoned into a five-gallon carboys, taking great care not to disturb any of the accumulated yeast in the bottom of the crock. Each carboy is then stopped with a rubber stopper which is bored for an elbow of quarter

inch glass tubing. From this tubing leads a piece of rubber tubing which is immersed about three inches in a quart Mason jar of tap water. With all connections tight, gas that accumulates at the top of each carboy through the fermenting process will soon force its way through the water seal and begin bubbling out at a fairly even rate. As time passes, the number of bubbles per minute will decrease. After the mixture has been in the carboy for about three days the bubbling will be going on at a rate of about 32 a minute, which is the bottling-point. If the bubbles emerge in groups of 2, 3 or 4, count this group one bubble.

Important to remember is that fermentation takes place at a faster rate when the temperature is higher than average and at a lower rate when the room in which the equipment is used is colder. Temperature variations have a marked effect and must be noted.

When the mixture is ready to bottle be sure you have all the bottles you will need, on the floor in front of the carboy, which has to be elevated to about table height to make possible easy siphoning. About 30 quart bottles will suffice. Inspect and rinse the bottles carefully just before the bottling is to begin.

When you siphon the mixture into the bottles, take care not to disturb the yeast; it is always best to sacrifice the last quart or so, rather than bottle a 'muddy' quart. Before capping, add a level teaspoon of sugar to each bottle with the aid of a small, perfectly dry funnel. After the capping is completed, the date of the bottling may be written on the cap with a crayon or wax pencil.

The beer should be stored in a cool dark place and aged for at least three weeks in the bottle. Before this time an obvious 'green' taste will be present. Ageing beyond three week does not improve flavor.

Before drinking, it is best to cool the beer somewhat. There will be a certain amount of yeast in the bottom of each bottle. This seems to be unavoidable. Most people do not like a strong yeast flavor and this can be entirely avoided by pouring the beer in the following manner: open the chilled bottle carefully, pour slowly and evenly into a 2-quart pitcher. Stop pouring just before the accumulated yeast begins to leave the bottle. Discard the last few ounces. It is a helpful habit to rinse each bottle carefully right after pouring.

Beer made this way will contain about twice the alcohol of commercial beer and since its carbonation is entirely natural it will prove to be a far more pleasurable drink.

Variation is possible:a stronger beer can be made with less water. Less than five gallons is not recommended as the beer becomes almost unpalatably thick and it is certainly not thirst quenching. More than ten gallons makes a rather watery brew. Less 'head' is possible by reducing the sugar

added at the time of capping, or by allowing the bubbling in the carboy to go on down to less than 32 a minute.

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We assume no responsibility for the failure or success of this recipe.