

The Main Street Brewer

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News from the Storefront

Lots of new stuff hitting the Main Street shelves over the past few months. It's almost getting difficult to keep up with all of the new developments. So I will forego the traditional prologue and jump right into the newsletter:

Stillspirits AirStill: In the "we are definitely living in the Future" category, stillspirits has released a new and improved "essential oil extractor" that works without having to run massive amounts of water through a condensing unit. What exactly does this mean? Well, this little unit is as easy to operate as a coffee maker. Just fill it up, plug it in and let it do its thing. For my American customers, please note: it is illegal to distill alcoholic beverages in the United States without proper ATF and local state authorization. Please obey your appropriate laws and follow your local regulations. For my New Zealand internet customers, you're probably pretty psyched. [My website](http://www.mainbrew.com) has more information about this amazing new unit, as well as several other stillspirits products that may just revolutionize this industry. Now all we need are flying cars and robotic maids and we'll be set....



THREE QUICK ANNOUNCEMENTS:

GAMBRINUS IS BACK: By popular demand, we were able to get Gambrinus 2-row base malt back into the store. So for all of you all-grainers lamenting the loss of Gambrinus, your mourning shall pass: we expect to have a fairly steady supply of both the regular Gambrinus 2-row and the Gambrinus ESB malt for the foreseeable future.

PLASTIC MALT BUCKETS: A quick reminder to all of our malt extract customers: please try to bring your white malt buckets back into the store for re-fills when you stop by for a recipe. Plastic is a petroleum-based product and (recently) seems to rise in price every few months. So, not only do YOU get a price break by bringing in your bucket for a re-fill, but it's just one more small step towards saving the polar bears AND screwing OPEC out of a few dollars....

FALL GRAPE BUY: We are now taking reservations and orders for our 2008 Fall Grapes. Please see Page Three for more information and be sure to sign up ASAP -- we are rapidly filling up...

Now on with the newsletter....

"New"

New Zealand Hops

We recently came upon a limited quantity of very special, very unusual New Zealand leaf and pelletized hops. Although we do not have large amounts of any one type, we will have a steady stream of them coming in for the next few months. Give them a try for a new taste sensation in your next beer....

LEAF HOPS

Styrian Goldings (Alpha 2.9)

Sticklebract (Alpha 14.1)

Super Alpha (Alpha 13.3)

Riwaka (Alpha 6.5)

Motueka (organic) (Alpha x.x)

Pacific Hallertauer (Alpha 5.3)

Hallertauer Aroma (Alpha 9.1)

Green Bullet (Alpha 13.2)

NZ Goldings (Alpha 3.7)

PELLET HOPS

Riwaka

Hallertauer Aroma (organic and non-organic)

Green Bullet

NZ Goldings

Please see [the hops page of the Main Street website](http://www.mainbrew.com) for detailed information about these new hop varieties....



SOUR CHERRY BELGIAN WIT BEER

Wit beers are Belgian-made wheat beers that are made with a large percentage - usually around fifty percent or so - unmalted (raw) wheat. This is different than most wheat beers, such as German and American hefeweizens - which use malted wheat. The addition of raw wheat leaves wit beers with a very high protein level - proteins are long molecular chains which bend and refract the light shining through the beer. This gives wit beers a cloudy, milky haze (thus the name "wit," meaning "white") as well as a rocky, frothy head. Unique yeasts and the addition of spices (typically coriander and orange peel) also add to the very unusual and thirst-quenching character of this beer.

The modern history of wit beer is pretty interesting. The style was brewed in Belgium for about 400 years. At one point in time, Belgium had thirty-one different breweries making wit beer. But due to various reasons, the style died out sometime in 1954. The last brewery that made wit beer ceased operation and the beer was no more. Anywhere. In the world.

In 1966 a Belgian man by the name of Pierre Celis remembered the refreshing wit beers of his youth, and decided to revive the style he so fondly recalled. He started a brewery and named the beer Hoegaarden (pronounced who-garden) after the town he lived in. And by the 1980's, cloudy, spiced wit beers were once again "in vogue" with the young Belgian beer drinking crowds.



Hoegaarden was bought out (as things tend to go these days) by the huge European mega-brewery, Artois, and Pierre took his money and went off. Years later, bored and looking to brew white beers once more, he searched the world over for a water source that was similar to the water in his native Belgium.

He found that water in Austin, Texas (!) and established a wit beer brewery deep in the heart of Texas. Celis Wit became the new worldwide "definitive" example of this lost style. Brewed in Texas.

Years later, (as things tend to go), Miller Brewing bought a stake in Celis and eventually decided that Celis was not generating enough revenue. Pierre decided he had had enough, took his money and Celis Brewing was permanently closed. The last of his wit beers was delivered to stores in February of 2001. But the style lives on in breweries around the world. Thanks to Pierre.

The recipe in this letter is for a non-traditional wit beer, kind of a cross between a cherry lambic and a wit. Very thirst-quenching, very different, very summery.

We have some great recipes for "real" Belgian wit beers, both all-grain and extract, if you want something a little more traditional, but - to be honest - the only way to produce a true, cloudy, hazy "white" version is by doing the all-grain method. Wheat extract syrups are made from wheat malt and so will not be one hundred percent true-to-style, and may turn out more reddish in color (although they will still taste great!).



This particular recipe can also be done with sour cherries, if available, but (if so) you should leave out the acidulated malt or the beer will be too sour. You can also substitute any other fruit pound for pound and make a great sour raspberry, sour blueberry, sour peach, sour boysen, etc. summer wit beer.

CRIMSON SUNRISE SURPRISE

- 7 pounds wheat malt extract
- 8 ounces Flaked (Raw) Wheat
- 6 ounces Acidulated Malt
- 6 ounces Vienna Malt
- 1.0 ounce Hallertauer Hops..... 60 minutes
- 0.5 ounce Hallertauer Hops.....20 minutes
- 0.5 ounce Hallertauer Hops.....10 minutes
- White Labs WLP400 Belgian Wit strain

Add hops as shown. At end of boil, turn off heat and add **four pounds of crushed, freshly-pitted cherries**. Stir the fruit into the wort, cover pot and let sit for twenty minutes. Pour through strainer, and cool the liquid down to 80 degrees or less. Add yeast.

This yeast often will ferment for 16 to 21 days. Be patient. Rack into secondary when the beer is bubbling once every ninety seconds. Let settle for one week and then bottle with one cup of corn sugar. For a more intense cherry flavor, you can add one-quarter to one-half vial of cherry extract at bottling or kegging time, although this may mask the Belgian-esque perfumey "wit" character.

Carbonate for two weeks and then enjoy!

THERE ARE WINDS OF CHANGE...

This is usually the page where I give you all a cool Summer wine recipe, like raspberry, or peach, or a quick lesson on the various types of oaks, or something else moderately informative and/or quasi-entertaining. But this newsletter will be different.

I usually don't like to talk about things for sale, or new products or "business" stuff, except on the First Page. I prefer to keep the newsletter as it has always been, way back since 1991: fun to read and full of information. But there has been a pretty dramatic turn-of-events in the world of wine kits and I would like to spend some time telling you about it.

Every year Winemaker Magazine sponsors a huge Canadian/American international home winemaking competition and both winemakers who make wines from scratch and winemakers who make wines from wine kits enter their products in to be judged. This year I noticed that Winexpert, the company who makes the wine kits that we stock did not score very well. Another company that makes wine kits, RJ Spagnols, won more medals than all of the other wine kit companies combined. We have the [results of this year's competition posted](#).

After doing some research, and asking some questions, and due to a fortuitous series of changes in our local distribution lines, we have decided to begin stocking the product that appears to have become the higher quality. Main Street will no longer carry Winexpert kits, but will transition to RJ Spagnols.

If you have been doing Winexpert wine kits and have been happy with them - as I personally have been - this should be a nice quality boost. And, (as an extra bonus) as many of you know, I have not been happy with the price increases that Winexpert has hit us with over the past few years. The prices of Spagnols kits should come in slightly-to-moderately less over all of the different levels of kits.

And not only do they have most of the same kits that Winexpert has, but they have a wider selection of some new and exciting stuff, as well.

They have many of the same Cooler Kits, as well as about a half-dozen or so new ones including a Watermelon White Merlot, and a Blueberry Shiraz. Their Sangria with Seville Orange sounds great for a late Summer barbecue, and their Cranberry Chianti would, I'm sure, be a wonderful Thanksgiving sipper.



They have a wider variety of their less-expensive Grand Cru kits than did the comparable Winexpert Reserve kits, and they have some very interesting new varieties in their Cru Select which were not available in the comparable Winexpert Selection kits.

Their top-of-the-line Cellar Classic and Primeur kits (which come with included grape skins) also come in a wider variety than do the Winexpert Estate series, and - extra bonus - we will be able to sell them at a lower and more reasonable price.

Overall, I am personally pretty excited about the new lineup, especially some of the new and exciting varieties - I think Spagnols will offer us a higher quality wine kit at a better price.

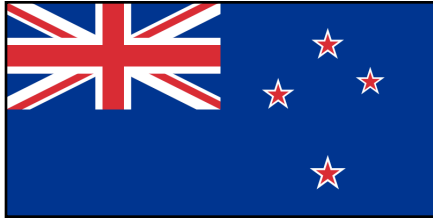
[Full information can be found at our website](#), so be sure to go there and check out all the new and improved wine kits we will now be carrying...

FALL GRAPE HARVEST

Although we are getting pretty close to being sold out, we still have some room left in our Fall Grape Purchase. The four varieties that we will be bringing down this Fall are Merlot, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Most of the grapes are getting pretty close to being sold out, but we still have a little room left for Merlot and Syrah right now. A few people have come up to me recently and commented on how smooth and silky the Merlot from prior years have been, and the Syrah is always a slam-dunk. If you have ever been interested in making wine from scratch, this is a great (and easy) way to get started and be ensured getting super high-quality grapes, with minimal hassle, at a great price...

New Zealand Bitter Supreme

As mentioned on the first page, we have some new, never-before-available hops in straight from New Zealand. While



the rest of the country suffers through massive hop shortages and prices as high as \$9.00 per ounce (!), we are pretty flush with

the leafy greens. At least for the moment.

Although I am getting calls from all over the U.S. from deprived - and depraved - homebrewers lamenting the fact that their local brew stores are devoid of hops, fear not: Main Street's supply should be pretty strong right on until the next Fall Harvest.

So, forget about hop constraints: check out this ultra-hoppy pale ale, Kiwi-style:

RIVENDELL BITTER

- 7 lbs, Extra-Light Malt Extract
- 6 oz. 10L crystal
- 6 oz. Carastan
- 1.0 oz Super Alpha.....60 minutes
- 1.0 oz. Riwaka.....15 minutes
- 1.0 oz. Super Alpha.....10 minutes
- 0.5 oz Riwaka.....5 minutes
- 0.5 oz. Riwaka.....dry-hopped

WLP005 (British yeast), SAF-Ale So-4, or yeast of choice.

Bottle with one cup of corn sugar, and let age for three weeks. This should be ready to drink and enjoy very quickly!

Next newsletter in early September, Cheers!

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