

Recommending

FRUIT FLAVORED WHEAT BEERS

BY MICHAEL KUDERKA



When it comes to recommending a beer style, there are few that could be considered a guaranteed win for the majority of consumers, but wheat beer comes close. Consistently one of the top five selling US beer styles, wheat beers are balanced, sweet, mildly hopped, easy to drink, always in season, and have a wide appeal across demographics. Plus, as U.S. brewers add fruit to this traditional Belgian and German beer style, the resulting complexity introduces a tart, sweet twist that any beer drinker will love.

Labeled as wheat beer, witbier, and weissbier, this style can range from hazy yellow to deep gold in color, with the two most commonly brewed varieties being the witbier and weissbier versions.

Belgian in origin, the witbier is distinctly flavored with adjuncts like coriander and orange, while the German weissbier relies on a traditional blend of at least 50% wheat malt to barley malt ratio. Alcohol by volume is usually low, commonly ranging from (4.5% to 5.6%).

German terms like hefeweizen, and kristallweizen are used to describe the clarity of the beer. Although wheat beers are often thought of as being cloudy or hazy, it is not a required style-trait. Wheat beers that are unfiltered can be described as hefeweizens ("hefe" being German for yeast) while filtered wheat beers can be called kristallweizen ("kristall" being German for crystal).

Although German and Belgian style wheat beers are popular, American versions of these styles often add in the complexity and appeal of fruit flavoring. As

simple as it sounds, adding fruit to beer to achieve the right balance isn't always easy. However, when done right, these brands attract quite a following.

So, as we look ahead to early spring, recommending a wheat beer flavored with blackberry, blueberry, raspberry, strawberry, mango, apricot, watermelon and grapefruit can give your customers the ability to experience the sweet flavors of malted wheat coupled with a wide range of fruit flavor possibilities.

24 GREAT (US BREWED AND COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE) FLAVORED WHEAT BEERS:

1. Abita Lemon Wheat (7 SRM, 18 IBU)
- Abita Brewing, LA
2. Alaskan Raspberry Wheat (16 SRM, 20 IBU)
- Alaskan Brewing, AK
3. Blue Moon Caramel Apple Spiced Ale (16 IBU) - MillerCoors/ Molson Coors, IL
4. Bocat Watermelon Wheat Ale
- Palmetto Brewing, SC
5. Hanger 24 Orange Wheat (13 IBU)
- Hanger 24 Craft Brewery, CA
6. Horny Goat Watermelon Wheat
- Horny Goat Brewing, WI
7. Lost Coast Tangerine Wheat
- Lost Coast Brewery, CA
8. Mad Anthony Ruby Raspberry Wheat
- Mad Anthony Brewing, IN
9. O'Fallon Wheach (3.2 SRM, 7 IBU)
- O'Fallon Brewery, MO
10. Opa Raspberry Wheat
- Opa Opa Brewing, MA
11. Pyramid Apricot Ale (11 IBU)
- Pyramid Brewery, WA
12. R.J. Rockers Son of a Peach
- R.J. Rockers Brewing, SC
13. Rock Art Vermont Maple Wheat Ale (12 IBU)
- Rock Art Brewery, VT
14. Samuel Adams Cherry Wheat (8 SRM, 23 IBU) - Boston Beer Company, MA

15. Saucony Creek Roxie's Golden Banana Wheat (4.5 SRM, 11 IBU) - Saucony Creek Brewing, PA
16. Shorts Brew The Chocolate Wheat (35 IBU)
- Short's Brewing, MI
17. Southern Tier Brewing Raspberry Wheat Beer (18 IBU) - Southern Tier Brewing, NY
18. Widmer Brothers Brewing Lemongrass Wheat Ale - Widmer Brothers, OR
19. Harpoon Ginger Wheat (18 IBU)
- Harpoon Brewery, MA
20. 21st Amendment Hell and High Watermelon Wheat (6 SRM, 17 IBU) 21st Amendment, CA
21. Hurricane Reef Raspberry Wheat (10.9 SRM, 16 IBU) - Florida Beer Company, FL
22. Ithaca Beer Company Apricot Wheat (15 IBU)
- Ithaca Beer Company, NY
23. Lancaster Brewing Strawberry Wheat (16 IBU)
- Lancaster Brewing, PA
24. Sea Dog Wild Blueberry Wheat Ale (6.5 SRM, 8.2 IBU) - Sea Dog Brewing, ME



Featured Brand: Pyramid Apricot Ale (Fruit Wheat Beer 2014 Gold Medal Winner at the Great American Beer Festival). This is an unfiltered apricot wheat ale with flavors and aromas of fresh apricot and sweet wheat malt. Available: Year Round ABV: 5.1% | IBU: 11 | SRM 10.

Michael Kuderka is the Managing Partner at MC Basset, LLC. The company designs beer selling solutions and training for On- and Off-Premise retailers. www.thebeerbible.com - Contact Michael at mkuderka@mcasset.com. © 2015 MC Basset LLC

