

# The Herald Tribune



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Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

July 2009

## July Meeting BeerBQ

This month's meeting of the AABG is Saturday July 11th and will be hosted by **Steve Darnell**. See the map and directions on the next page. The featured style is **Fruit Beers**.

### BeerBQ

Mike will be crafting the main course on his big BarBQ. As usual, everyone is asked to bring a dish to pass, and any other munchies they'd like to share. Start time is 12 p.m. and the main course is around 4 p.m. There will be one of those big blow up moon-walks for the kids. Mike will have his tables, chairs, etc., but feel free to bring 'camp' chairs or other items of comfort and, of course, beer.



### AABG 2009

January .....	Rolf Wucherer .....	Strong Ale
February .....	Mike O'Brien .....	English Pale Ale
March .....	Chris Frey .....	1.080+*
April .....	Matt and Rene Greff ....	Extract
May .....	Stephen Krebs .....	Scottish and Irish Ale
June .....	Mark Zadvinskis .....	Spice/Herb/Vegetable
July .....	Steve Darnell .....	Fruit Beer
August .....	Tom Roach .....	Amber Hybrid*
September .....	Jeff Renner .....	European Amber Lager*
October .....	John Rathmell .....	Pilsner
November .....	Chris Frey .....	Belgian Strong Ale*
December .....	Rolf Wucherer .....	Sour Ale

\* Denotes AHA Club Only Competition Style  
All meeting are the second friday of each month beginning at 7:30 p.m., except for the July meeting (BeerBQ) which is the second saturday.

### AABG Pico System

The guardian of the club's pico system is Mike O'Brien. Anyone wishing to use it should contact him at:  
734.637.2532 or e-mail:  
mobrien315221MI@comcast.net

## 20. Fruit Beer

**Aroma:** The distinctive aromatics associated with the particular fruit(s) should be noticeable in the aroma; however, note that some fruit (e.g., raspberries, cherries) have stronger aromas and are more distinctive than others (e.g., blueberries, strawberries)—allow for a range of fruit character and intensity from subtle to aggressive. The fruit character should be pleasant and supportive, not artificial and inappropriately overpowering (considering the character of the fruit) nor should it have defects such as oxidation. As with all specialty beers, a proper fruit beer should be a harmonious balance of the featured fruit(s) with the underlying beer style. Aroma hops, yeast by-products and malt components of the underlying beer may not be as noticeable when fruit are present. These components (especially hops) may also be intentionally subdued to allow the fruit character to come through in the final presentation. If the base beer is an ale then a non-specific fruitiness and/or other fermentation by-products such as diacetyl may be present as appropriate for warmer fermentations. If the base beer is a lager, then overall less fermentation byproducts would be appropriate. Some malt aroma may be desirable, especially in dark styles. Hop aroma may be absent or balanced with fruit, depending on the style. The fruit should add an extra complexity to the beer, but not be so prominent as to unbalance the resulting presentation. Some tartness may be present if naturally occurring in the particular fruit(s), but should not be inappropriately intense.

**Appearance:** Appearance should be appropriate to the base beer being presented and will vary depending on the base beer. For lighter-colored beers with fruits that exhibit distinctive colors, the color should be noticeable. Note that the color of fruit in beer is often lighter than the flesh of the fruit itself and may take on slightly different shades. Fruit beers may have some haze or be clear, although haze is a generally undesirable. The head may take on some of the color of the fruit.

**Flavor:** As with aroma, the distinctive flavor character associated with the particular fruit(s) should be noticeable, and may range in intensity

from subtle to aggressive. The balance of fruit with the underlying beer is vital, and the fruit character should not be so artificial and/or inappropriately overpowering as to suggest a fruit juice drink. Hop bitterness, flavor, malt flavors, alcohol content, and fermentation by-products, such as esters or diacetyl, should be appropriate to the base beer and be harmonious and balanced with the distinctive fruit flavors present. Note that these components (especially hops) may be intentionally subdued to allow the fruit character to come through in the final presentation. Some tartness may be present if naturally occurring in the particular fruit(s), but should not be inappropriately intense. Remember that fruit generally add flavor not sweetness to fruit beers. The sugar found in fruit is usually fully fermented and contributes to lighter flavors and a drier finish than might be expected for the declared base style. However, residual sweetness is not necessarily a negative characteristic unless it has a raw, unfermented quality.

**Mouthfeel:** Mouthfeel may vary depending on the base beer selected and as appropriate to that base beer. Body and carbonation levels should be appropriate to the base beer style being presented. Fruit generally adds fermentables that tend to thin out the beer; the resulting beer may seem lighter than expected for the declared base style.



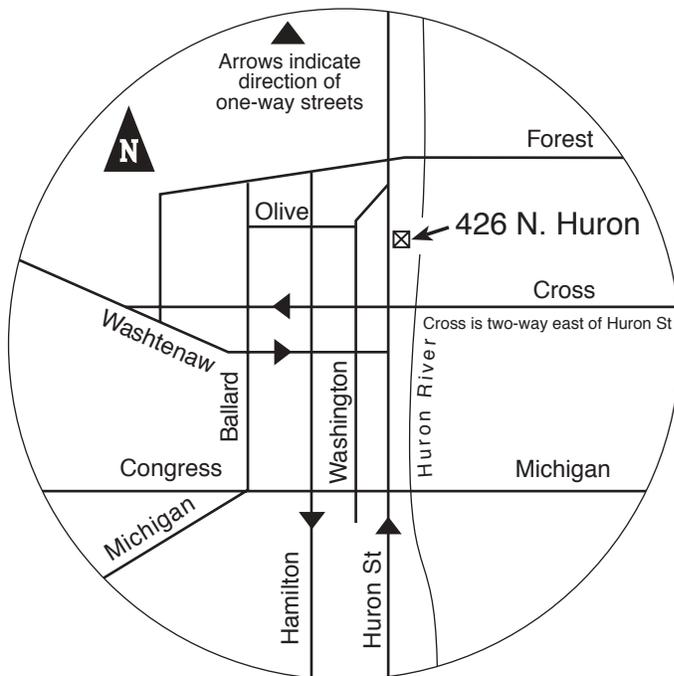
**Overall Impression:** A harmonious marriage of fruit and beer. The key attributes of the underlying style will be different with the addition of fruit; do not expect the base beer to taste the same as the unadulterated version. Judge the beer based on the pleasantness and balance of the resulting combination.

**Comments:** Overall balance is the key to presenting a well-made fruit beer. The fruit should complement the original style and not overwhelm it. The brewer should recognize that some combinations of base beer styles and fruits work well together while others do not make for harmonious combinations.

*Fruit continued on next page...*

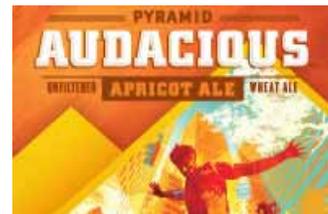
## WHEN AND WHERE

**Saturday, July 11, 12 Noon**  
**Steve Darnell**  
**426 N. Huron St.**  
**Ypsilanti, MI**  
**483 9633**



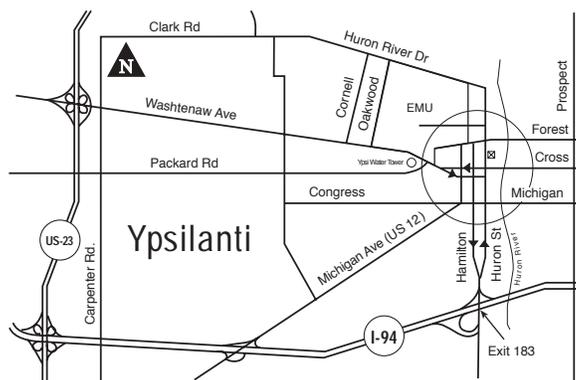
## Guide for New Members

Bring 1–2 bottles per batch of your beer that you'd like to share, or an interesting commercial beer. Bring tasty munchies to cleanse the palate and sop up the alcohol. Feel free to share and sample with other members and make and accept constructive comments. Please use good judgment while imbibing and don't drive while intoxicated.



## AABG Policy

AABG encourages responsible, legal consumption of homebrewed and craft beers. You must be at least 21 years old to attend AABG meetings.



## Fruit continued...

The entrant **must** specify the underlying beer style as well as the type of fruit(s) used. If this beer is based on a classic style (e.g., blond ale) then the specific style must be specified. Classic styles do not have to be cited (e.g. "porter" or "wheat ale" is acceptable). The type of fruit(s) **must** always be specified. If the base beer is a classic style, the original style should come through in aroma and flavor. Note that fruit-based lambics should be entered in the Fruit Lambic category (17F), while other fruit-based Belgian specialties should be entered in the Belgian Specialty Ale category (16E). Aged fruit may sometimes have flavor and aroma characteristics similar to Sauternes, Sherry or Tokaj, but a beer with a quality such



as this should make a special claim (e.g., amontillado, fino, botrytis). Beer with chile peppers should be entered in the Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer category (21A).

**Vital Statistics:** OG, FG, IBUs, SRM and ABV will vary depending on the underlying base beer, but the fruit will often be reflected in the color.

**Commercial Examples:** New Glarus Belgian Red and Raspberry Tart, Bell's Cherry Stout, Dogfish Head Aprihop, Great Divide Wild Raspberry Ale, Founders Rübæus, Ebulum Elderberry Black Ale, Stiegl Radler, Weyerbacher Raspberry Imperial Stout, Abita Purple Haze, Melbourne Apricot Beer and Strawberry Beer, Saxer Lemon Lager, Magic Hat #9, Grozet Gooseberry and Wheat Ale, Pyramid Apricot Ale, Dogfish Head Fort.



## Best Fruit Beers – Top 10 Ranked by the U.S. Open Beer Championship

This Top Ten American fruit beer or vegetable beer List is from America's Best and Top Ten. On July 4, 2009, this list will be from the results of the 2009 US Open Beer Championship.

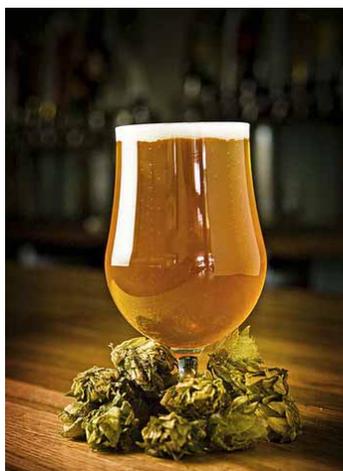
1. Wisconsin Belgian Red: New Glarus Brewing, Wisconsin
2. Raspberry Tart: New Glarus Brewing, Wisconsin
3. Bell's Cherry Stout: Bell's Brewery, Michigan
4. Raspberry Imperial Stout: Weyerbacher Brewing, Pennsylvania
5. #9: Magic Hat Brewing, Vermont
6. Black & Blue: Dogfish Head Craft Brewery, Delaware
7. Frambozen Raspberry Brown Ale: New Belgium, Colorado
8. Wild Raspberry Ale - Great Divide Brewing - Colorado
9. UFO Raspberry Hefeweizen: Harpoon Brewery, Massachusetts
10. Sweetwater Blue: Sweetwater Brewing, Georgia

## Adding Fruit to Beers

Adding fruit to your beers is easy. The main consideration is how to kill unwanted organisms in the fresh fruit without overcooking the fruit or adding unwanted chemicals. The easiest way to do this is by pasteurizing. Berries (all types), apples, plums, apricots, cherries, grapes, and kiwi fruit are all great fruits to use.

### Adding fruit in the primary fermentor

The fruit will be added to the brew pot after the boil is complete and before the wort has been chilled. Wash and pit the fruit, and mash with a potato masher, or use a food processor. When your beer has reached the end of the boil, turn the heat off and wait until the wort has cooled to about 200F. Once it has cooled, add the fruit pulp and replace the lid on the brew pot. It is important that the fruit is not boiled, this will release the pectins in the fruit which could cause haze problems in the finished beer. Allow the wort to stand for a full twenty minutes. If adding a large amount of fruit you may want to check the temperature: if it falls below 160 oF you will need to carefully add heat. If you do this, watch the pot carefully to make sure the heat is not raised above 180F. Use a sanitized spoon to stir the mixture, this will help to distribute the heat more evenly. After 20 minutes proceed with chilling the wort as you usually do. To get the most out of the fruit it is a good idea to leave the pulp in the beer during the primary fermentation, and then rack the beer off the fruit into a secondary fermenter after the primary fermentation.



### Adding fruit to the secondary fermentor

If you add fruit in the second stage of the fermentation, the fruit flavors are usually more pronounced. To do this, prepare the fruit as described above. If you do not want to transfer the beer after the secondary fermenter, you may want to strain the pulp after you mash it. You may want to add a small amount of water if the juices from the fruit are not sufficient to make a consistency that is easily stirred. On a low flame, carefully raise the temperature of the fruit pulp to 180F, stirring frequently. Cover and let rest for 20 minutes. Cool it down and add the pulp to your secondary fermenter. Allow the beer or mead to ferment for an additional 1 to two weeks.

Another option is to add the fruit without pasteurization. This can be done successfully in the secondary fermenter if the beer is relatively high in alcohol (over 5% by volume), and if you take great care in cleaning the fruit and all utensils use in pulping it. This method can introduce wild yeast or unwanted bacteria to the beer, especially if the skins of the fruits are added with the pulp. As a further precaution, campden tablets (sodium or potassium metabisulfite) can be used, but these add sulfites to the beer or mead.

## Fruit Flavouring and Adjuncts

Fruits have been used as a beer adjunct or flavouring for centuries, especially with Belgian lambic styles. Cherry, raspberry, and peach are a common addition to this style of beer. Modern breweries may add only flavoured extracts to the finished product, rather than actually fermenting the fruit.

One of the most prominent brewers of fruit beer is Yanjing Beer, one of the largest Chinese breweries, which widely markets Pineapple and Lemon beer. New Glarus Brewing Company, of New Glarus, Wisconsin, produces Raspberry Tart, a framboise made with raspberries, wheat and year old Hallertau hops, and fermented in large oak vats. Magic Hat Brewing Company of Vermont brews '#9', quite popular in the northeastern U.S. and is a 'not-quite-pale ale' flavoured with apricots. RJ Rockers Brewing Company of South Carolina released Son of a Peach Wheat Ale in 2009 which is made with real peaches added during the fermentation process [3]. Früli is a fruit beer made from 70% wheat beer and 30% fruit juice.

### Vegetable flavouring and adjunct

Anheuser-Busch brews *Tequila*, a beer flavoured with tequila from blue agave nectar. Desperados is a tequila-flavoured beer popular among German and French youth.

Pumpkin-flavoured beers are brewed seasonally in the autumn in North America. An example, Pumpkin Ale, is produced by Coors Brewing Company's Blue Moon brand.

Chile pepper is used to flavour pale lagers. One of the most popular American chile beers is produced by *Eske's* (aka Sangre de Cristo

Brewing) in Taos, New Mexico. *Eske's* "Taos Green Chile Beer" is made with New Mexico roasted green chiles. Black Mountain Brewing Company in Cave Creek, Arizona, brews "Cave Creek Chili Beer", the only internationally marketed chile beer.

## Fruit Beers in the Northwest

I have an old photograph at home, taken at the Weinhard Brewery here in Portland in 1906. The brewmaster is posed in front of the brew kettle in high collar, tie, and jacket, handlebar mustache brushed and waxed. The jacket, tie, and his bowler hat are clearly symbols of rank; the other brewery workers are in shirtsleeves, suspenders clearly visible (although proud mustaches are shared by all)

Frankly, the guy looks pretty serious, pretty stern. It's easy to imagine him supervising every step of the operation, judging the quality of the hops, the malt, the maize—probably a tough man to work for and a hard taskmaster. In all likelihood, he was thoroughly steeped in German brewing traditions; his common technical language with other brewers was German, not English, and his notion of beer was German, with some American pragmatism thrown in. It's a great photograph; I don't have any trouble imagining any of this.

What I can't for the life of me imagine is calling this brewmaster into the corporate office and informing him that we've decided to add a new beer to the line: Weinhard Marionberry Pilsner. Did he have a sense of humor? Would he chuckle heartily and then go back out to his kettle? Or would he fix me with a fierce Prussian glare and assure me that there was no Marionberry in Pilsner. In fact, there was no fruit in beer. Period.

Fruit doesn't get much respect, even as wine. Wine snobs—er, connoisseurs—refer to them (the non-grape variety) as "country" wines, and one rarely finds these poor sisters, with their clodhoppers and matted hair, at the table with the cabernets and chardonnays. And if fermented fruit doesn't get any respect in wine, where it technically belongs, how are we to view it in beer? Beers are made from malted grains, barley, or sometimes wheat, but fruit?

While it's possible that fruits were occasionally added to beer in its early history (along with all manner of herbs and spices), the only surviving fruit beers are found—unsurprisingly—in Belgium. Most commonly, these are made from a lambic

*Northwest continued on next page...*

base; a unique style of spontaneously fermented beers in which an array of yeasts and bacteria—and the combination of barley and wheat—provide a riot of flavors. The best of these combine the tartness of the beer with the sourness of the fruit in a lively, effervescent brew that has more in common with champagne than with pilsner.

In most of these beers, whole, macerated fruit is added after the initial fermentation is complete, and a second fermentation of the fruit sugars begins. Frequently, the beer is then blended once again, with an un-fruitied lambic. Very dark, intense cherries (for kriekbier) and raspberries (for framboise) bursting with flavor were the prevalent choice for years, but recent interest in lambics has caused some experimentation and the introduction of new variants, such as peche (peach) and cassis (currant). In the pursuit of a faster brewing process, some breweries have turned to concentrates, syrups, or essences in lieu of whole fruit.

Whole cherries and raspberries are likewise added to a remarkable tart brown ale at the Liefman's Brewery in a different region of Belgium. Unlike the pale lambics, Liefman's beer has a tremendous color and depth of its own. When combined with the intense dark cherries, Liefman's Kriekbier goes down like Black Forest cake when first bottled. Over time the beer dries out and the sour/tart flavor comes to the fore.

Even the staunch Purity Law Germans are not above taking some liberties with fruit, although "fruit beers" as such are verboten. At Munster's Pinkus Muller brewpub, the dry, crisp altbier (made, like the lambics, with a large portion of wheat) is served with seasonal fruit. The fruit is macerated and then soaked in syrup; the beer is added to the glass and the Pinkus Alt is poured over.

Here in the US fruit beers are exploding on the microbrewery scene. In the mid-'80s, as Portland, Oregon's brewery scene was gathering momentum, the McMenamin brothers gave their first brewpub a novel cast by adding odd ingredients to the beer: chocolate and fruit. Fruit? The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, which has to approve everything about alcoholic beverages, was not amused. No, fruit went into wine. Grains went into beer. They took a lot of convincing, and for a time each new addition was viewed with suspicion and hostility.

Today fruit beers are everywhere, at least here in the Pacific North-west. Like their Belgian counterparts, American fruit beers tend to be constructed from a wheat beer base, but the

American versions, with much less wheat, are generally blander. In general American brewers get their beer's pep from hops, and hops make a very poor companion to fruit. While the Belgian versions gain complexity from odd fermentations, most American brewers have stuck with simple, clean ale yeasts.

American brewers tend to ignore another Belgian concept, the use of very tart, acidic fruit. Fruit extracts and syrups, because of their simplicity of use, have found the greatest favor, and their contributions are mostly those of sweetness, some fruity flavor, and fruit aroma. Raspberries, perhaps the most aromatic of fruits, gained an early foothold. Of late, apricot seems to be gaining ground. The Boston Beer Co., badly misusing the term "lambic" for its Samuel Adams beer, did stick to some classic precepts: a wheat beer base and a very tart fruit, cranberry.

In the early microbrewing years, Washington State's Thomas Kemper Brewery produced something they called a "helles," ostensibly a pale lager beer. Their original yeast choice, however, had been an odd one and the beer was far fruitier than a lager should be. Curiously, the beer tasted of blueberries, although none were added, and the "helles" gained something of a cult following as the "blueberry beer." After a new brewer was installed and the brewery started producing true lagers, the blueberry flavor was lost, to some fans' dismay. Recently, the brewery added art to life by reintroducing their blueberry helles, this time with real blueberries! Generally, American brewers have taken to the convenience of fruit extracts and essences. Few breweries can tie up fermentation vessels for extra weeks on crushed fruit—and fewer still would be enthusiastic about the accompanying mess. For the homebrewer the possibilities are endless. Fruit beers are among the cases in which there simply are no rules. They can be brewed from any base, using virtually any technology. Good fruit can be picked in season, found frozen or in syrups or extracts.

Fruits and fruit syrups can be added in the kettle, but care should be taken not to boil them, so as to avoid pectin haze. If care has been taken to choose undamaged, clean fruit, sanitation should be of limited concern even when the fruit is to be added for a secondary fermentation. Bear in mind that adding a lot of fruit will also add a lot of alcohol to the beer, and be prepared for a vigorous and messy fermentation when the fruit sugars kick in. Give yourself a lot of room in an open fermenter; enclosing the fruit in a mesh bag or a clean stocking can save a lot of trouble cleaning up.

Fruit and hops do not mix. Whatever the base beer, it's best to keep the hopping rate very low, both in the bittering and the flavor additions. A very late, very flowery hop addition might marry with the fruit's aroma but is more likely to mask the delicate nose.

Use your yeast. Really interesting fruit beers have something working in combination with the sweetness of the fruit. Some yeast strains that might have produced overpowering esters for a lager or a simple ale will actually enhance the character of a fruit beer.

Carbonation levels should be elevated. A good pale ale is fairly quiet, not too gassy, but a really aggressive level of carbonation can help push the aromatic notes up the scale.

Generally, crisp is good. Some of the most interesting fruit beers I've tasted are very dry and snappy. High carbonation helps, as does a very attenuative yeast (one that ferments out virtually all of the available sugars). Generally, too, pale beers work best as showcases for fruit. They allow more fruit flavor to appear, as well as permit the delicate hues of raspberry or cherry (or blueberry!?) to shine.

And yet I've tasted some terrific beers that violate that rule. Black-berries grow in profusion along country roads here in Oregon, and every year the state fair homebrewing competition has a huge selection of blackberry porters and stouts. Somehow, the acidity of the black malt works well with the rich sweetness of the berries. Like I said, there are no rules in fruit beers.

Quantities of fruit to be added vary widely. Generally speaking, the heavier the beer, the more fruit is necessary, but the type of fruit makes a tremendous difference.

Raspberries are remarkably aromatic, and it doesn't take a lot of raspberries to make an impact (and a good thing, too, given how much they cost!). Peaches, on the other hand, don't have a big punch, like most of the stone fruit. If you can find really intense, dark, tart cherries, by all means use them, but the usual table fruit will need some help.

Perhaps the simplest technique, and an excellent starting point, is to use a fruit extract. Retailers like California's HopTech carry concentrated fruit flavors in small containers. The great thing about these is that they can be added directly to finished beer during bottling. Not only does it simplify production, but the brewer can experiment with small quantities of beer and small quantities of fruit flavor until a suitable addition for the entire batch can be determined.

– Jeff France