Beer is one of the oldest types of alcoholic drinks in the world, and the most widely consumed. It is the third most popular drink overall after potable water and tea.It is produced by the brewing and fermentation of starches, mainly derived from cereal grains—most commonly malted barley, though wheat, maize (corn), rice, and oats are also used. During the brewing process, fermentation of the starch sugars in the wort produces ethanol and carbonation in the resulting beer. Most modern beer is brewed with hops, which add bitterness and other flavours and act as a natural preservative and stabilising agent. Other flavouring agents such as gruit, herbs, or fruits may be included or used instead of hops. In commercial brewing, the natural carbonation effect is often removed during processing and replaced with forced carbonation.