

DRAUGHT *lines*[®]

CELEBRATING BEER CULTURE IN THE DELAWARE VALLEY

HOLIDAY

**30 Years of
Vanberg &
DeWulf**



**Smokin' Hot
Beer & Cigars**

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Betty's Speakeasy

Speaks for Itself



Sugar, butter and beer—what else could you want in a treat? Betty's Speakeasy on Grays Ferry Avenue in Philadelphia is a café that specializes in traditional treats baked with non-traditional ingredients—like beer! Owner, Liz Begosh opened her café about three years ago as an extension of her booming fudge business. Begosh's inspiration comes from local products that she incorporates into traditional recipes, such as her first beer cupcake called the Growler. Begosh used a family recipe for birthday cake made with coffee and added Dock Street's Russian Imperial Stout to the mix. That cupcake took her in a new creative direction. "We found a niche—not many people were baking with beer," says Begosh. This was a great way to bring in other flavor components without the cupcakes becoming too sweet. Begosh explains, "The trick to baking with beer is knowing the subtle flavors it possesses. It really has helped us develop our own palates. We have become particularly aware of the different flavor profiles of beer and which baking ingredients best complement the beverage."

Begosh's most recent creations include the Bramble and Palo Santo cupcakes. Bramble is baked with raspberries that have been reduced with Sly Fox's Black

Raspberry Reserve, finished with a dash of kaffir lime and topped with a pale pink (from the raspberries in the beer) Black Raspberry Reserve butter cream frosting. As for the Palo Santo cupcake, fresh sweet corn is soaked in Dogfish Head's caramelly, malty Palo Santo beer and the corn mixture is added to the butter cream cake batter. The cupcake is then topped with a barley malt butter cream frosting. A standard menu item at Betty's Speakeasy is the Devil's Pocket, a traditional devil's food cupcake made with Yuengling Lager. Yum and yum! To complete this match made in heaven, mint butter cream frosting is sprinkled with mini chocolate chips. Three flavorful beers paired with three interesting and delicious cupcakes—now that's a six pack worth every calorie!

Vanberg & DeWulf

30 YEARS OF BELGIAN BEERS

Happy Anniversary Vanberg & DeWulf!

By Lew Bryson



This November 15th will see a Coast to Coast Toast celebrating the 30th Anniversary of Vanberg & DeWulf beer importers. You may not be familiar with the company — who pays attention to importers? — and you’ve probably never heard of the principals, Don Feinberg and Wendy Littlefield. But they’ve had a tremendous influence on American craft beer and craft beer drinkers by bringing the finest from Belgium since 1982, and they continue to find — and create — great new beers today. You may be a participant on the 15th, so it’s my pleasure to introduce you to my good friends, Don and Wendy.

“We actually went to Belgium in 1979,” Wendy recalled. “We eloped while I was still in school and moved to Brussels right after my graduation from our alma mater (Yale).” They both got jobs in advertising, started exploring Belgium and quickly found the beers.

They loved the whole country, though: the food, the people, the architecture. They wanted to share it and thought that since the beers were delicious, and not imported at that time... and that’s how the company was started. Vanberg & DeWulf were two names of people in Belgium; “Sounded better than Feinberg & Littlefield,” Don once told me.

They started with some now very familiar names in Belgian brewing, a real hall of fame portfolio. “The first was Duvel,” Wendy said. “Then in rapid succession we added Jenlain, Castelain, Rodenbach, Kwak, Blanche de Bruges, Affligem, Frank Boon’s lambics, Dubuisson, Dupont and Slaghmuylder. We had kindred spirits plowing the same row like Charles and Roseanne [Finkel, of Merchant du Vin], and the fine work that Michael Jackson did building the knowledge base.”

In the 1990s, they took the huge step of opening Ommegang in partnership with three Belgian breweries, making Belgian beer in upstate New York. It was brilliant: a farmhouse brewery, a gorgeous setting, excellent beer, events celebrating Belgian beer, food and culture.

In 2003, though, Duvel Moortgat bought out their partners — including Don and Wendy — and bought back Vanberg & DeWulf’s import rights to the Duvel beers. Other brewers went through ownership changes, and the Vanberg & DeWulf portfolio shrank dramatically. Don would rebuild the portfolio over the next five years alone; Wendy took a break, and rejoined the company in 2009.

But Don doesn’t really want to dwell on the history of the company. “I did this little roadshow for Philly Beer Week in 2011,” he said,

“about 30 years of celebrating...and I hated it. I couldn’t care less about what we’d already done. I couldn’t do what I wasn’t excited about. If I’d had to say “was” one more time, I’d slit my throat. The only good time I had was when I talked about what we were going to be doing.”

In that vein, then, here’s what Don and Wendy are doing now. The portfolio’s still based on the best. “I think of myself as a gallery owner,” Don said, “a small gallery of artists we think deserve attention. We’ve changed the content of the portfolio, but not the nature of it.”

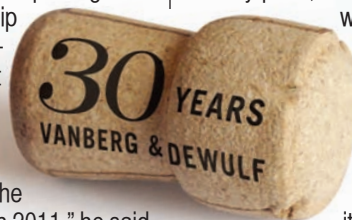
Here are the stars. Dubuisson has been with them for years (Scaldis, Prestige, Peche Mel, Cuvee des Trolls), an 8th generation independent family-run brewery. Dupont — also independent and family-run — not only has the classic saison (and wonderful Christmas version), but the delightful session-strength Avril as well and lots of new stuff coming: “Olivier Dedecker is doing great things,” Wendy noted, “digging through the old notebooks for grandfather’s recipes.”

A third independent, family-run brewery, Slaghmuylder, has a new brewer: young, dynamic Karel Goddeau, also the blender/owner of DeCam lambic. Watch for their newly arrived Witkap Stimulo; “Our favorite abbey single,” Wendy noted. Dilewyns is a new family brewery, based in Dendermonde, that already produces five beers including their Vicaris Tripel, blended with Girardin gueuze: unique.

The portfolio has expanded somewhat, beyond Belgium. “We are now free to promote not just Belgium, but a Belgian sensibility,” Don said. “I call the non-Belgian beers we bring in HBB: Honorary Belgian Beers.” They’ve imported Castelain for years, of course, a variety of bieres de garde — including the organic Jade — and you’ll see draft in October. Amiata is a tiny Tuscan brewery (“The brewery is the size of your kitchen. ‘Artisanal’ doesn’t begin to define what this guy is doing.”), producing Contessa IPA: “Italian Pale Ale,” a hoppy beer with a deft touch of chestnuts.

Then there are the projects Don’s been working on; beers he develops as ideas, then matches to a brewery, then tests until they’re right. Or as Wendy put it, “Don gets the ball rolling, then they’d send us samples and we’d drink them in the kitchen.” Lambrucha started when Wendy brought a bottle of kombucha tea home from a yoga class. They tasted it, were struck by the lambic similarities, tried some blending, and...next thing you know, Don’s approaching De Troch with a project.

Hop Ruitter is made by Schelde. Vanberg & DeWulf sell it internationally, but Schelde sells this brilliantly balanced



gets **DRAUGHTED**

hoppy golden ale in the Low Countries, because Don and Wendy want to help them succeed.

Then there's Lambickx. "My motivation was 'I love lambic,' and I wanted lambic." Don said; not fruited lambic, not faro, not gueuze, but still, unblended lambic. "If you really like the taste of spontaneously fermented, barrel-aged pediococcus and brettanomyces beer, it's lambic. Gueuze is champagne, but I don't like champagne, I like still white wine. Lambic could be the chardonnay." So he's convincing lambic blenders — not always willing to say who they are — to sell him straight young lambic beer, with the idea that he'll blend and bottle to his tastes; much like a negociant or an independent Scotch bottler. It's novel, and it changes all the time.

"Thank God for people like Don and Wendy," says Mike Naessens of Eulogy. "They are good, honest, hardworking beer people and that is my favorite thing about them. I could always count on them to keep a fresh supply of the products our guests loved in stock, so it's been 10 years of constant momentum build. I feel their love of what they do gives them a patient and nurturing attitude with the beers. The breweries they represent go beyond anything we could accomplish as humans, the breweries are like living fairy tales."

Jon Myerow at Tria Café says, "I cannot imagine making a beer list without the beers of Brasserie Dupont, everyone's favorite Belgian farmhouse brewery. Don and Wendy's contributions to making Belgian beer popular in the United States are monumental. They are now commissioning beers that they want brewed, like commissioning great works of art. They are two of the most intelligent, kind, witty and passionate people I've come across in the beer industry. They manage to speak like Ivy League professors, yet come off as incredibly down to earth. No small trick."

Indeed, and as I think back over our years of friendship, I agree. These two people changed my life: my first eye-popping bottle of Duvel in 1984, introductions to Belgian brewers and a steady stream of brilliant interviews and expansive ideas. I'm excited about these new projects.

They're excited too...and a little nervous. Wendy asked me what I thought of the new portfolio, and I told her it was promising, but really new. Don laughed, and said, "When you're out front this far, you worry that you're out front because you're going in the wrong direction!" A bottle of Hop Ruitter quickly puts that thought to rest.

Don then summed it up. "At the end of the day, our job is this: there's this great place, Belgium, and here's this beer you have to try." Pretty great job you've got, guys; keep up the good work.



Stuff Your Stocking

The stocking is almost full, but one last interesting item would make all the difference. These creative openers, from a few favorite brewers, will make fellow drinkers jealous!

Dos Equis Adjustable Baseball Cap Bottle Opener

\$21.99; wearyourbeer.com

Lagunitas Butterfly Bottle Opener

\$15.00; store.lagunitas.com

Dogfish Head Shark Openers

\$2.00; dogfish.com

Guinness Toucan Magnet/Bottle Opener

\$9.95; guinnesswebstore.com

Stone Brewing Bottle Opener

\$35.00; stonecompanystore.com

Corona Lime Bottle Opener

\$9.99; store.corona.com

Coors Light Guitar Shaped Bottle Opener/Key Chain

\$2.00; coorsandco.com

Chimay Wooden Bottle Opener

\$4.00; beerables.net

Corona Belt Buckle Bottle Opener

\$9.99; wearyourbeer.com





Celebrate the Season Safely

lager made with pure Irish spring water, classic Irish barley and the finest hops, while St. Pauli NA has a pleasant hop aroma, a well-balanced flavor, crisp hop finish and the taste of an imported beer without the alcohol.

Not only will non-alcoholic beer give designated drivers something tasty to sip on, it will also allow them to be a part of the party as they raise their bottle to toast the season. Non-alcoholic beers also make great companions to food. They complement roast beef, steak and tomato based Italian food very well—something to keep in mind while planning the menu.

Make this year's holiday soirée a safe one, while offering all of you're guests an enjoyable experience.

It's time to begin planning your annual holiday party. You've prepared the menu, chosen the décor, written the guest list and now it's time to decide what alcohol to serve. As you think of different options, visions of last year's event run through your head. Cousin Bob had a lampshade on his head as he danced around the living room with his shirt off and your friend Paul made his way around the room hitting on every woman at the party after his fair share of cocktails. Although you expect people to relax and enjoy themselves at your gathering, it is inevitable that there will be those who overindulge. You try your best to ward off over indulgers by offering food, water and coffee, but that may not be enough.

The one thing you can control, however is that your guests get home safely. After you have stated on the invitation that all attendees must be escorted by a designated driver, a question runs through your mind...how can you make this party an enjoyable experience for those who do not drink? Not that you have to consume alcohol to have a good time, but you don't want your sober guests to feel left out. What can you serve to make them feel a part of the party while staying sober? You could put fruit juices in martini glasses and offer virgin daiquiris, but what if some prefer the taste of beer?

The answer may be something you have never tried before... non-alcoholic beer! Several well known breweries offer beer with little to no alcohol (<.5% ABV). Most of them taste pretty decent and you can offer a variety! Paulaner ThomasBräu provides true, all-natural Munich brewing heritage and taste in a non-alcoholic beverage alternative while Buckler, brewed by Heineken in the Netherlands, is malty and smooth with a clean amber beer flavor. Smooth and full-bodied with genuine beer taste, Coors NA is the responsible choice when you want to combine fun and great taste. Kaliber is a fully brewed, non-alcoholic



In a recent pole posted on drinkwiththewench.com, a question was posed asking whether or not people would still drink beer if there was no alcohol in it. Although some responded, "no way," many said they would because they enjoy the taste of beer. Besides great taste and hangover prevention, non-alcoholic beer is full of vitamins and antioxidants that not only offer nutritional value, but also have a beneficial impact on cardiovascular health by increasing antioxidant levels in the bloodstream.

UP IN *Smoke*



*By
Lew Bryson*



Do you have some money to burn? Then you, my friend, like me, should check out the delicious possibilities found in the pairing of cigars and beer.

As a friend of mine who's incredibly knowledgeable about cigars told me, it's about as no-brainer as it gets. "Beer and cigars are largely complementary flavors; if it works, it works, and well, if it doesn't...how the hell bad can it be? You're smoking a cigar and drinking a beer!"

With that kind of assurance in hand, let's talk cigars (because I assume if you're reading this, you've already got a rudimentary knowledge about beer!). Cigars hit a huge wave of popularity in the 1990s, a recovery after years of neglect. People suddenly were

aware of Dominican seed, Connecticut shade-grown leaf, robustos and panatelas; the burgeoning growth of the aficionado brought new life to an industry that had been largely marginalized.

One business that benefited from this was Holt's Cigar Company, right here in Philly. I dropped into their northeast Philly store to talk to Anthony Mazzola, their urbane and articulate General Manager. This man loves a good cigar, and was happy to explain how a fine cigar is built. The tobacco comes from countries like Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, the U.S., Brazil, Cameroon and, of course, Cuba, though Cuban cigars are still illegal for import and sale in the U.S.

"There are three parts to a cigar,"

Mazzola said. "Wrapper, filler and binder. The filler is what's inside." The filler is the bulk of the cigar, and may be chopped into smaller pieces of tobacco in cheaper cigars, or longer pieces of whole leaves in better cigars. The body and strength of flavor comes largely from the filler, and depends on the type of tobacco and where it was grown, as well as what part of the plant it came from: the lower leaves have less flavor, mid-level leaves are mild and dry, while the uppermost leaves have the strongest flavors.

"The binder," he continued, "is wrapped around the filler, holds it together, and largely determines the burn quality." Burn quality is important; how steadily and quickly the cigar will burn depends on how the binder holds the filler together.

“The wrapper goes around the outside,” he concluded, “and gives a lot of flavor and strength to the cigar.” My friend made the comparison of the wrapper — which has the most effect on the cigar with the least actual tobacco — to the pitcher in a ballgame. “He’s only one guy, but he gets credit for the win.” The different color of the wrapper — from the light claro to the dark maduro and oscuro — is a direct indicator of the flavor of the cigar: the darker the wrapper, the more intense the cigar.

Lighter cigars tend to be mildly spicy — “Pepper, we’re usually talking about,” said Mazzola — and the darker maduro-wrapped cigars develop richer flavors of chocolate, ripe fruit, coffee, hickory and intense spice. There are some obvious similarities with beers there — think pilsner vs. Imperial stout — but don’t try to make it too one-to-one. Dry, hoppy beers can be refreshing after a cigar...but most times they don’t work so well. The hop flavors and bitterness will clash with the cigar. That said, my friend told me, “Sometimes one of those unlikely pairings will work, and that’s just magic, and you go with it.” Like he said: “How the hell bad can it be?”

What does work? Mazzola brought out seven cigars, and I started pulling out some beers. Two mild cigars were first: the Ashton Cabinet #7 — “A refined cigar, mild and creamy,” Mazzola said — and a San Cristobal



Anthony Mazzola, General Manager of Retail Operations for Holts Cigars in Center City and Northeast Philadelphia.

Elegancia Imperial, Mazzola explained, has notes of a “subtle white pepper spice.” The first I paired with Ayinger Altbairisch Dunkel, also mild and creamy; the second met up with Samuel Adams Boston Ale; a hoppier beer, but with a malt base that supported the cigar well. The La Aroma de Cuba E.E. (“Edicion Especial”) #4 he produced next turned up the spice and pepper, so I pulled out a Saranac Black & Tan; quite affordable and a bit more brawny.

Mazzola upped the ante with another La Aroma de Cuba, the “Mi Amor Magnifico.” The

richer smoke had notes of dark chocolate and rich fruit that paired well with Sierra Nevada Porter, bold enough not to be buried. The Padron Anniversary Imperial Maduro brought us a full-bodied, rich espresso character, which made Dogfish Head Chicory Stout a natural choice.

The final La Aroma De Cuba was the Papa Gayo, a real heavyweight with a Nicaraguan oscuro wrapper. “It’s full-bodied,” Mazzola said, “with big flavors of black cherry and hickory.” I wasn’t intimidated, not with a Weyerbacher Old Heathen in my other hand. Full-bodied? Check. Big flavors? Check. Pairing on!

Mazzola turned it up to 11 with a Tatuaje Fausto. “A full-bodied blend,” Mazzola said, “a spice bomb.” I pulled out a Belgian-brewed bomb of my own: a big malty glass of Scaldis. The fruit notes of the beer met the spice of the cigar in a quietly beautiful match.

Cigar and beer pairing is fairly simple, easier than food, actually. Just remember mild to mild, big to big. If you’re just starting out with cigars, don’t go too big too soon; start mild and work your way up. The nice thing is that a cigar lasts a while, giving you plenty of time to try different beers with one. That’s the best way to find out what works for you, and that’s always the most important thing. Light ‘em up, folks; smoke ‘em if you got ‘em!



Brighten the HOLIDAYS for the BEER LOVER in Your Life

FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SEEKER: BEER BOOKS

If your beer lover is also a bookworm, there's no shortage of excellent books out there dedicated to the beverage. From cookbooks to beer history, home brewing and travel, there is something to fulfill every beer enthusiast's interests.

amazon.com

FOR THOSE WHO STAY ON TOP OF THE TRENDS: A BEER MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION

Magazine subscriptions make great presents. It's the gift that keeps on giving! Every month the recipient will be reminded of how much they are loved as they sit down to enjoy a magazine dedicated to their favorite beverage.

beerinfo.com

FOR THE COLLECTOR: BEER MEMORABILIA

Whether it's a T-shirt, a key chain or something more substantial, almost every beer drinker owns something with a beer logo on it. This holiday season, up the ante and find a collectable that reflects your beer lover's devotion to a particular brewery or beer. Many breweries' websites offer some really cool memorabilia.

FOR THE TRAVELER: BREWERY TRIP

If money is no object and you want to score some big brownie points, plan a brewery trip. Whether it's a weekend journey to a few local breweries, a West Coast tour or an all out, no expenses spared excursion to the brewery's of Belgium, map out an entire trip based around beer.

For international tours: beertrips.com

FOR THE INDECISIVE DRINKER: A 6 PACK OF DIFFERENT CRAFT BEERS

There are many takeout stores in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties that offer single-serve beer selections and most of them allow customers to mix and match their own six pack! Buy your beer fan a selection of their favorites or a few they've never tried. Go even further by creating a basket complete with a bottle opener, glasses and some cheese.

Foodery at 10th and Pine, Philadelphia; The Craft Beer Outlet, Northeast Philadelphia; The Bottle Shop, South Philadelphia; Pinocchio's, Media; Trenton Road Takeout, Levittown; Capones, Norristown...just to name a few

FOR THE PERFECTIONIST: GLASSWARE SET

Just like wine, the taste of beer is enhanced by the shape of the glass and each style benefits from a different shape. A craft beer enthusiast would be ecstatic to receive a set of glasses, perfectly suited for their favorite beer style or consider a mixed set to complement many different styles. Personalize them or add their favorite brewery's logo to make the gift extra special.

pubglasses.com

FOR THE HOST WITH THE MOST: BAR ESSENTIALS

If your beer aficionado loves to throw a party, bar accessories are perfect gifts. Whether you have them monogrammed for a few dollars more or imprinted with their favorite brewery's logo, a matching set that includes a bar mat, set of glasses, bottle opener and towel will class up their next party, and hopefully you'll be invited!

thebar.com

FOR THE PLANNER: A BEER LOVER CALENDAR

For beer enthusiasts with hectic schedules, keep them organized with a daily beer calendar. The beer nut in your life will enjoy 365 days of their favorite beverage.

calendars.com

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE A FAVORITE BREW: A GROWLER (OR TWO) OF BEER

Whether you purchase one from a local brewery or a bar / distributor in your area, any beer lover would drool over a fresh half gallon of their favorite brew.

Available at these fine establishments: *Grey Lodge Pub, Northeast Philadelphia; Hawthorne's Beer Boutique and Eatery, South Philadelphia; TJ's Restaurant and Drinkery, Paoli; Craft Ale House, Limerick; Hulmeville Inn, Langhorne; The Beer Store, Southampton*

FOR THE STUDIOUS DRINKER: BEER CLASSES

Philly Beer School on South 22nd Street offers beer class gift certificates. There are many interesting courses (offered in the evenings) including beer tasting, brewing and history. The fully customizable gift will satisfy any beer drinker who wants to learn more about the libation.

vinology.com



The Bookshelf

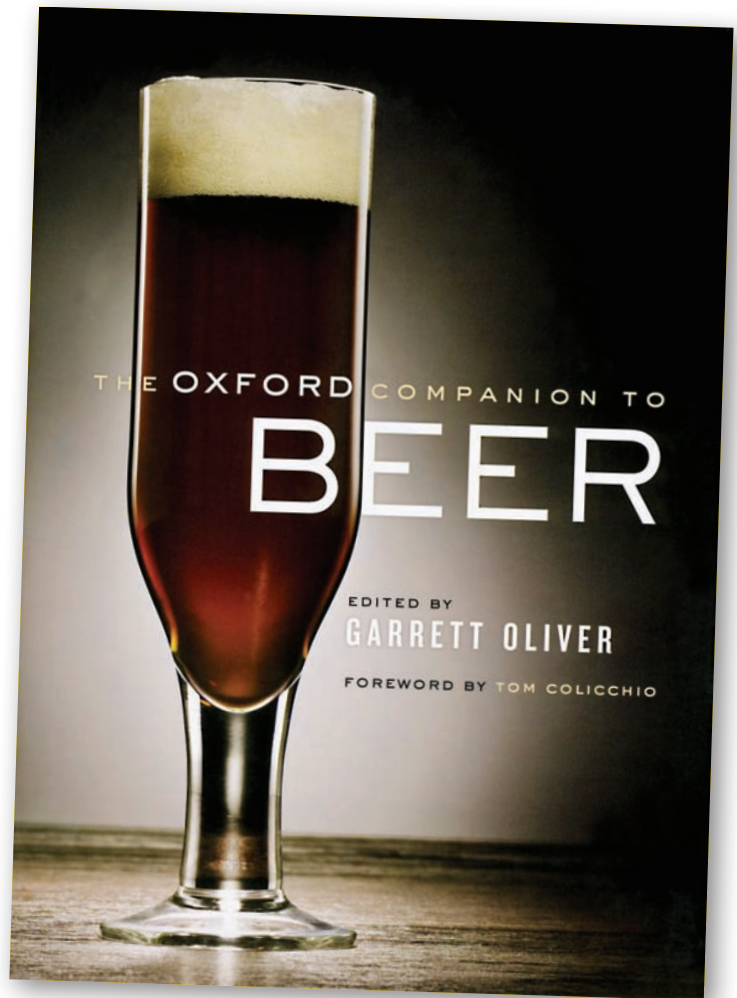
THE OXFORD COMPANION TO B E E R

EDITED BY
GARRETT OLIVER
FOREWORD BY
TOM COLICCHIO

If you are into beer, you have probably heard of Brewmaster, Garrett Oliver or at least Brooklyn Brewery where he has been instrumental in creating great beers like Black Chocolate Stout and Penant Ale. Besides his brewing credentials, Oliver is also a noted author whose first book *The Brewmasters Table* is the definitive guide to traditional beer and its relationship to history, life and food in particular.

Well, he's done it again. After five years of editing and research, *The Oxford Companion to Beer* has just been released. There are Oxford Companion books on lots of topics; there's one about wine as well. The books are like encyclopedias or textbooks. No one really reads them from cover to cover, but they cover absolutely everything known about their subject. This companion to beer runs nearly 1000 pages and has articles written by 166 different writers. It contains literally everything, from regional history, to styles, to brewing techniques, to ingredients, to notable brewers and more. If you want to know everything about dry-hopping or the history of lagers, this book is for you. And it's an attractive tome that will look good on the coffee table.

The foreword to the book is written by Tom Colicchio who co-founded the Gramercy Tavern and Craft in New York City. Colicchio is the recipient of five James Beard Foundation Medals for cooking accomplishments. He has been the head judge on every season of the Bravo reality TV show *Top Chef*. This excerpt from his introduction to *The Oxford Companion to Beer* spells out every reason why a beer lover should own the book.



The Oxford Companion to Beer provides an exhaustive account of not only beer's history, but its science and its art, at a time when people are more willing than ever to take beer seriously. And if I had to choose one person to be my beer guide and teacher, it would be Garrett Oliver, whose passion for beer is only surpassed by his sheer knowledge on the subject. In this volume Oliver and numerous experts have assembled beer wisdom from around the globe, creating a virtual beer symposium – the scope of which the world has never known. And we, as readers, have a front-row seat.

Available at Amazon.com for \$38.40



Randall 3.0 An Off-Centered Gift

"Some of the best things are made in small batches, like our limited release beers and Randall 3.0."

-Dogfish Head Mid-Atlantic Sales Manager, Wendy Domurat

Dogfish Head Brewery has built its business on bringing off-centered products to off-centered people. In 2002, they introduced an off-centered product perfect for off-centered people—Randall the Enamel Animal. The sophisticated filtering system infused even more flavor into Dogfish Head's already robust beers by adding your choice of fresh whole leaf hops, spices, herbs, fruit etc.

Like many new inventions, Randall the Enamel Animal was slightly flawed. Thankfully, engineering guru Greg Christmas, masterfully tweaked the imperfections to ensure the newer model was more effective and user friendly. Now the Randall returns, new and improved, as Randall 3.0! The updated

design addresses excess foam and is now more user friendly. Randall 3.0 was created with two chambers. The infusing chamber features automatic vents, eliminating vapor-locking and maximizing beer-to-hop contact as the beer filters through the natural additives. And the "de-foaming" chamber provides both space and time for the foamy beer to settle and stay cool. Randall 3.0 also features an adjustable faucet that balances between different beer types or short-draw / long-draw draught systems, making it much more user friendly than the former Enamel Animal.

If you know of a great craft-centric beer bar that would love to spice up some beer, send them to www.dogfish.com. The device costs \$375 plus shipping. If Randall 3.0 is not available when you look—just be patient he'll return!

IT'S ONE GIFT THAT WON'T BE RE-GIFTED...

Beer with a Bow!

By Steve Hawk, Philly Beer Geek 2010

It happens to all of us. There's a person on your gift list that completely stumps you. You don't know their size, or what they like, or what they want. And, if you have to make one more trip to the mall you'll shoot yourself. What's more, you have a strong suspicion that last year's gift may have ended up in the hands of a complete stranger through that time-honored practice of re-gifting. So, what do you give?

The answer is simple... Beer with a Bow!

First and foremost, it's every person's drink. You don't have to know the person's preference (as you do with that pretentious beverage known as wine). And, it's a gift that literally defines friendship, as in "wanna grab a beer." Plus, there are so many styles to choose from, one for everyone on your list. Here are some examples:

Your boss (or any corporate type)
There's just one requirement for this gift – it needs to impress. You'll want to choose a rare variety, with a

distinct flavor. It also must look the part, so color, head and aroma are all very important. The beer I recommend for this gift is *Chimay Tripel (Cinq Cents)*, a well-crafted, highly acclaimed beer brewed by Trappist monks in Belgium. Chimay Cinq Cents has a hazy golden color with a fine, thick, brown, creamy head. The enticing aroma hints of muscat and raisins arising from an agreeable combination of fresh hops and yeast. If your goal is to make a statement, this beer says it all!

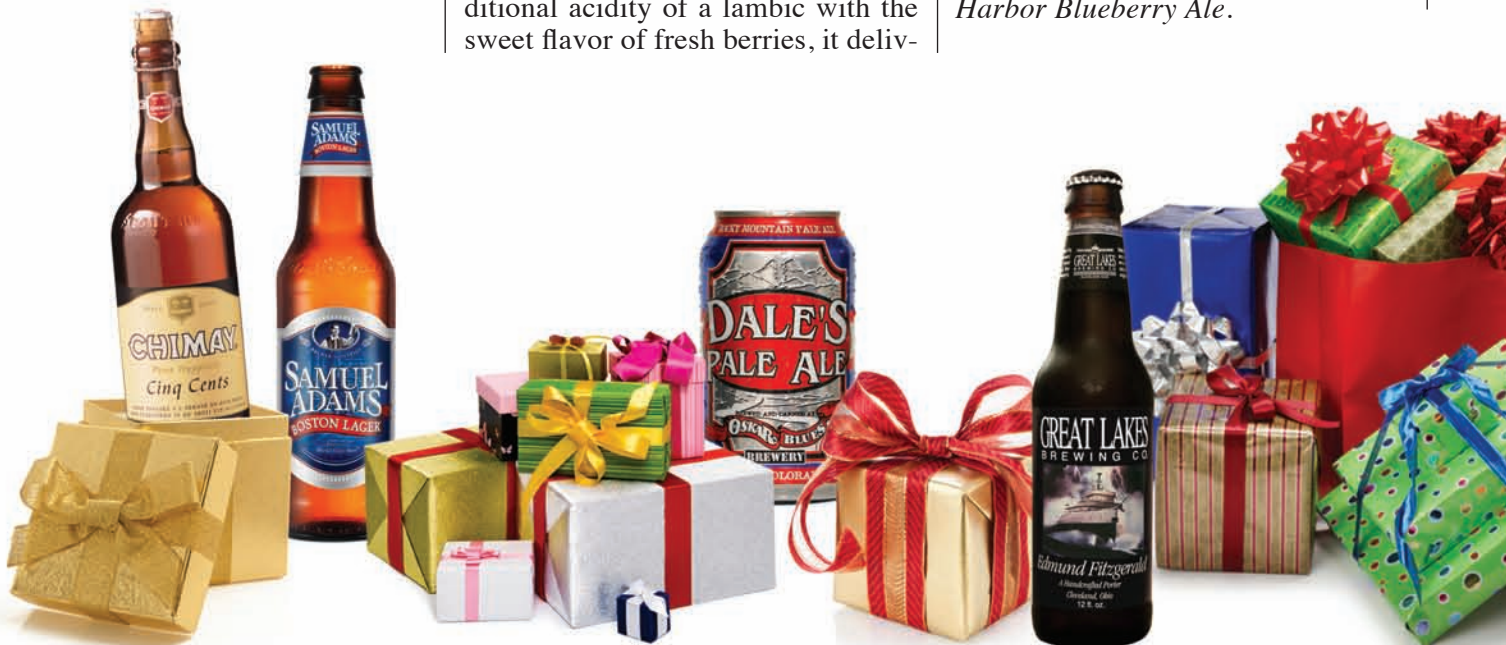
Other possible choices for this person include *Weyerbacher Merry Monk's Ale*, *Unibroue La Fin du Monde*, *Kasteel Rouge*.

Your favorite female (wife, mother, girlfriend, best friend – it's up to you)
"Sweets for my sweet," as the saying goes. For a special lady in your life, you'll want a sweet, delicate brew that oozes affection and shows how much you care. A perfect choice is *Lindemans Framboise*. It's a uniquely flavored Belgian lambic fermented with raspberries. Blending the traditional acidity of a lambic with the sweet flavor of fresh berries, it deliv-



ers a wonderful fruity aroma. And... if you want to take this gift a step further, combine it with a romantic dinner. Lindemans Framboise pairs perfectly with oysters and a decadent chocolate dessert! Your favorite lady is sure to thank you for your thoughtfulness.

Other possible choices for your special girl include *Blue Moon Belgian White Ale*, *Abita Purple Haze*, *Bar Harbor Blueberry Ale*.



The adventurer in your group

This is a guy (or gal) who always looks for excitement. They favor any sport that's played outdoors and don't shy away from a little danger. A good choice for this person is *Dale's Pale Ale*, a gold medal winner that delivers a blast of hop aromas, a mouthful of hop flavors and a thrilling finish! There's plenty of malt in this copper-colored brew, as well as piney citrus-edged hops. Also, Dale's is the first hand-canned microbrew in the U.S., making it perfect for outdoor activities.

Other possible choices for this person include *Port Brewing Shark Attack*, *Sly Fox Pikeland Pils*, *21st Amendment Brew Free! or Die IPA*.

A true gourmet (or chef)

Put simply, this person loves food. They know a good steak when they see one, love experimenting with different recipes and rate their beer by how well it complements their dishes. A good beer for this individual would be *Sierra Nevada Porter*. It's a delicious, medium-bodied ale with a creamy head and smooth flavor, derived from a blend of deep-roasted barley malts. While steak is typically paired with porter, its deep maltiness is an equally perfect match for the rich, smoky flavors of grilled Portobello mushrooms. And don't count it out with dessert either, as the creaminess of the porter's chocolate and caramel malts makes it perfect at the end of a meal, as well. Your "foody"

will be delighted with this choice.

Other possible choices for the food lover include *Dogfish Head Indian Brown Ale*, *Oskar Blues Old Chub Scottish Ale*, *Great Lakes Edmund Fitzgerald Porter*.

The "hostess with the mostess"

This person lives to entertain. Put three people in a room, and he or she will call it a party. They'll want a beer they can share with others – one that's not too exotic, but definitely easy to love. *Samuel Adams Boston Lager* fills the bill nicely for this gift. Flavorful and complex, this world champion, amber colored Vienna-style lager is brewed with the finest two-row barley and most expensive, hand-selected Nobel hops. The dry, slightly bitter green floral notes make it a perfect match for foods served at parties, including cured meats and cheeses; American classics like beef, poultry and veal; spicy Mexican food; and even a good pizza. Give this to your party-host friend and your next invitation will be right around the corner.

Other possible choices for the party planner include *Sly Fox Royal Weisse*, *Harpoon IPA*, *Allagash White*.

Hope this helps your gift-giving dilemmas and makes

your holiday season a little more joyous. Of course, if you're lucky, your friends will "share" and you'll get to enjoy some of these very special brews yourself. Happy Holidays!



Dear Santa,

I have been a very good boy this year. I helped elderly women cross the street and volunteered at my local hospital. My family lives in a very scenic part of the country and our weather is great. I have a good job and many friends. All in all, life is good. But, there is one glaring absence in my little corner of the world. It lacks a thriving beer culture. I am hoping you can make it better. You see, a local beer scene gives a region a sense of place, provides well-paying jobs and adds great amounts of merriment. Santa, the only thing I want for Christmas is a brewpub.

Brewpubs are the experimental laboratories of the beer business and most original American styles began their lives in them. They are also places to get a great meal and watch a ball game. They even brew beers in honor of your holiday.



Two of my favorite brewpubs are Sly Fox and Manayunk. Sly Fox has been in Pheonixville, PA for over 15 years and brews its Christmas Ale every year to celebrate the season. It is a red ale brewed with traditional mulling spices. The 6.5% ABV, deep copper-colored beer bursts with the flavor and aroma of ginger, clove, cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice. Manayunk Brewing Company is located in the Philadelphia neighborhood it is named after and while the back deck is the place to be in the summer, its winter seasonal offerings keep the place packed after November's first frost. Manayunk brews Festivus Ale every Christmas and its recipe changes yearly. While the particulars change, the beer's warming qualities remain as constant as children's smiles on Christmas morning.



Santa, I realize that a brewpub might be a tough thing to get down the chimney, so maybe you could just bring some of America's tasty Christmas potables to my local bar. My town would be all the merrier if we could enjoy a Lost Abbey Gift of the Magi this December 25th. The 9.5% golden ale is brewed with frankincense and myrrh in honor of the kings' gifts in the biblical account of the first Christmas. And while I am asking, I figured I would go for the gusto and ask for one of America's best selling Christmas beers, Great Lakes Christmas Ale. The 7.5% ale is brewed with honey and spices and has been a reason for the naughty to act nice for over a decade.

Europe's holiday fermentables would also be appreciated. Avec Les Bon Voeux de la Brassiere Dupont translates as, "With best wishes to you from the Brewery Dupont." Originally, the brewery made the dry-hopped blonde ale as a present from the brewers to their customers and it would look great under my tree this year. Samuel Smith has been part of England's holiday cheer since the 1750s and the brewery's Winter Welcome is a classic example of what that style should be. The honey amber liquid and rich caramel flavor are all that is

needed to turn up the volume on a night spent caroling.

So Santa, for Christmas this year I would like my home town to have the best beer scene in the world. I would love to have great brewpubs and award winning breweries. I would like my corner of the world to have the respect of the other great American brewing regions and a solid place in our hearts for the beer cultures that showed us the way. I know this all seems like a lot so, Santa, if you are too busy you could just find me a job and a place to live in Philadelphia.

With breathless anticipation of Christmas,

-James Wiggins

P.S. I am over 21





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The Brew Lounge

brewlounge.com

Bryan Kolesar tells the stories behind the passionate pursuit of great beer and clues Philadelphia in on upcoming beer events.

Draught Lines

origlio.com

A trade publication committed to showcasing the finest local and imported craft and specialty beers in the Philadelphia area, Draught Lines can be downloaded for free on the origlio.com home page.

Beer Advocate - Respect Beer

beeradvocate.com

A beer community dedicated to supporting and promoting beer through education and appreciation.

Joe Six Pack

joesixpack.net

Reporting and drinking beer in Philadelphia and beyond...

Lew Bryson - Seen Through a Glass

lewbryson.blogspot.com

Lew Bryson's beer and whiskey blog: tasting notes, quick rants and raves, Philly area beer news and all that good stuff.

Jack Curtin's - Liquid Diet

jackcurtin.com

A beer blog with a heavy emphasis on Philadelphia and the Delaware Valley region.

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The *Style* Profile

IMPERIAL STOUTS

Almost any beer with the word "Imperial" attached to its name implies a bigger, stronger, more robust brew with an alcohol content commonly ranging from 7% to 12% ABV. Most are not necessarily brewed to be so high in alcohol, rather it is a side effect of the heavy doses of malt and barley used to create the aroma and flavor of the beer. An added benefit of the higher alcohol content is that these beers are able to withstand time.

The Imperial stout style originated in Britain almost 300 years ago. The stronger stouts were brewed for the Czarist Imperial courts of Russia who were connoisseurs of champagne, caviar and the art of the table. It was an obstacle for British brewers at the time to make beer that would withstand the thousands of miles of travel over the Baltic. By the time the "regular" stout reached its destination, the beer was frozen, spoiled or stale. To overcome the problem, British brewers began increasing the hop and alcohol content of the recipes, ensuring freshness. Thus, the Russian Imperial stout style was born. High taxes forced the Russians to brew beer themselves rather than importing it and by the mid-1900s the style fell by the wayside. Imperial stouts were almost extinct until British brewer Samuel Smiths recreated the style in the early 1980s. The brewery's award-winning Imperial stout continues to be enjoyed by beer lovers today.

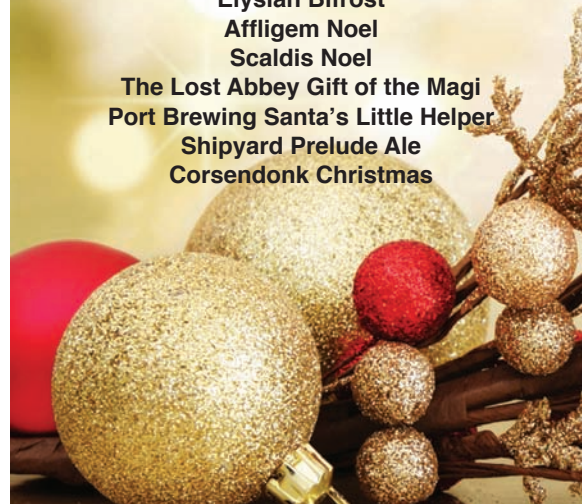
Imperial stouts are deep, rich, malty brews that most often incorporate coffee, chocolate and espresso flavors. When aged, Imperial stouts frequently acquire a sweeter, molasses-like flavor that is not present when drunk fresh. These beers are meant to be savored and enjoyed and they make wonderful accompaniments to many different foods.

The first brewery to offer an Imperial stout in America is said to be the Yakima Brewery in Washington. Brewer, Bert Grant's version was a twist on the style with a significantly increased hop presence and bitterness, with less alcohol. As the craft beer movement began to evolve and American brewers wanted to experiment and look beyond traditional styles, Imperial stouts again emerged and continue to be popular. However, modern brewers have the freedom to play around with style, incorporating different techniques like aging the beer in barrels or on oak chips and adding interesting flavors or ingredients like fruit, chocolate or coffee. Most current American versions are significantly higher in alcohol with ABVs often above 10%.

Dogfish Head World Wide Stout weighs in at a hefty 18% ABV, while Stone Imperial Russian Stout has an alcohol by volume of 10.8% and Oskar Blues Ten FIDY is close behind with 10.5%. Another wonderful example of the style is Lagunitas Cappuccino Stout, a big, dark and scary Imperial stout brewed with plenty of dark malts, roast barley and loads of coffee. Great Divide Yeti Imperial Stout is an onslaught of the senses, an almost viscous, inky-black brew that opens with a massive, roasty, chocolate, coffee malt flavor that eventually gives way to rich toffee and burnt caramel notes. At 9.5 % ABV, Port Brewing Santa's Little Helper is a seriously naughty, but nice brew. Black as coal, but smooth and sweet, this one leans more towards dark cocoa and freshly brewed coffee than sweet malt tones. Named after the infamous "Blackout of 2003," Great Lakes Blackout Stout has a slightly lower ABV (7.2%) with a hearty malt body and bold hop flavor.

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

Blue Moon Winter Abbey Ale
Samuel Adams Winter Lager
Mike's Hard Winter Blackberry
Heavy Seas Yule Tide
Sly Fox Christmas Ale
Harpoon Winter Warmer
Dogfish Head Chicory Stout
Sierra Nevada Celebration Ale
Weyerbacher Winter Ale
Dock Street Bubbly Wit
Great Lakes Christmas Ale
Narragansett Porter
Great Divide Hibernation Ale
Twin Lakes Tweeds Tavern Stout
Saranac Big Moose Ale
Oskar Blues Ten FIDY
Woodchuck Winter Cider
Ommegang Adoration
Samuel Smith's Winter Welcome
Lagunitas Cappuccino Stout
Abita Christmas Ale
Elysian Bifrost
Affligem Noel
Scaldis Noel
The Lost Abbey Gift of the Magi
Port Brewing Santa's Little Helper
Shipyard Prelude Ale
Corsendonk Christmas



BEER Re-discovered: CHIMAY PREMIERE

Chimay is one of the six Belgian beers that can carry the logo, "Authentic Trappist Product," meaning it is brewed within the walls of a Trappist monastery under the control and responsibility of the community of monks whose revenue is devoted to social service.

Abbeys have been sites for the true art of brewing over the years, an art that has been perfected by the Notre-Dame de Scourmont Abbey, where Chimay is brewed. Chimay beers are produced using 100% natural products and a process of top fermentation followed by refermentation in the bottle. They are neither filtered, nor pasteurized.

The Chimay trilogy of beers consists of Chimay Cinq Cents (White), the first Trappist triple to exist in a keg, Chimay Grande Reserve (Blue), first released as a Christmas beer and Chimay Premiere (Red), the very first beer brewed by the Chimay monks.

Premiere, otherwise known as Chimay "Red or Red cap" is noted for its particularly attractive copper color. Topped with a creamy head, this beer gives off a light, fruity apricot aroma produced by the fermentation. Its taste, which imparts a silky sensation on the tongue, is made refreshing by a light touch of bitterness. Drinking this beer from a chalice-shaped glass will allow you to fully experience the flavors and aromas. Aside from its festive label color, Chimay Red is a wonderful beer to experience or give as a gift this holiday season. Available in 25 oz. cork and caged bottles in addition to the 11.2 oz bottles, Chimay Premiere is the perfect beer for sharing by the fireplace on those chilly winter nights. Take your time to savor this beer, a Chimay is not drunk, it is tasted, mouthful after mouthful.

