

MILE HIGH DIY



Denver brews more beer than any other metropolitan area in the U.S., making it America's No. 1 beer city! Don't know a saison from a session? VISIT DENVER is here with a lesson on Beer 101 from one of Denver's top brewers.



Alyssa Thorpe has come a long way from her five-gallon homebrewing operation, which earned her numerous medals and “best of show” awards in competitions. Since 2015, she has studied Applied Craft Brewing at Regis University and earned experience working at several award-winning breweries in the Denver area. She eventually landed the head brewer gig at Jagged Mountain Craft Brewery, which produces a wide variety of styles, ranging from traditional German beers to experimental sours and everything in between. Alyssa is an advocate for fostering diversity within the brewing industry and can be found on Instagram as [@SouthernBeerGirl](#). She's here to help you unravel brewing terminology so you can order your next beer with confidence!



GET SMART ABOUT BEER



ABV

Alcohol by volume. The higher the ABV, the stronger the beer. "Session" beers are low ABV, starting anywhere under 5% ABV. "Imperial" beers are the opposite and pack a punch anywhere above 8% ABV.

ALE

Any beer that is not a Lager. These beers are typically fermented at warmer temps with top-fermenting yeast. Covers many different types and styles of beers from brown ales to IPAs.

BEER

An alcoholic beverage made from basic ingredients that usually include malt (ex: barley, rye, wheat), hops and yeast. Some beers can have additions called "adjuncts", which would be ingredients like milk, sugar, corn, fruit and spices.

BELGIAN STYLES

Outside of the sour and spontaneous beers of Belgium, these beers are typically described as having strong flavors and aromas of clove, pepper and banana with some exhibiting deep flavors of dried fruits and caramel. Some of the most popular styles include Saison, Witbier (wheat beer) and Tripel.

CASK-CONDITIONED

Extremely popular in the United Kingdom, these complex, cloudy beers undergo a secondary fermentation in a sealed cask. They're often called "live ales" because they're unfiltered and still contain live yeast when poured. Cask-conditioned beers are best served at "cellar temperature" (about 55°F) and typically have a smooth, velvety mouthfeel due to the lower carbonation.

IBU

International bitterness units. The best measurement we have to predict the bitterness of beers from hop additions.

IPA

The most popular craft beer style in Denver and the U.S., India Pale Ales are a hopped ale that originated in England in the 18th century as a way to keep beer fresh (hops are a natural preservative) on the long journey by boat to India. With many sub-categories ranging from black IPAs to the relatively new New England IPA, you can bet on this beverage showcasing bitterness and the wide range of flavors and aromas we get from hops.

LAGER

The most consumed commercial style worldwide, these beers are fermented at cooler temps with bottom-fermenting yeast. Lagers usually have a crisp, clean flavor. While beers were stored in cold caves thousands of years ago, the introduction of Reinheitsgebot, the German purity law only allowing 3 ingredients in beer that consisted of water, hops and yeast is what made the delicious lager we have today.

NITRO BEERS

A serving method made popular by Guinness, instead of using CO2 to carbonate beer, a nitrogenous gas is used to showcase a beautiful "cascade" when poured. They have a thick, creamy head and a velvety soft mouthfeel. Although you can serve any beer on nitro, it's most popular with darker ales, such as stouts and porters.

SAISON

This highly carbonated, golden-hued Belgian-style beer - a type of farmhouse ale - is dry, earthy, sometimes spicy and maybe even a little funky. The name means "season" in French.

SESSION

Looking for something you can sip all day? Session beers are perfect for ball games and backyard barbecues because of their light body and low alcohol content - generally under 5% ABV.

SOURS

Ranging from light and refreshing, to complex and mouth puckering, this style of beer has many methods of production, but the sourness is usually due to the addition of Lactic Acid producing bacteria introduced either manually by the brewer, or naturally (spontaneously) from an open vessel. Some of the most popular styles include Kettle Sours, Ode Bruin, Geuze and Kriek.

STOUT AND PORTER

Both styles are dark, malty (rather than hoppy) beers. Taste ranges from dry and roasty to sweet and creamy, with flavors of coffee, chocolate and caramel. Many new beer drinkers find them intimidating, but with so much variety, there's one for everyone!

WEISSBIER/WIT WHEAT

As the name implies, these beers trace their lineage to Germany and were unusual when they came about due to their lighter colors. They are typically brewed with a high proportion of malted wheat. American wheat beers are also light in color and may appear cloudy when poured.

CLICK FOR
A LIST OF
BREWERIES IN
AND AROUND
DENVER

