



Historical Beer Styles

by Bryan Antoniuk

What are historical beer styles?

- Styles of beer that are no longer widely produced, with a focus on their unique characteristics tied to specific time periods and geographic locations.
- Styles can be in the process of rediscovery by craft brewers.
- We won't go over every historical style, focusing on those in the BJCP Style Guidelines (2021), with others mentioned at the end

Beer Styles, History, and Recipes

- Kellerbier*
- Kentucky Common*
- Lichtenhainer*
- London Brown Ale
- Piwo Grodziskie*
- Pre-Prohibition Lager*
- Pre-Prohibition Porter
- Roggenbier*
- Sahti*

* Samples provided

**KELLER
BIER**

*Kellerbier History:

The original Kellerbier is a Märzen-type lager from the Franconia region of Germany, but other traditional versions are based on Munich Helles and Dunkel lagers. Originally referred to lager beer matured in the caves or cellars under the brewery, and then served from them. By tradition, a serving style for a popular summer specialty in Bavaria, but now adapted broadly as a marketing term for unfiltered lagers. The name literally means cellar beer, and is a natural, gentle handling of fresh-tasting German lagerbier for seasonal, on-premise service.

Nährwert

Energie kJ

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Eiweiß

Salz

www.tapi

Zutaten: W



Sich am Boden absetzende Hefepartikel können durch leichtes Schwenken gelöst werden.

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Alk. 5,2% vol.

KELLERBIER

VOLLMUNDIG & UNFILTRIERT

DIREKT AUS DEM LAGERKELLER

F
GETREU DEM
BAYERISCHEN
REINHEITSGEBOT

What defines the style?

An unfiltered, unpasteurized, fully-attenuated German lager traditionally served from lagering vessels. May be a little richer, more robust, and rustic than the base styles. A fresh beer without fermentation defects associated with young, green (unfinished) beer. Characteristic ingredients are the same as base styles. Traditionally naturally carbonated. Traditionally lagered and unfiltered, these beers were never meant to be packaged for external sale.

NATURTRÜB UND UNGEFILTERT

Kellerbier ist ein Bier aus dem
Hause «Freiberger», gebraut nach
deutschem Reinheitsgebot.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- **MALTS & ADJUNCTS**
- 7.91 lb. Pilsen Malt
- 15.5 oz Vienna Malt
- 2.3 oz Carahell Malt
- 2.3 oz Acidulated Malt
- **HOPS**
- 2 oz Hallertauer Mittelfrueh, 3.7% AA @ 90 min
- 0.5 oz Hallertauer Mittelfrueh, 3.7% AA @ 15 min
- **YEAST**
- Imperial Yeast Global L13

Specifications:

Yield: 5 U.S. gal. (18.9 L)

Original Gravity: 1.050

Final Gravity: 1.012

ABV: 5.0%

IBU: 28

SRM: 3.4

Efficiency: 70%

Mash in at 120°F (49°C) and hold for 20 min, then raise to 147°F (64°C) and hold for 15 min. Run a single decoction by pulling approximately 50 percent thick mash into a separate kettle and boiling it over medium flame, stirring constantly, for 30 mins. Return decocted portion to the mash tun, raise temp to 160°F (71°C) and hold for 30 mins. Mash out at 170°F (77°C) and sparge. After the boil, cool to 45°F (7°C). Oxygenate and pitch yeast, allowing a free rise to 48°F (9°C). Hold at 48°F until 75 percent attenuation (4–5 days), then bump to 60°F (16°C) for a diacetyl rest. When the beer reaches final gravity (10–14 days), crash to 33°F (1°C), rack, and keg at 2.6 volumes of CO₂



***Kentucky Common History:**

An American original, Kentucky Common was almost exclusively produced and sold around Louisville, Kentucky from some time after the Civil War until Prohibition. It was inexpensive and quickly produced, racked into barrels while actively fermenting, and tightly bunged to allow carbonation in the saloon cellar. Before the style died, it accounted for about 75% of sales around Louisville. Common beer was fermented at higher temperatures like an ale, but was aged for a very short period of time if at all before being consumed, thus eliminating any need to keep it cool.



What defines the style?

A clean, dry, refreshing, slightly malty dark beer with high carbonation. Mild-tasting, with light toast and caramel flavors, served very fresh as a sessionable saloon beer. Characteristic Ingredients include six-row barley malt. Corn grits. Caramel and black malt. Rustic American bittering hops. Imported Continental finishing hops. High carbonate water. Ale yeast. Like a darker-colored Cream Ale emphasizing corn, but with some light character malt flavor.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- **MALTS & ADJUNCTS**
- 6.5 lb. (2.95 kg) pale 6-row malt
- 3.5 lb. (1.59 kg) crushed or flaked corn
- 4 oz. (113 g) black malt
- 3 oz. (85 g) 80°L caramel malt
- **HOPS**
- 0.4 oz. (11 g) Vanguard, 4.7% a.a. @ FWH
- 0.4 oz. (11 g) Cluster, 6.5% a.a. @ 60 min
- 0.4 oz. (11 g) Cluster, 6.5% a.a., whirlpool 30 min @ 80° F
- **YEAST**
- 1 L starter Wyeast 1056 American Ale yeast

Specifications:

Yield: 5 U.S. gal. (18.9 L)

Original Gravity: 1.052 (12.7°P)

Final Gravity: 1.012 (3°P)

ABV: 5.2%

IBU: 20

SRM: 15

Efficiency: 70%

Full fusion mash at 152°F (67°C) for 60 min. Mash out at 168° (76°C) for 10 min. Fly sparge with 168° (76°C) water to collect 6.5 gal (25 L) wort. First wort hops are added before the wort run off. Whirlpool hops for 30 min at 180°F (82°C). Boil 60 min. Yeast nutrient and ½ Whirlfloc tablet @ 10 min. Chill, add oxygen and pitch yeast. Ferment at 67°F (19°C) until complete. Cold crash and keg to 3–3.5 volumes.

***Lichtenhainer History:**

Originating in Lichtenhain, in Thüringen (central Germany). Height of popularity was towards the end of the 1800s, and was widely available throughout Thüringen. Like a pre-1840 Berliner Weisse. Particularly popular among the students at Jena university. Historians debate the recipe composition being either all barley or a mix of wheat and barley.



What defines the style?

A sour, smoked, lower-gravity historical central European wheat beer. Complex yet refreshing character due to high attenuation and carbonation, along with low bitterness and moderate sourness. Smoked barley malt, wheat malt, Lacto, top-fermenting yeast. Grist varies, but the wheat would typically be 30-50%. Can be made with all barley malt. In the same general historical lower-alcohol central European wheat beer family as Gose, Grodziskie, and Berliner Weisse; has elements of all of them but with its own unique balance – sour and smoke is not found in any of the other styles.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- **MALTS**
- 4.5 lb. (2.04 kg) Weyerman Oak Smoked Wheat malt
- 2.25 lb. (1.02 kg) Weyerman Pilsner malt
- 0.75 lb. (340 g) Weyerman Munich malt
- **HOPS**
- 1 oz. (28 g) Czech Saaz, 2% a.a. @ 45 min
- 1 oz. (28 g) Hüll Melon, 7.3% a.a. @ 5 min
- **YEAST**
- 1 vial White Labs WLP001 California Ale Yeast
- **ADDITIONAL ITEMS**
- 2 tablets Swanson Probiotics *Lactobacillus Plantarum* or
4 oz. (113 g) Noosa Yoghurt or other *Lactobacillus*
culture

Specifications:

Yield: 5.5 U.S gallons (20.8 L)

Original Gravity: 1.041 (10.0° P)

Final Gravity: 1.010 (2.6° P)

ABV: 4.10%

IBU: 8

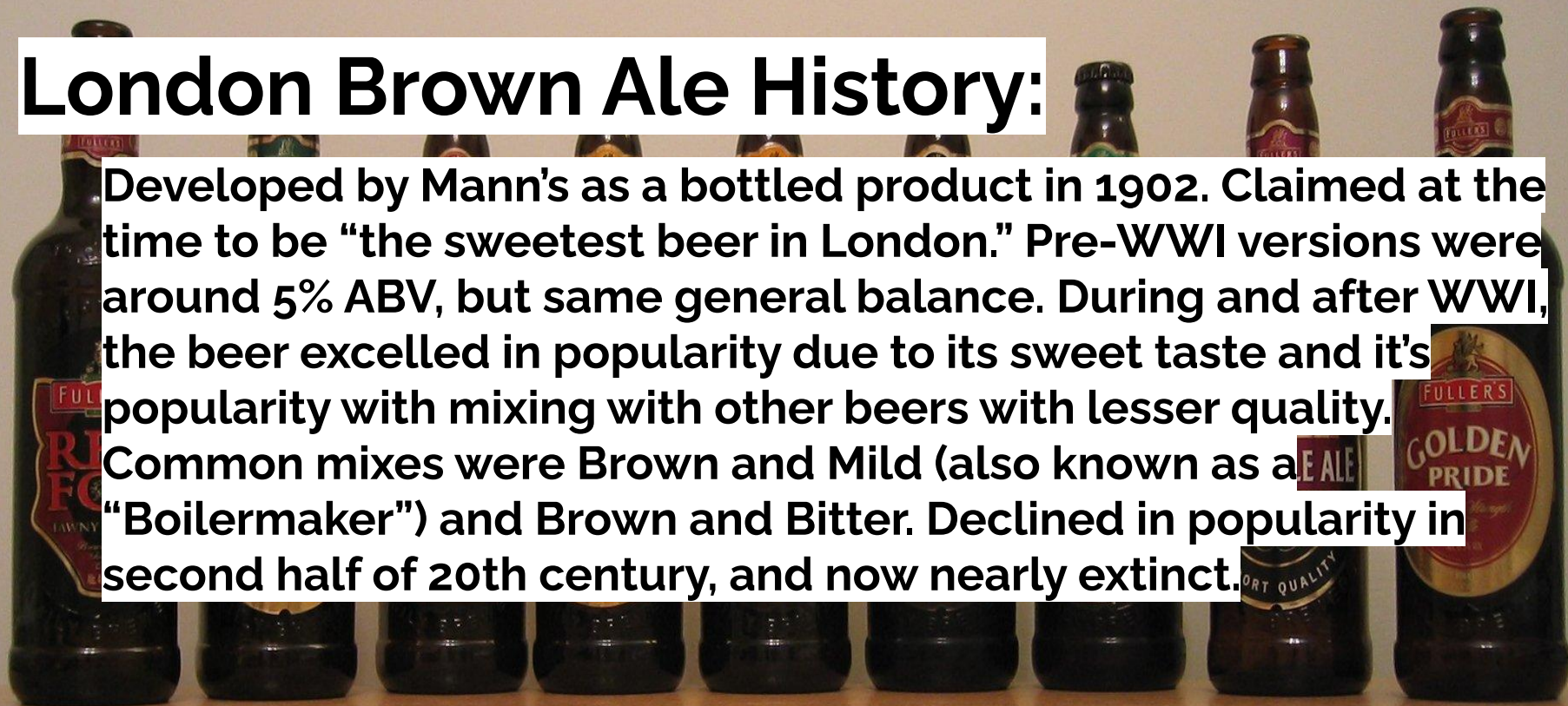
SRM: 4

Efficiency: 75%

Mash in at 152° F (67° C) for 60 minutes. Collect runoff and heat wort to 180° F (82° C). Cool wort to 115° F (46° C), wash wort with CO₂, and purge kettle or another vessel to be used for souring (the key is to create an anaerobic environment until desired pH is achieved). Add yogurt or other *Lactobacillus* culture to wort. Insulate the vessel to maintain temperature. Conduct boil when pH has dropped to 3.5. Ferment at 68° F (20° C) until terminal, rack to secondary for 7 days, and then bottle or keg.

London Brown Ale History:

Developed by Mann's as a bottled product in 1902. Claimed at the time to be "the sweetest beer in London." Pre-WWI versions were around 5% ABV, but same general balance. During and after WWI, the beer excelled in popularity due to its sweet taste and its popularity with mixing with other beers with lesser quality. Common mixes were Brown and Mild (also known as a "Boilermaker") and Brown and Bitter. Declined in popularity in second half of 20th century, and now nearly extinct.



What defines the style?

A luscious, sweet, malty, low-alcohol dark brown ale, with caramel and toffee malt complexity and a sweet-tasting finish. Characteristic Ingredients include English pale ale malt as a base with a large proportion of darker caramel malts and often some black and wheat malts (this is Mann's traditional grist – others can rely on dark sugars for color and flavor). Moderate to high carbonate water. English hops. Post-fermentation sweetening with lactose or artificial sweeteners, or sucrose, if pasteurized. May seem somewhat like a less roasty version of a Sweet Stout (and lower-gravity, at least for US sweet stout examples) or a sweet version of a Dark Mild.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- **MALTS & ADJUNCTS**
- 6.5 lb Maris Otter (69.3%)
- 1 lb crystal 80 (10.7%)
- 10 oz crystal 120 (6.7%)
- 0.5 lb Special Roast (5.3%)
- 0.5 lb Pale Chocolate (5.3%)
- 4 oz Carafo II (2.7%)
- 1 lb Lactose added at the end of boil
- **HOPS**
- 1 oz Fuggles [5.6%aa] – 60 minutes
- **YEAST**
- White Labs WLP013 London Ale Yeast

Mash grains at 158°F for 60 minutes.

Collect wort and boil for 60 minutes, adding hops per recipe.

Cool wort to 68°F and pitch yeast.

Specifications:

Yield: 5 U.S. gal. (18.9 L)

Original Gravity: 1.043

Final Gravity: 1.014

ABV: 3.8%

IBU: 22

SRM: 29

Efficiency: 70%



*Piwo Grodziskie History:

Developed as a unique style centuries ago in the Polish city of Grodzisk (known as Grätz when ruled by Prussia and Germany). Its fame and popularity rapidly extended to other parts of the world in the late 19th and early 20th century. Regular commercial production declined after WWII and ceased in the 1990s. Pronounced in English as “pivo grow-JEES-kee-uh” (meaning: Grodzisk beer). Known as Grätzer (pronounced “GRATE-sir”) in German-speaking countries, and in some beer literature.

What defines the style?

A low-gravity, bitter, oak-smoked historical central European wheat beer with a clean fermentation profile and no sourness. Highly carbonated, dry, crisp, and refreshing. Characteristic ingredients include oak-smoked wheat malt, which has a less intense smoke character than German Rauchmalz, and a drier, crisper, leaner quality – a smoky bacon or ham flavor is inappropriate. Traditional Polish, Czech or German hops. Moderate hardness sulfate water. Clean, attenuative ale yeast; Weizen yeast inappropriate. Similar in strength to a Berliner Weisse, but never sour and much more bitter. Has a smoked character but less intense than in a Rauchbier. Lower gravity than a Lichtenhainer, but more bitter and not sour.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- **MALTS**
- 7 lb. (3.18 kg) Weyermann Oak Smoked Wheat malt
- 1 lb. (454 g) Rahr red wheat malt
- **HOPS**
- 0.25 oz. (7 g) Sterling pellets, 7.4% a.a. FWH
- 0.25 oz. (7 g) US Magnum pellets, 13.2% a.a. @ 60 min
- 1 oz. (28 g) Sterling pellets, 7.4% a.a. @ 10 min
- **YEAST**
- 1 L starter Wyeast 1056 American Ale yeast

Specifications:

Yield: 6.5 US gal. (24.6 L)

Original Gravity: 1.030 (7.6°P)

Final Gravity: 1.008 (2.1°P)

ABV: 2.90%

IBU: 27

SRM: 3.2

Efficiency: 70%

Use a sequence of step infusions that end in a full-volume, no-sparge mash: 126°F (52°C) for 30 minutes, 152°F (67°C) for 60 minutes, and 169°F (76°C) for 10 minutes. Lauter, and then boil 60 minutes. After boil, chill to 67°F (19°C), pitch yeast, and aerate. Ferment at 67°F (19°C) for 10–14 days, letting temperature free rise to 69°F (21°C). Hold at 69°F (21°C) until end of fermentation.



***Pre-Prohibition Lager History:**

An adaptation of continental lagers by immigrant German brewers in the mid-1800s in the US. Became most popular by the 1870s, but weakened in strength, bitterness, and popularity after Prohibition, and was largely replaced by Standard American Lager. Resurrected by homebrewers in the mid-1990s, but few commercial examples exist.



What defines the style?

A bitter and hoppy pale American adjunct lager, often with a robust, corny flavor profile, although more crisp and neutral-tasting versions exist. Characteristic ingredients include six-row barley. Corn or rice adjuncts, up to 30%. Traditional American or Continental hops. Modern American hops are inappropriate. Lager yeast. Similar balance and bitterness as modern Czech Premium Pale Lagers, but exhibiting native American grains and hops from the era before US Prohibition. More robust, bitter, and flavorful than modern pale American Lagers, often with higher alcohol.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- **MALTS & ADJUNCTS**
- 78% Pale Malt (6 Row) US
- 22% Flaked Corn
- **HOPS**
- Cluster 60 min addition (27.4 IBUs)
- Hallertauer Mittelfrueh 5 min addition (2.7 IBUs)
- **YEAST**
- WLP840 American Lager

Specifications:

Yield: 5 U.S. gal. (18.9 L)

Original Gravity: 1.048 (12.7°P)

Final Gravity: 1.008 (3°P)

ABV: 5.2%

IBU: 30

SRM: 3.2

Efficiency: 70%

Chill to 48 degrees and oxygenate with pure O₂ for 90 seconds @ 1L per min. Pitch decanted starter and hold the fermentation at 48-50 degrees for 2 weeks or until final gravity is reached. Slowly raise the temp to 55 degrees for 3-4 days for a diacetyl rest. Rack to a keg and lager for 60 days prior to serving.

The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of several beer cans. One can in the foreground is clearly visible, showing a label with an eagle logo and the text 'BREWERY' and '1899'. Another can below it has 'Original Amber Beer' and '12 FL. OZ.' visible. The cans are covered in condensation droplets.

Pre-Prohibition Porter History:

Commercially brewed in Philadelphia during the revolutionary period as an adaptation of English beer. Evolved later as German immigrants applied lager brewing methods during the second half of the 1800s. Prohibition ended most porter brewing in the US, except in a few regional Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states where it was most popular. Also known as Pennsylvania Porter.



What defines the style?

A historical American adaptation of English Porter by German immigrants using American ingredients, including adjuncts. Characteristic ingredients include two row or six row malt. Low percentages of dark malts including black, chocolate, and brown malt (roasted barley is not typically used). Adjuncts are acceptable, including corn, brewers licorice, molasses, and porterine. More historical versions will have up to twenty percent adjuncts. Lager or ale yeast. Historical or traditional American bittering hops, American or German finishing hops.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- **MALTS & ADJUNCTS**

- 4 lb (1.8 kg) Maris Otter
- 4 lb (1.8 kg) Pilsner malt
- 1 lb (454 g) Chocolate rye malt
- 0.5 lb (227 g) Fawcett Crystal 45L
- 0.25 lb (113 g) Carafo II
- 0.5 lb (227 g) molasses (pre-boil)

- **HOPS**

- 1 oz Northern Brewer (9% AA) @ 25 minutes

- **YEAST**

- 1 L starter Wyeast 1056 American Ale yeast

Specifications:

Yield: 5 U.S. gal. (18.9 L)

Original Gravity: 1.053

Final Gravity: 1.011

ABV: 5.7%

IBU: 25

SRM: 30

Efficiency: 72%

The background of the entire image is a close-up, high-resolution photograph of rye grains. The grains are elongated and oval-shaped, with a light tan or golden-brown color. They are densely packed and fill the entire frame, creating a textured, organic pattern. The lighting is even, highlighting the natural sheen and slight variations in color of the grains.

***Roggenbier History:**

A specialty German rye beer originally brewed in Regensburg, Bavaria in 1988 by Schierlinger. After eventual purchase by Paulaner, the beer is now positioned as a regional brand and thus hard to find as an export. Duke of Bavaria, William IV famously enacted the Bavarian Purity Law of 1516, in part to ensure the availability of rye and wheat for bakers to produce affordable bread, and decreed that beer was only allowed to be made with water, hops and barley. As a direct result of the 1516 purity laws and later the Reinheitsgebot, Roggenbier disappeared from German beermaking for nearly 500 years.

What defines the style?

A Dunkles Weissbier made with rye rather than wheat, but with a greater body and light finishing hops. The rye gives a bready and peppery flavor, a creamy body, and a dry, grainy finish that blends with the distinctive banana-and-clove weizen yeast character.

Characteristic Ingredients: Malted rye, up to 60% of the grist. Pale and wheat malts. Crystal-type malts and debittered dark malts can be used. Weizen yeast. German or Czech hops. Patented decoction type mash.

TURTRÜB UND UNGEFILTERT

Kellerbier ist ein Bier aus dem
Hause «Freiberger», gebraut nach
deutschem Reinheitsgebot.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- **MALTS**
- 6.25 lb. (2.83 kg) rye malt
- 3.5 lb. (1.59 kg) Munich malt
- 3 lb. (1.36 kg) Pilsner malt
- 1 lb. (454 g) Weyermann Caramunich II malt
- 2 oz. (57 g) Weyermann Carafo Special II malt
- **HOPS**
- 1 oz. (28 g) Tettnang, 4% a.a. @ 60 min
- 0.3 oz. (9 g) Czech Saaz, 3.5% a.a. @ 15 min
- **YEAST**
- White Labs WLP300 Hefeweizen Ale or Wyeast 3068 Weihenstephan Weizen

Specifications:

Yield: 5 U.S. gal. (18.9 L)

Original Gravity: 1.060 (14.8° P)

Final Gravity: 1.014 (3.5° P)

ABV: 6%

IBU: 17

SRM: 15

Efficiency: 70%

Mash at 154° F (68° C) with about 5.5 gal. (20.8 L) of water for 60 mins. Ferment at 62° F (17° C).

A close-up photograph of a juniper branch with green, needle-like leaves and clusters of small, round, white berries. The background is blurred, showing more of the same plant.

***Sahti History:**

An indigenous traditional style from Finland; a farmhouse tradition for at least 500 years, often brewed for festive occasions like summer weddings, and consumed within a week or two of brewing. The earliest written records of sahti only date back a few hundred years to the late 18th century, but casks of the traditional Finnish style were found aboard a sunken Viking ship dated back to the 9th century. Some historians even claim ancient beer styles like sahti were the motivation behind developed agriculture in Scandinavia. Brewed year-round in Finland and has experienced a resurgence by craft breweries.



What defines the style?

A sweet, heavy, strong traditional Finnish farmhouse beer usually with rye and juniper, and a banana-clove yeast character. Characteristic ingredients include malted barley. Rye is common. Low hops, if any. Juniper boughs (with or without berries) used for lautering (traditionally in a hollowed-out log). Uses Finnish baker's yeast in a fast, warm fermentation (German Weizen yeast is a reasonable substitute). Long step mash regime. Wort is not boiled. Passing resemblance to Weizenbock, but sweet and thick with a rye and juniper character.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- 7 kg Pilsner malt
- 2.4 kg Munich malt
- 0.6 kg Dark rye malt (Kaljamallas, home-toasted rye malt or caramel rye malt)
- 10 g of juniper branches
- 25 g fresh compressed baker's yeast or 10 g dry baker's yeast

Mash grains at 60°C for 45 minutes using 2.3 liters of water per kilogram of grain. Mix juniper branches into the mash. Raise temperature to 70°C for 45 minutes, and then to 80–85°C for 15 minutes. Begin lautering, and recirculate until wort runs clear. Sparge with 80–90°C water until 20 litres of wort is collected. If using immersion chiller, insert it in the beginning of lautering into hot wort to sanitize the chiller.

Specifications:

Yield: 5 U.S. gal. (18.9 L)

Original Gravity: 1.097

Final Gravity: 1.034

ABV: 8.5%

Chill the wort to fermentation temperature. Dissolve fresh compressed yeast into a small amount of cold water, or rehydrate dry yeast in 40°C water. Pour the whole wort into fermenter – since wort is not boiled there is no trub. Add yeast and ferment at 18–25°C until fermentation begins to calm down. Depending on the yeast and temperature, this takes 1–3 days. When sahti still tastes sweetish, but not cloying, move fermenter to cold. If unsure, check if the gravity is in the range 1.034–1.038. Available to drink shortly after packaging.

Questions?