



STYLE GUIDE

MÄRZEN

WHAT IS A MÄRZEN

Pronounced MARE-tsen and otherwise known as Märzenbier (German for "March beer"), this beer falls under the Amber Malty European Lager category according to the BJCP. It's a German lager with a clean, rich, toasty, bready malt flavor, restrained bitterness, and a well-attenuated finish.

STYLE COMPARISON

Technically and historically there is a lot of overlap between märzenbier, Vienna lagers, and oktoberfestbier. The märzenbier and oktoberfestbier tend to have a sweet, almost toffee-link maltiness, with biscuit and bread flavors, while the Vienna lager tends to be more hoppy and drier.

In Germany, the name Oktoberfestbier is now legally reserved only for the six breweries who may serve their beers at the Munich Oktoberfest. All other breweries may use just the märzen designation for their Oktoberfest-style beers.

VITAL STATS

ABV: 5.5%-6.3%
IBU: 18-24
SRM: 8.0-17.0

HISTORY

The historical origins of märzenbier lie in a Bavarian decree issued in 1553, which forbade all brewing between April 23 and September 29, the warmer months when ambient bacteria would often infect beers and quickly spoil them. Brewers then brewed enough beer in March to last them through the summer. These beers were slightly higher in alcohol and were stored cool (or lagered) so they would keep longer.

AROMA

Moderate malty aroma, typically rich, bready, somewhat toasty, with light bread crust notes. Clean lager fermentation character.

APPEARANCE

Amber-orange to deep reddish-copper color. Bright clarity, with persistent, off-white foam.

FLAVOR

Moderate to high rich malt flavor often initially suggests sweetness, but the finish is moderately-dry to dry. Bready, toasty notes. Hop bitterness is moderate. Hops provide sufficient balance that the malty palate and finish do not seem sweet. However, a noticeable sweet caramel, dry biscuit, or roasted flavors are inappropriate.

MOUTHFEEL

Medium body with a smooth, creamy texture that often suggests a fuller mouthfeel. Medium carbonation. Fully attenuated, without a sweet or cloying impression.