

DESCRIPTIVE BEER TASTING

STEP 1- PREPARATION

Pick out three or four types of beer (our senses cannot distinguish between more than three or four variants). You could pick for instance three or four different types from the same brewery, select different brands or choose three or four beers from a specific category. Remember that most beers should be served at 8° C. Strong beers, however, are best served at 12-14° C.

Draw up a game plan Start with the light beers with low alcohol content, and progress to the dark beers with high alcohol content. Round off the tasting with the sweetest beer of the evening. It's a good idea to start out with lager, a taste which is familiar to most people.

Choose glasses – three or four per participant. Pick a glass that is not too tall, and preferably with a stem. And make sure the glasses are spotless, as a dirty glass equals a flat beer and a head of foam with no fizz.

Print out evaluation forms for the participants (one per beer for each person).

STEP 2 – APPEARANCE

Pour the beer into a glass and hold it up to the light. How does the head look? Describe the clarity of the beer Describe the colour of the beer Note down your observations on your form.

STEP 3 – COLOUR

Assess the colour of the beer on a scale ranging from light yellow through golden, red-golden, reddish brown, and chocolate brown to black. Make a note of the colour on your form.

STEP 4 – AROMA

Lift the beer up to your nose and take a deep whiff – which aromas does your sense of smell detect? The hops – may be floral or herbal, or be scented, spicy or resinous. The brewmaster controls the aroma by deciding which type of hops to use and when to add them to the brewing process. Make a note of the aromas you detected on your form.

STEP 5 – TASTE

Take a sip of the beer and swirl it around in your mouth so it connects with all your taste buds. Wait a little before swallowing. How sweet is the beer? The front of your tongue is where your sweetness sensors are. How bitter is the beer? The back of your tongue is home to your bitterness sensors. What about the beer's aftertaste? Note down your observations on your form.



STEP 6 – THE SENSATION OF THE BEER IN YOUR MOUTH

Take another sip and swirl it around in your mouth before swallowing. How is the serving temperature? How much carbon dioxide is there in the brew? How about the beer's body? Light bodied or full-bodied? Note down your observations on your form.

STEP 7 – GENERAL EVALUATION

Review your notes and taste the beer again, if desired. Your final verdict. Did I enjoy this beer?

OTHER POSSIBLE WAYS TO DO A BEER TASTING:

- Triangle test – participants compare three beers, two of which are the same.
- Ranking test – participants rank three or four beers according to alcohol percent.
- Blind tasting – participants must identify three or four types of beer served in unmarked glasses.

