

The Bierkieser

Thank You!!!

It has definitely been a good new year for us. We opened our doors on January 3, 1995 and very kind word of mouth action has brought us many visitors in our first few weeks. Thanks to everyone who has come in. Your support and encouragement has been greatly appreciated. Many of you have wondered why we haven't been doing much advertising yet. Well, we wanted to make certain that all the bugs were worked out and everything was 100% before we started really cooking. We put up our first sign a few weeks ago and have just started advertising. You will see much more of us in the local papers in the weeks to come.

What the hell is a Bierkieser you might be asking yourself. Well, this is my tribute to what I would consider to be the ultimate job. The Dictionary of Beer and Brewing defines a Bierkieser as "The name given in Alsace in 1723 and 1763 to sworn beer essayers. The role of these experts consisted in tasting the newly tapped beer to ensure that its quality was up to the standards set by the magistrate of that city, who had decreed that only malt, water and hops could be used for its production." Well, I can dream can't I?

What's new in store

Well actually everything is new. However, we do have some products which are not only new to The Beer Nut, but are new to the Wasatch area. Here are some quick blurbs about some of the more interesting items.

"Brew Magic"

Brew Magic is a new RIMS designed for the all-grain homebrewer or the microbrewer looking for a pilot brewing

system. RIMS stands for recirculating infusion mash system. The basic idea of the RIMS setup is to continuously recirculate the mash liquid during the saccharification rest. This is done to combat the many problems faced by most homebrew mashing setups such as low yields, poor grain mixing, and turbid runoffs. Here are some facts about the Brew Magic: Nearly perfect temperature control is achieved with the help of a microprocessor thermal controller which is precise to within 1/10th degree. This controller allows the user to 'program' and maintain the desired temperature with incredible ease and accuracy. The Brew Magic uses both electric and gas heat sources to provide incredible versatility for almost every kind of brewing technique and style. Brew Magic has taken 5 years of development and 5 prototypes to achieve the commercial quality results which it now attains. And perhaps best of all, Sabco guarantees your satisfaction with the Brew Magic. If the Brew Magic is found to be unsatisfactory for any reason it may be returned for a full refund. You should definitely come check out this

system. At the very least it will get you thinking about new ways to improve your existing setup.

Sabco Brewkettles

In addition to the Brew Magic system we carry the Sabco line of Brewing Kettles. These kettles are manufactured from re-conditioned brewery kegs. They are available in many setups ranging from the complete mash/lauter kettle which comes with a stainless false bottom assembly, 3" stainless dial thermometer, and stainless siphon assembly, down to the boiling kettle which is perfect for a simple 15 gallon boiler. The welding is superb and all kettles have been acid cleaned after welding to give them a truly showroom quality look. These kettles are far cheaper than purchasing a new stainless pot and having it modified for brewing. These deserve a look. As with all of our products, we guarantee your satisfaction with these kettles.

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Hop Storage

For us lupomaniacs, the hop is perhaps the most beautiful flower around. It gives our beer wonderful bitterness, flavor and aroma. However, hops need very careful storage to ensure that they give our beer all these desirable characteristics. The hop oils which give our beer these flavors are easily oxidized.

In order to prevent this oxidation hops must be stored at as cold a temperature as possible. This is why The Beer Nut uses chest freezers set at their coldest setting to store our hops. This keeps the hops below -10F. Another important part of hop storage involves the reduction of contact with oxygen. There is a simple test to determine if the hops you purchase are protected from the oxygen. Take the bag of hops and smell the bag deeply. If you can smell the hops through the bag then oxygen is getting in and will oxidize the hops. This is why The Beer Nut packages its hops in oxygen-barrier bags. Finally, light will accelerate the deterioration of the hops and therefore they should be packaged with some sort of light protection. At The Beer Nut we use a light shaded bag which has an almost mirror look. This is very good at keeping the hops safe during any transit your hops might make once they leave the store. The Beer Nut is committed to giving you the freshest hops available. Don't settle for anything less than the freshest ingredients you can get for your beer. After all, your taste buds deserve the very best.

De Wolf-Cosyns Grains

We are the only supplier in the area to carry not just one or two of the De Wolf-Cosyns specialty grains but their entire selection of malts and grains. And the selection of malts they produce is exceptional. De Wolf-Cosyns is known for having the highest, uncompromising, standard of malt quality. This is demonstrated by De Wolf-Cosyns use of the traditional floor malting process. This method is quite expensive; however, it produces the best malt possible. You might see Belgian Malts available from other sources; however, if it isn't produced by De Wolf-Cosyns then it will lack the exceptional quality of these malts. The De Wolf-Cosyns malt kernels are incredibly plump and uniform. You simply do not find the scorched and undersized kernels that you find in other maltsters products. These malts are produced using the highest quality 2-row barley which reduces the harsh astringency that the domestic 6-row specialty malts can give. The small increase in cost is definitely worth the significant improvement to your beers.

While the De Wolf-Cosyns base malts are outstanding I am simply astonished by their roasted malts. In fact, to quote George Fix. "These malts are the gems of the Belgian collection...[they] have no equal." Fix describes the Cara-Vienna malt as "[having] the most attractive caramel-sweet aroma that I have ever encountered in a malt. It leaves an extremely pleasant tone in the finished beer." I personally find the Special B malt to have a lovely roasty-sweet flavor which makes an exceptional addition to any pale ale in small amounts, as well as doing an excellent job filling out a porter recipe. Equally as interesting is the De Wolf-Cosyns Chocolate malt. This malt has been debittered; therefore, it won't give that burnt bitter coffee taste that the domestic highly roasted malts tend to give. In fact, as an experiment, I brewed a porter with 1 pound of DWC Chocolate malt in a 5 gallon recipe and ended up with an incredible smooth roasty character with none of the harshness you would be led to expect. This malt deserves quite

a bit of experimentation and envelope pushing.

I can't leave my discussion of these malts without discussing the Biscuit and Aromatic malts. Aromatic is defined as being a color malt and will give your beer that sought-after malty aroma. It should be used in small amounts, however, due to its high color and flavor potentials. Biscuit malt is a funny malt. Simply chewing on a few kernels will give you an idea why this malt is called Biscuit. This malt will be a fun one to play with. I hope that everyone will give these malts a try and let me know their results. Perhaps we could get some new recipes to put in The Bierkieser.

Brewers Best Beer Kits

I have been quite hesitant to stock many beer kits in the shop. Most beer kits will simply not produce beer of the quality all homebrewers should demand. However, these kits from L.D. Carlson are something special. These kits are an excellent way for a beginning brewer to start making excellent beer without worrying about recipe formulation. It allows one to learn the process in the quickest manner possible. These all-malt kits come complete with 1-2 cans of M&F malt extract, dry malt extract as required per recipe to up the fermentables without producing those cidery flavors which can accompany the use of corn sugar, pre-crushed specialty grains for extra flavor and character as required per recipe, Bittering and Flavoring hops pre-measured and packaged in light shaded oxygen barrier bags, corn sugar for priming, yeast, grain and hop bags to make the process as easy as possible and bottle caps to ensure that these kits are completely self contained. All the brewer needs is the standard equipment and bottles to produce 5 gallons of excellent beer. These kits have easy to follow instructions, which we have augmented with our own instructions to ensure excellent beer, and produce beer far superior to the standard canned kits. These are the perfect beginners kits for the brewer who has some confidence in the kitchen.

Beer Term of the Month

Ale-stake: In old England, a branch, stick or pole placed outside a house to indicate that ale had been freshly brewed there. The practice dates back to Saxon times when wayside taverns or ale-houses erected on Roman roads were identified by means of a long pole. If wine was sold along with mead and ale an ivy-bush was hung atop the pole. In the 14th century the same bush or ivy-plant was a sign for the ale-conner and customers that a fresh brew was ready. In London, in 1375, a city ordinance prescribed that such poles should not extend more than seven feet in length. Syn: ale-pole; ale-post.

-Dictionary of Beer and Brewing, Carl Forget

Money Saving Tip

Using liquid yeast is perhaps one of the greatest improvements one can make to their beer. However, to the frugal brewer the costs might feel quite high. Here is one way in which you can increase the mileage you get from a "smack pack." I have tried this. It works quite well and it makes liquid yeast almost as cheap to use as dried. Simply put this method takes the original Wyeast package and produces several "copies" stored in beer bottles. This is referred to as parallel culturing in contrast to serial culturing due to the fact that each copy was taken from the same "parent." This method has the advantage of avoiding genetic drift, ease of sanitation, and it does not require any special equipment that a homebrewer does not already have.

Step 1

Prepare some starter wort (S.G. = 1.020) as described later in this newsletter. You need about 1/2 gallon but if you use the method given here you might as well make more.

Step 2

Place 1/2 gallon or so of starter into a suitable container (1 gallon glass jugs work great), pitch the inflated Wyeast package at the correct temp for the yeast strain and fit with an airlock. This is now the 'master' starter.

Step 3

Allow the beer to ferment to **completion**. When fermentation has ceased, swirl the 'beer' to suspend all sediment. Then carefully bottle it in sanitized bottles and place in the refrigerator.

You now have about 6 bottles of very thin beer with a good deal of viable yeast in each. Use each bottle as you would a normal package of Wyeast. i.e. prepare a starter culture a couple of days before brewing. If you followed my suggestion to make extra starters then all you need to do is pop open a mason jar of wort and dump it into a gallon jug, open the bottle of yeast and add it to the wort, aerate and fit an airlock. I have personally used yeast cultured in this method 3-4 months after bottling and know of others who had viable, healthy yeast over 6 months later.

The most important part of this process is to ensure that you maintain sanitary procedures throughout.

Making Yeast Starters

For high gravity and large batch beers the liquid yeast packs do not have enough yeast for a fast start. This problem becomes increasingly important in the summer when the chances of infection are much higher than in winter. So how do you get around this problem? Simple, make a yeast starter. In this way you can grow a healthy yeast colony which will ensure that you have a strong and healthy fermentation. This will eliminate many off flavors and reduce the chance for infection. Dave Miller has a good and simple method for making up sterile wort for using as yeast starters. We strongly recommend using this method for it's simplicity and effectiveness.

Here is Miller's recipe for 3 gallons of sterile wort.

4-pound can or 3 pounds dry malt extract
1 teaspoon yeast energizer
.5 oz hops
3.5 gal brewing water
12 1-quart canning jars, lids and rings
5-gallon canner and other brewing equipment

Step 1

Dissolve the extract in 2.5 gallons water. Bring this to a boil and add hops when boil is reached.

Step 2

Boil the wort for 15 minutes then strain off hops into a bucket which has been premarked at the 3-gallon level. Top up the wort to the 3-gallon level with additional brewing water.

Step 3

Fill the jars, fit the lids (boiled per the instructions which come with the lids) and rings. Put six jars into the canning pot and fill with water up to the rings on the jars with warm water. Bring to a boil then turn down heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes.

Step 4

Remove jars very carefully and let cool. Put the remaining 6 jars into the canner and bring to a boil and simmer as before.

Step 5

When the jars are cool you can remove the rings and set them aside for reuse. You now have 12 quarts full of vacuum sealed sterile wort ready for making starters.

Now, instead of simply pitching the Wyeast pack into your wort, pour this sterile wort into a sanitized gallon jug and pitch the yeast from the Wyeast pack into the jug as well. Seal the jug with a stopper and airlock and aerate the inoculated wort well. This starter should be in active fermentation within 48 hours.

You can now either pitch the entire starter into your 5 gallons of wort or, if you are concerned about diluting your beer, you can pour off most of the liquid, leaving just enough to swirl the yeast up into, and pour out nearly pure yeast.

This method adds a couple of days to the brewing process yet is definitely worth it if only for it's peace of mind.

Next Issue:

Next month we will talk about an easy method of determining the health of your yeast starters. And a method of long term storage of yeast in a sucrose solution.

We will review the new, to us anyway, CAMRA books including "Brew Your own Real Ale at Home" and "The Real Ale Drinkers Guide."

And, hopefully, many more fun things. Please come by or call with any ideas you might have. Moreover, I would love to include any items submitted by readers.

Special Offer

For a limited time we are offering a free sample of the DWC Specialty malts. Come in and choose from any of the DWC Malts and we will give you a pound of it to try in your next batch. If you have been reluctant to give these malts a try this is the perfect time. We are confident that once you experience the significant quality difference between these malts and the standard domestic specialty malts you will want to use them in most every beer you brew. Simply come in and mention that you saw this offer in the newsletter. One per customer, etc...

The Bierkieser



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