

May Beer Corner



Unfortunately most of the beer events in Pittsburgh all took place over craft beer week so I can't get anyone information on anything just yet. Hopefully June will have some more events around for those interested and the possibility of some new brewpubs and beer bars around the Pittsburgh area set to open.

SPRING BEER STYLES

History of the Maibock

Maibock or Helles Bock, is one such seasonal. The name alone –May Bock or Pale Bock– descriptively hinting at its roots as a strong, bottom-fermented spring beer, and one designed to bridge the chasm from hearty wintry brews to bright summer fare. Think of them as an intersection of traditional bock with Munich Helles or festbier, with firm and tempered maltiness melding with the subtleties of pale Continental brews. Forged in Einbeck, maibock as we know it today is considered a fairly new style, but it is a remnant of those beers that fostered Germany's image as a brewing epicenter.

History of the Hefeweizen

Back in the middle ages, the Germanic tribes began to brew much paler ale than usual. The reason: These brewers used the most abundant resources and brewing ingredients available to them, just like all other civilized cultures. For the Germans, wheat grain was one of these as was barley, and the use of both to brew one beer brought the inception of the Weissbier – weisse meaning white. They were so much lighter than the traditional dark beers that the term "white beer" became a common naming convention.

Simply broken down, Hefe (yeast) Weizen (wheat) is of German origin and traditionally means an unfiltered wheat beer with yeast in it. It is often referred to as "weissbier mit hefe" (with yeast). It is an ale and usually a bottle-conditioned one at that – filtered, then infused with a secondary yeast strain for natural conditioning. Crafted with up to 65 percent malted wheat, the remainder of the grist is malted barley. The addition of wheat is what gives this beverage a very crisp and refreshing profile. Hefeweizens are generally highly carbonated brews, and when poured, these magnificent beers should be cloudy (from the higher proteins contained in wheat malt), pale gold to a spectrum of amber shades and with an almost-on-the-verge-of-overflowing, meringue-like crown (thick, stiff, foamy and creamy).