




Bad economy boosts homebrewing

More discriminating tastes also a factor



Coopers, the world's largest producer of homebrewing concentrates, reported an 8% increase in overall sales for the second half of 2008. But sales of premium quality concentrates were up by 26%. Meanwhile, the UK reported a 12% increase in the sales of beer-making kits. Are these indications of a new boom in homebrewing? That homebrews are a fraction of the cost of store-bought is one of the primary reasons people begin homebrewing. It becomes a passion when the homebrewer learns to re-create craft beer styles from around the world, especially when the style is not available at the local beverage store. What's better than savoring a homebrew made in the style of a master brewer, or better yet, one of your own, in the comfort of your favorite chair with your buddies?

Big Brew Day '09 shaping up to be really big

Celebrate this year's National Homebrewing Day in a big way. Brew the Big Brew recipe with us at either the North Greenbush or West Boylston store on Saturday, May 2 (sorry, but we are not permitted to brew in Cambridge). The official Big Brew Day recipe we chose is SS Minnow Mild Ale – Dark Mild – Extract With Specialty Grains (see the recipe on Page 4 of this newsletter). Brewing will begin at 10 am. Just bring your equipment, including burners.

And to celebrate homebrewing's big day, we will provide **all ingredients FREE to all participants**. Plus we have all the ingredients you might need for your other brewing projects in stock.

Come on down. You will be one of the 4,000 homebrewers worldwide doing their thing at one of the official Big Brew Day sites. For more info, call us at 518-283-7094.

From the Prez

Balance is important in wine and beer. California juice buckets offer a prime example. Zinfandel can come in with so much sugar that they can reach 18% abv if the yeast can ferment that high. The alcohol overpowers the flavor of the grape. You can add water but you get a thin wine with no structure.

US "hop bomb" beers are another example. Some are great, but many are simply an exercise in high alcohol, bitterness and vegetal flavor. I'm getting tired of that. So I made a nice session beer, a mild about 3% abv. I can easily drink a pint when I get home, even two. It was good to see the Big Brew Day recipe was also a mild.

We need balance in our life too. Times are troubling, but they always are. I started my first business during the stagflation of the '70's. There was Black Friday in '87, the dot com crash, and a few smaller ones here and there. Remember friends, this too will pass. Research shows that many people who lose jobs will take that opportunity to start their own business. Typically job creation starts shortly after that. The country is rich and its people resilient. We'll emerge stronger. In the mean time help other people get some balance in their lives and introduce them to winemaking and brewing. Relax, don't worry, have a homebrew.

Roger Savoy

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Upcoming Local Beer Contests

SPARGE Homebrew Competition

Northampton, MA

<http://sparge.us/index.php?page=pro-am-comp>

03/21/2009

Hudson Valley Homebrewers

19th Annual Homebrew Competition

New Paltz, NY,

<http://hvhomebrewers.com/index.html>

04/18/2009

2009 South Shore Brewoff

Mansfield, MA,

<http://www.southshorebrewclub.org/>

05/02/2009

Green Mountain Homebrew Competition

Burlington, VT, Web:

<http://www.mashers.org>

For more information or to find more events, visit <http://www.beertown.org/homebrewing/calendar/events.aspx>

Club Stuff

For info on local homebrew clubs, visit their websites.

Worcester Incorporated Zymugists Advancing Real Draft (WIZARDS)
members.aol.com/wizbrew/

The Boston Wort Processors
www.wort.org

Fitchburg Order Of Ale Makers (FOAM)
www.foambrew.com

Saratoga Thoroughbrews
www.thoroughbrew.com

And the Hudson River Brew Club meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 8:00 pm upstairs at the Troy Pub & Brewery.

Beef and Beer Stew

Sanford D'Amato is the chef/owner of Sanford Restaurant and Coquette Café in Milwaukee. He is winner of the James Beard Foundation's Perrier Joulet Best Chef Midwest award. His restaurant consistently receives Zagat's highest rating for food. He was one of 12 chefs personally chosen by Julia Child to cook for her 80th birthday celebration.

D'Amato is known for his creative use of Wisconsin's artisanal produce, small-batch cheeses, local sausages and craft beer. The following recipe is based on the traditional Belgian dish, Boeuf Carbonnade. It is not on his restaurants' menus. It is one that he cooks at home while enjoying a local craft beer. He recommends a dark beer with good acidity and not much sweetness, such as (author's favorite) Milwaukee's Lakefront Brewery's East Side Lager.

6 strips bacon, diced	2 cups beef broth
3 pounds beef chuck, trimmed and cut into 2-inch cubes	2 medium carrots, peeled and ends trimmed
Salt and freshly ground black pepper	2 celery stalks, ends trimmed
2 yellow onions, halved and thinly sliced	6 sprigs flat-leaf fresh parsley
8 peeled, whole garlic cloves	4 sprigs fresh thyme
1/4 cup tomato paste	2 bay leaves
1/4 cup all-purpose flour	
1/4 cup red wine vinegar	
2 tablespoons light or dark brown sugar	
2 12-ounce cans or bottles dark beer	

Yield: 8 servings

Preparation time: 45 minutes

Cooking time: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Heat a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven over medium heat for 2 minutes. Add the bacon and cook until lightly browned, stirring occasionally. Transfer the bacon to a plate lined with paper towels and set aside.

Increase the heat to high. Season the beef with some salt and pepper and add it to the pan. Brown the meat on all sides, then transfer to a bowl and set aside.

Add the onions to the pan and cook until limp and browned. Reduce the heat to medium, add the garlic and cook until fragrant. Stir in the tomato paste and cook for 2 minutes, then add the meat and the flour and cook while stirring constantly for 2 minutes. Stir in the vinegar and cook for 1 minute, then add the brown sugar, all but 1/4 cup of the beer and the beef broth.

Using twine, tie the carrots, celery, parsley, thyme and bay leaves into a bundle and add to the pot. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and gently simmer until the meat is tender and falls apart easily, about 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Remove the carrot-celery bundle and discard. Add the remaining 1/4 cup of beer and season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with the bacon and serve.

EBI Beverage needs your help

The NYS Liquor Authority has determined that EBI has been selling homebrew supplies in violation of their Class C liquor license. As a result, they no longer can sell homebrew supplies even though they have been for many years. This seems totally unreasonable, especially at

a time when the State is talking about expanding their sales to wines. It seems reasonable to allow beverage stores to expand their product line to something like homebrewing supplies. Please contact your state legislator and voice your opinions on this. **Roger**



SPECIALS

FOR BEERMAKERS

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30 free shrink capsules.

April - Buy any Orchard Breeze

or Island Mist kit and get **30 free**

shrink capsules.

May - Buy any Selection or Cru Select

kit get **30 free shrink capsules plus**

30 9x1 1/2 first quality corks.

The boys at play...

Just because it's the dead of winter doesn't mean there isn't any "research" to do. Bruce, Roger and Russ visited **Harpoon Brewery** in Boston. They got an up-close tour from brewer Ray Dobins. It was an impressive sight to see all those huge fermenters.

Russ and Roger got a great tour of **Old Saratoga Brewing** from head brewer Paul McErlane. They've greatly expanded their facilities over the past 7

or 8 years ago, which was the last time Roger saw them.

Roger and Russ visited **Harvest Spirits** in Valatie. Harvest Spirits are the distillers of Core Vodka. Core Vodka is produced from the apples grown on the farm on which the distillery is located.

The vodka has received many favorable reviews. While there, the boys also sampled their Pear Brandy, made from pears grown on several local farms.

At last... a spousal friendly brewing system

Does your hobby dominate every square inch of the kitchen and encroach onto the adjoining room? Is domestic peace threatened? Then promise to do something about it. Just announced is the NanoBrewMaster Home Brew Station. It's a 2-foot by 8-foot mobile kitchen counter that houses a computerized compact brewery. It handles every stage of the process from sterilization to

beer at the tap. You can draw two different types of homebrew from the two refrigerated 7.5-gallon containers. The system uses an easy-to-use extract brewing system that eliminates mashing and lautering. However, Nano Brewing Technologies haven't announced the price yet. Just what is domestic bliss worth?

What's New In New England For '09

Here's a sampling of the new brews that New England craft brewers will be offering in 2009:

Already available in stores is **Boston Beer Company's** Blackberry Witbier, voted as the Beer Lovers choice winner. There will also be an Imperial series, Imperial White Ale, Imperial Stout and Double Bock, all sold in 4-packs

The Mayflower Brewing Co. will bottle its India Pale Ale for the first time. The Cape Ann Brewing Co. will be offering the new Fisherman's Bavarian Wheat.

The Mercury Brewing Co., brewers of Ipswich Ales, will donate part of the proceeds from four new specialty brews to help celebrate Ipswich's 375th anniversary in 2010. The four brews are Choate Bridge Imperial Stout, Summer Barley Wine, a double IPA, and Whipple House Old Ale.

The Wachusett Brewing Co. will offer a "Hometown Brewery Series" of beers. The series honors the brewery's 15th anniversary and the town of Westminster's 250th anniversary. They will be available only on tap and in the Westminster area.

Morrisville's **Rock Art Brewery** will offer Belvedere, a double IPA. It is made with brewer Matt Nadeau's homegrown hops. Magic Hat's new brew will be Poppy Agave Pilsner.

Otter Creek will offer three higher, more than 8%, alcohol beers - a Russian imperial stout, an imperial IPA and a Belgian ale.

Smuttynose Brewing is adding Gravitational Belgian Quad to its Big Beer Series. They will also offer a light, low-alcohol Belgian ale, Star Island Single.

Allagash Brewing Company's new beer is Confluence, brewed with its house yeast strain. Gritty McDuff is brewing its first IPA, called 21IPA. And Geary's will release its first double IPA.



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Big Brew Day Recipe

SS Minnow Mild Ale – Dark Mild – Extract With Specialty Grains

Fermentables

5 lb Light Dry Malt Extract
11 oz Crystal 60° L
6 oz Crystal 120° L
3 oz British Chocolate Malt
3 oz Brown Malt (if unavailable, substitute
Biscuit Malt or Amber Malt)

Hops

0.75 oz East Kent Golding, 5.8% Alpha Acid,
for 60 minutes
3/4 tsp Irish moss, added at 15 minutes

Yeast

1 package Wyeast 1968 London ESB Ale Yeast
or White Labs WLP002 English Ale
Yeast. We recommend making a
yeast starter.

Steep grains in 2.5 gallons of water at 150°F for 30 minutes, raise temperature to 170°F then strain and sparge with 2 quarts of hot water. Stir in extract for a total boil volume of 3.5 gallons, and bring to a boil.

At the beginning of the boil, add the bittering hops. Boil for 45 minutes then add the Irish moss. Boil for 15 more minutes.

After the 60-minute boil, cool the wort to 67°-70°F. Transfer wort to fermenter and top-up to 5 gallons with pre-boiled and cooled water. When the wort temperature is down to 67°F, pitch the yeast and aerate well. Ferment at 67°F for one week. Rack to secondary and age for one week. Rack to keg, or add the bottling sugar and bottle.

5 gallons yield with a 3.5-gallon boil

O.G.: 1.037 F.G.: 1.012 IBU: 15



This is one of the two official Big Brew Day recipes that will be used worldwide. We will brew this at the West Boylston and Rensselaer sites. If you can't make it you may be able to register with the AHA. If you want to make the batch we'll give you a free Wyeast or White Labs yeast when you buy the rest of the ingredients. And if you come and brew your own with us to celebrate National Homebrewing Day we'll provide you with ALL the ingredients FREE.