

BREWER'S GUILD NEWSLETTER



12TH NIGHT, A.S. XXXIII

Brewers' Guild Ranking System

DEFINITIONS:

Style - beer, wine, mead, cordial, or non-alcoholic beverage.

Public Service Work - teaching a workshop, submitting articles or art to newsletters, holding a contest or tasting, etc.

Proficiency - competency in a style, as judged by fellow brewers from a sampling of at least four different brews.

RANKINGS:

Apprentice - Anyone who wants to play and participate in the Brewers' Guild activities. (Is entitled to wear the Guild badge on a green field.)

Journeyman - Someone who is proficient in at least one style of brewing and has performed at least one public service work. (Is entitled to wear the Guild badge on a blue field.)

Craftsman - Someone who is proficient in at least two styles of brewing, and had performed at least three public service works. (Is entitled to wear the Guild badge on a red field.)

Master Brewer - To achieve this rank you must have attained the previous rank of Craftsman, be nominated by your fellow Craftsmen, and be approved by the other Master Brewers. (Is entitled to wear the Guild badge on a purple field.)

All members of the Guild are encouraged to donate bottles of their beverages to the Guild for use as "taxes" given to the reigning Royalty during court presentations. Brewers outside of the central Kingdom, or in the more distant regions of the Marches, may achieve awards up through Craftsman by participating in their local events. Such individuals should write to the Guild Master to inform him or her of their level of participation.

The Guild badge is as follows: "Fieldless, A tun palewise Or charged with a laurel leaf vert." The tun, as generally depicted, is a wooden barrel.

The Kingdom Brewer's Guild newsletter is an unofficial publication and is printed and published through donations and unofficial subscriptions. It is published at no cost to the Brewers' Guild or the SCA. Members who would like to have a newsletter mailed to their home (vice hoping to pick up a spare copy during Kingdom events) are welcome to donate \$ 5.00 per year to the Guild Chronicler. Both stamps and suitable coins of the realm will be gleefully accepted!

From Thea

All Vintners, Brewers, Imbibers and friends of the West Kingdom Brewers Guild please pay heed!

I will be stepping up for the talented Crystal of the Westmark as the West Kingdom Brewers' Guild Master at March Crown A.S. XXXIV. As the result of this, please note that some changes have been made in the Proposed Contest List. Because it can take many months to prepare an entry for competition, next years schedule has been retained with the addition of an A&S competition schedule. These additional competitions are to encourage participation and to increase the knowledge of the Known World. Other changes in the schedule will not become effective until 12th Night 2000. Please note the codification of the Rules of Submission for Brewers Guild Competitions. These rules are here to provide an even ground for all competitors and to encourage people to submit entries.

At March Crown we will be having our annual Silent Auction to raise funds for the Newsletter as well as hosting the A&S Pavilion. We encourage everyone to stop by to visit and show us your support. There will be free brewing handouts available as well as Hot Mulled Cider for sale to warm your bones on a cool March day while you browse our auction articles. If you don't receive the Newsletter and would like to, contact our chronicler Henry an Eynhallow. The newsletter is a mere \$5 of the realm per year to have it delivered to your door and it will keep you abreast of the latest.

****Join us in Brewhaha (/ˈbruːhɑːhɑː/ n. commotion; sensation. (French)) at March Crown - the first Kingdom wide interactive brewing demonstration! ****

If you're like me, after several brewing sessions you will have odd bits of grains and hops left over taking up space. The challenge is to collect these bits and pieces from all parts of the West Kingdom (or Known World) and to create a unique and drinkable beverage. You do not need to be a Brewers Guild member to participate. Bag, box, mail in or send with a friend YOUR brewing bits and pieces! We hope to include ingredients from as many locations as possible. If all goes well, this unique beverage should be available for a tasting session at Beltane. Contact me if you need more info.

Yours in Service,
Thea of Midvale

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Rules for Competition Submissions West Kingdom Brewers' Guild Effective March Crown XXXIII

1. ALL entries must be in 12 oz. brown unmarked bottles sealed with plain bottle caps or corks. NO LABELS ON BOTTLES OR MARKS ON CAPS. No fancy bottles - no exceptions! For cordials, bottles do not have to be full but need to contain eight oz. (1 cup) for judging please. I am only interested in the contents not the presentation.

2. All documentation must be in a plain, easily readable font WITHOUT your name on it. Please resist your favorite fancy font. We want the honor of reading your entry and appreciating your scholarship.

3. When you present your entry for competition please enter your name on the list. Next to your name there will be two stickers with a number. Place one sticker on your bottle and one on your documentation, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE THE SAME NUMBER IS ON THE BOTTLE AND THE PAPER. Entries sent from far away for judging need to follow these restrictions. Please put a post it on your bottle and paper with your name and you will be assigned a number at random when your entry is received. Time permitting, you will also receive confirmation that your entry has arrived.

Bottles and documentation without numbers will not be judged. Bottles with labels will not be judged. Bottles with marks on the lids will not be judged. Documentation with your name on it will not be judged.

We will make every effort to run Kingdom level competitions in the most anonymous manner possible. Documentation as well as skill are equally important, please do not be sloppy with either. We wish to offer equal opportunity to all contestants regardless of their skill level or the remoteness of their residence from the central kingdom. If you want "kind comments" judging only, please note this on your documentation. We want no one to be afraid of entering our competitions for any reason.

The West Kingdom Brewers' Guild is not responsible for the judging of competitions at Principality Level. This is handled by our fine representatives and comments regarding their competitions should be directed to them.

Historical Measurement Information

Recreating period brewing recipes can be a real challenge. We are providing the following conversions for the convenience of SCA brewers who wish to recreate brews at smaller quantities than typically specified in the original period instructions.

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Hogshead of Claret..... | 46 gallons |
| Butt of Sherry..... | 103 gallons |
| Pipe of Port or Masden..... | 115 gallons |
| Pipe of Madeira or Cape..... | 92 gallons |
| Pipe of Teneriffe..... | 100 gallons |
| Pipe of Lisbon or Bucellas..... | 117 gallons |
| Butt of Tent, Malaga, or Mountain.... | 105 gallons |
| Aum of Hock, Moselle, or other German Wines.. | 30 gallons |
| Pipe of Marsala or Bronti..... | 93 gallons |
| Puncheon of Scotch Whiskey..... | 110-130 gallons |
| Puncheon of Brandy..... | 110-120 gallons |
| Hogshead of Brandy..... | 55-60 gallons |
| Puncheon of Rum..... | 90-100 gallons |

A hogshead is 1/2 a Pipe, Butt or Puncheon
A quartercask is 1/4 of a Pipe, Butt or Puncheon
An Octave is 1/8 of a Pipe, Butt or Puncheon

English Wine and Spirit measure

4 gills = 1 pint
2 pints = 1 quart
4 quarts = 1 gallon
36 gallons = 1 tierce
54 gallons = 1 1/2 tierces = 1 hogshead
108 gallons = 2 hogsheads = 1 pipe, butt, or puncheon.

Ale, Beer or Porter measurements

4 gills = 1 pint
2 pints = 1 quart
4 quarts = 1 gallon
9 gallons = 1 firkin
2 firkins = 18 gallons = 1 kilderkin
2 kilderkins = 36 gallons = 1 barrel
3 kilderkins = 54 gallons = 1 hogshead
2 hogsheads = 108 gallons = 1 butt
2 butts = 216 gallons = 216 gallons

Before 1824

The Wine gallon = 231 cubic inches
The Corn Gallon = 268.8 cubic inches
The Ale gallon = 282 cubic inches
(The post-1824 Imperial Gallon = 277.274 cubic inches)

West Kingdom Brewers Guild Contest List

1999

12th Night - Beverages using flowers as a main flavoring/ coloring ingredient
March Crown - Beverages fermented with naturally occurring yeast
Beltane A.S. XXXIV - Mead
June Crown - Distilling flower/ spiced waters. NO ALCOHOL PLEASE unless you can also document current mundane legality!!
A&S Tournament - "Hair of the Dog" Medieval hangover cures. To be judged Sunday morning.
Purgatorio - Cold non-alcoholic beverages
October Crown - Brew off of a period recipe.

2000

12th Night - Small beer/ weak meads
March Crown - Period gruits
Beltane A..S. XXXV - Infused/ flavored wines or meads " Maywine anyone?"
June Crown - Medievaloid soda - fizzy non-alcoholic drinks derived from period sources
A&S Tourney - Brewing Paraphernalia Attn: wood and metal workers! Please have documentation and picture of period source if available.
Purgatorio - Open Western European beverages
October Crown - Winter Warmers Brews over 12% alcohol. Please provide specific gravity measurements and details of process used.

2001

12th Night - Spiced Meads (metheglins and mead based cordials)
March Crown - Beverages served warm (caudles, mulled ciders, ales and wines)
Beltane A.S. XXXVI - Period beverages from any non- Western European country
June Crown - Fruit beers
A&S Tourney - Medical Medievallia - documented Medical cures using wine or ale as a component.
Purgatorio - Scented waters (Rose water, Orange Blossom, Jasmine, Sage water, etc.)
October Crown - Hyppocras or Clarrey made with at least two kinds of peppercorn.

Syrups of Herbs or Flowers

Crystal of the Westmark

Occasionally I find "dream recipes," things that are easy to make and adaptable for almost any palate. One of these is the following recipe from Elinor Fettiplace*.

" To Make Sirrope of any Hearbe or Flower Fill an Earthen Jugge full of the berbes of flowers you will make sirrope of, then ad to yt as much spring water as yor Jugge will receive, so let yt stand where yt may bee kept warme 2 howers, then strain yor licoure from the rest very hard, then to that licoure put more of the herbes of flowers, and let yt stand 2 howers as you did before, thus you must doe 3 times straining out the licoure and putinge in fresh herbes the last time ad to every pinte of licoure 2 pound of sugar smale beaten, set yt in yor Jugge againe in a pott of warme water till yor sugar bee dissolved but cover yt not untill yt bee cold"

This recipe is from an 1604 English manuscript, so any of the herbs mentioned by late period English writers such as Digbie, Markham or Platt would be suitable. You could also check Gerard's herbal for more ideas of the herbs and flowers used in food and medicine of that time.

I took Master Wulfric's suggestion and made this syrup with mint and lavender. I took four ounces of fresh mint, five ounces of dried lavender and put them in a pot. I then covered them with about 5 cups of water and set it on the lowest stove top letting. I let it sit for about two hours. Then I strained & squeezed out the herbs, promptly discovering I had only four cups (or two pints) of herb-water left. I took four pounds of sugar and added it to the water. I brought the mixture to a brief boil to sanitize and bottled quickly into clean containers. I know the original says to wait until the syrup is cool, but where Lady Fettiplace probably had separate still-rooms and bake-houses, I have only one kitchen, and I didn't want this to ferment.

* Spurling, Hilary, *Elinor Fettiplace's Receipt Book: Elizabethan Country House Cooking*. Published by Penguin Books, London England, 1986. Page 154.

Parfait de Amour - a flower cordial

Thea of Midvale 1998

Today we associate the scents of lavender, rose, carnation, jasmine and other flowers with perfumes and sachets, however nearly every old European cookbook contains recipes for spirits made with flower petals.

The historical references that I found for this type of cordial were fairly late period (1500's onward) and involved distilling the flower/ alcohol mixture after steeping. Since we don't want to attract unwanted attention from the authorities, this is my interpretation of a flower based cordial.

Many dried flower petals are available from health food stores or ethnic/ specialty stores. Look for hibiscus (New World), lavender, calendula, orange, lemon, jasmine, carnation (gillyflowers) and roses/ rosehips. Elderflower, borage, bugloss, and saffron are mentioned in historical sources. Fresh flower petals can be prepared by cutting the flower heads in full bloom and removing the petals from the stems and stamens. Gently rinse and pat dry.

Vodka or everclear interferes less with the flower taste however brandy was used in the historical references. White wine might also be good but I have never used it.

For a basic flower cordial you will need:

1 ½ cup fresh petals or 1/3 cup dried petals
1 ½ cup liquor
½ cup sugar syrup

Steep the flower petals in liquor for 2-3 weeks. Strain and squeeze out the juices. Add sugar syrup and age approximately one week.

Parfait de Amour is a flower cordial made with orange and lemon flavors.

I like to use extracts for the lemon and orange because I can avoid the bitter peel flavors.

1 ½ tsp. pure lemon extract
1/8 tsp. pure orange extract
½ " length of vanilla bean OR 1/8 tsp. pure vanilla extract
6 fresh flower petals
3 cups vodka or brandy
1 ½ c sugar syrup

Steep the flavorings with the liquor for two weeks. Strain and add sweetener. This tends to be a very sweet cordial but adjust the flavor to taste. Mature about a week.

Collected Miscellanea

Henry an Eynhallow

In teaching many different brewing classes in both the West and East Kingdoms, Eirny Thorvaldsdottir and I have answered a number of questions dealing with SCA period brewing practices. Here's a collection of some of the more frequent questions.

How did medieval brewers estimate temperatures without any measurement devices?

Short answer - we don't know for certain, although some books provide brewing methods that do not require a temperature measurement.

We do know how to estimate temperature without a thermometer, from a method documented in the 18th century (which is not medieval, but it is without a thermometer).

There are actually two methods based on a variation of a theme.

The first does not require a great deal of fire control. Bring your water to a boil and let it sit. The moment that the steam no longer completely obscures your reflection, it is cool enough to add the grist--but add the grist quickly, with much stirring, so it will cool the water properly to mashing temperature as it comes in.

The second method requires better fire control. Heat the water until the steam completely obscures your reflection, and NO MORE HEATING. Add the grist.

Both methods come from "The London and Country Brewer - no longer in print, the 7th edition (published 1759) is in Cornel's rare book collection. The book is a "homebrewing" manual from 1759, written by a commercial brewer who was also a homebrewer. He describes methods, ingredients, and recipes that would work for a gentleman who brewed for himself at home.

Post SCA period brewing references are valuable as a way to put SCA period reference in perspective. We've had good luck "working backwards" to interpret in-period references.

How did medieval brewers obtain the right mash temperature without thermometers?

For several years Henry has been collaborating with Lord Jeffrey Dwiggins of the East. We have discovered that using the literal description of several recipes works fine. Here's how: Markham describes mashing by pouring boiling water onto the grist. Boiling water will destroy enzymes, so most brewers thought that Markham's process could not work. Henry suggested that by following the procedure exactly - but scaled for our smaller batch size - the process should be "self working." Henry's mathematical models predicted that under fall weather conditions and batch size, the

mash temperature would be near the ideal. Jeffery's experiments proved the theory. To make Markham's method work at modern home brewing batch sizes you need to use a small ladle (1 or 2 ounces) to gently pour hot water from your hot liquor pot onto the grist. What happens is that the first water cools fairly rapidly as its heat is transferred to the grist. Each subsequent ladle raises the temperature by a very small amount. The result is very little enzyme destruction and the right mash temperature when you're done. Jeffery has made a number of brews while camping with this method.

Are Hops SCA period?

Absolutely! But it depends on where in Europe you're interested in as to whether or not hops were used at a specific date. For example, we have references to hopped beer in Holland in 1323. Hopped ale was generally available in England in the late 16th century.

Here's a passage from Bickerdyke's "The Curiosities of Ale and Beer" 1965 edition pg. 66...

"That the hops was known to the English before the Conquest in some form or other, is proved by the reference to the hymele, or hop plant, in the Anglo-Saxon version of the Herbarium of Apuleius. Although no trace of the word hymele now remains in our every-day language, it is found in Danish as 'humle,' and is only the English form of the Latin humulus. The Herbarium just mentioned contains a remarkable passage with reference to 'hymele.' 'This wort,' it says, 'is to that degree laudable that men mix it with their usual drinks.' (note: in this instance wort is referring to the plant used, not wort as in beer, in herb talk wort means plant or herb) The usual drinks of the English were undoubtedly malt liquors, and this passage would go far to show that even in Saxon times the hops was used in English brewing. Cockayne, the learned editor of 'Saxon Leechdoms,' is inclined to this opinion, and he instances in confirmation of it that special mention is made of hedge-hymele, as though there existed at that time a cultivated hop from which it had to be distinguished."

(skip ahead on same page)

"In the year 822 there is a record that the millers of Corbay were freed by the abbot from all labours relating to hops, and a few years later hops are mentioned by Lucovicus Germanicus."

Is Porter or Stout SCA Period?

The short answer is no because the styles were specifically created in the 19th century. In particular, both beers use darker malts that are produced by higher kilning temperatures. In English Ale descriptions there are many references to a strong preference for light malts (meaning not kilned at high temperatures). The more involved answer is that the exact nature of the malt depends a lot on how it is kilned. A home French kiln described by Markham is relatively small and was fueled by a variety of woods and straw. Without having constructed the kiln (so this is some conjecture) it seems likely that some of the malt would have been roasted to a darker malt. So, at least for brown ales that use a

mixture of light and darker malts it's reasonable to expect that a distribution of malts occurred when malt was made at home. Our conclusion is that Porter-like beers are probable late SCA-period brews in England. As a side note, for those who think that smoked malt is a new invention, Scottish malt houses routinely used peat for their fuel source - and allowed the smoke to flow upwards through holes in the malting floor.

What Yeast Do I use?

Finding historically appropriate yeasts for SCA brewing has been a frustrating hunt for many folks. As a practical matter, we suggest using a mono-culture such as one of the dried brewing yeasts, or the "smack pack" variety. Select according to the style that you're brewing. Keep in mind that the idea of brewing is to make something that is good and fun to drink. For the most part, these mono-cultures were isolated in the 1950s and 1960s by scientists working for several monasteries and commercial brewers. Open air inoculation of your wort will introduce local yeast and bacteria - not the ones that were present in say England of 1350. Traditional Lambics are still fermented using wild yeast from the surrounding region. So, it is possible to drink at least one style of beer that is reasonably accurate. For what it's worth, historical references to the taste of English Ale leads us to believe that the Ale of the SCA period probably had a lot in common with modern Lambics. The so-called stale ale is described with bacillus-induced qualities.

Judging Brewing Contests - A Pennsic Class by Eirny Thorvaldsdottir

The fair and uniform judging of brewing competitions is a challenge faced by all brewing judges of all the Kingdoms of the Known World. How do you create a system that people can understand and follow, that will work for all types of brewed beverages? This past August Henry and I were able to take a class relating exactly to this problem.

One of the joys of attending Pennsic, is the opportunity to take classes taught by brewers from other kingdoms. We were fortunate to be able to participate in a class run by Ernst Nuss von Kitzingen, a well-known brewer and judge from the East Kingdom, a long time connoisseur of alcohol, and an old friend. Ernst is especially well known for his excellent cordials, but he places considerable emphasis on improving the quality of brewing contests through the standardization of judging techniques and the general education of the judges and populace. This was a two hour class, which ran three hours, with lots of tasting (yum!). One could obviously write a book based on this class, but we have tried to summarize his main points here.

Step 1 - When handling the brews handle them as little as possible. ALWAYS assume that there is some sort of sediment in the bottom of every bottle that you are given, and that they should NOT be shaken. Any brew, even cordials, can have sediment in the bottom. Mixing this into the brew does not in any way improve the clarity or flavor .

Step 2 - Make sure that the brew is at the appropriate temperature. Cordials are fine at room temperature, but many meads, beers and wines are at their best when served slightly chilled. Achieving the perfect temperature may be a problem, especially in a camping environment, but a serious effort should be made. A mead which is delicious at fifty degrees may be nasty at seventy.

Step 3 - Use a clean, clear GLASS for your tasting. It will not impart any unwanted flavors, and it allows you to accurately judge the clarity and color of the brew. A delicious brew with a nasty color should be noted on the judging sheets. A metal container can change the flavor of a brew and ceramic will not rinse clean as easily. The clarity of the brew is also difficult to judge in an opaque vessel! Your glass should be rinsed with clear water after each use.

Step 4 - Use a standardized sheet for your judging. Ernst uses a sheet based on the techniques used by professional wine tasters. It requires the judge to dissect, as objectively as possible, the various flavors that are evident in the brew over time. It also takes into account the overall impression that the brew gives, and the quality of the documentation. (More on this later!)

Step 5 - Set the judging area up with stations that contain the brew and the documentation. Placing the brews on a table is the most efficient arrangement. It allows the judges to circulate at their own speed, and judge the brews in any order. It also helps avoid shaking the brews up.

Step 6 - The brews should be judged one category at a time. This is to say, a beer should NEVER be in competition with a cordial, or a mead. Each type of drink should be judged only against its own type. If people really insist a "Best of Show" may be given.

Step 7 - Standardize the method in which you taste. Ernst recommends using the same techniques as professional wine tasters. Scientifically the majority of our taste comes from smell, so step one is always swirl the glass and smell the brew. This is also a safety tip for judges. Not all brewers do a good job. Some brews may be awful from the start, or may have "gone bad". Smelling the brew will usually give you a clue about anything dangerous. Mead competitions are particularly well known for their ability to give the judges upset stomachs.

After you have taken a sniff, take a sip - a SMALL sip (about a teaspoon). Inhale through your mouth and smack your tongue to help atomize the brew and bring out all of its characteristics. Start counting the seconds - one-one-hundred, etc. As time ticks by you will experience various flavors - note them, good or bad, and when they occurred. When nothing new seems to be happening take another tiny sip and note the overall impression that the brew makes. You should be able to detect LOTS of different flavors, tannins, apple, pear, hops, pits, honey, spices, depending on what the brew is. Fill out your judging sheet and rinse your glass. There should be a bucket for rinsing glasses into, dumping excess brew, and also spitting into in case of a high "Yuck!" factor in a brew.

Step 8 - As a judge, make sure that the comments you make on the judging sheets are meaningful and helpful to the brewer. For instance, "Yuck!" would not be a helpful comment, whereas "Too much tannin!", or "Too sweet!" gives the brewer something concrete to work with. If you know what may have caused a specific problem try to mention this in your comments. For instance, "The 'off' flavor may be caused by a bacterial infection - you may want to check your sanitation procedures." or "The champagne yeast that you used probably caused this mead to be overly dry - next time you might want to try a yeast specifically recommended for mead".

Step 9 - Standardize the way you judge documentation. Is it a period recipe? What is the source? Are the ingredients period? Are there ingredient substitutions, and if so are they explained? A simple checklist can be set up to remind you of what to look for.

Step 10 - If you are not familiar with the style of brew that you are judging, talk to other judges that may be more knowledgeable. Learn the characteristics of a brew. You do NOT need to like a brew to be able to judge it, but you do need to know what it is supposed to taste like.

This process may seem tedious at first, but after three hours of class and two of actual tasting, we found that the process worked smoothly and allowed a rather speedy analysis of about 30 brews by a class of over 60 people. It was also rather impressive, in that while people's personal preferences for various flavors varied, the majority of the class was able to taste and agree on the presence or absence of various flavors and whether they should be there or not! When was the last time that you got 60 people to agree on anything!?!?

Documentation

Ernst recommends that all brewers entering a competition provide a single page with their documentation. The documentation should contain the original recipe with reference, the translation if any, and the redaction. In addition, since it's unlikely that the original procedures will be followed exactly, the documentation should describe the modifications and the motivation for making them. As a practical observation, it is always good to provide detailed and thorough documentation, but it may make it impossible for judges to understand the whole entry without the one page summary. We believe that any brew that is not commonly understood to be within the SCA period should also include explicit references that would allow judges to recognize the brew as being within the period. As a judge you have a special responsibility to listen to new information for in-period brews.

Brewers' Guild Leadership

Head of the Guild

Crystal of the Westermarck (Crystal A. Isaac)

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Private
No peeking

19 (no calls after 9 PM, please!)

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No

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lease...

This newsletter is an unofficial publication prepared by and for the members of the Brewers' Guild of the Kingdom of the West. The articles, opinions, and recipes published herein are strictly the responsibility of their authors and not of the SCA or the Kingdom of the West. (Now that the lawyers are happy... relax and have a home brew!)