

Title:

Beer Brewing Traditional In Europe

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Summary:

Beer brewing in Europe continues to be a serious traditional business. For thousands of years, Europe has been a leader in brewing this popular beverage. Many countries have perfected distinctive beers; some are like mythological ambrosia. Maintaining the quality of centuries-old recipes, many brewers realise that their strength lies in maintaining tradition over promoting innovation. Not to say there aren't several breweries experimenting with new flavours, but mostly they l...

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Article Body:

Beer brewing in Europe continues to be a serious traditional business. For thousands of years, Europe has been a leader in brewing this popular beverage. Many countries have perfected distinctive beers; some are like mythological ambrosia. Maintaining the quality of centuries-old recipes, many brewers realise that their strength lies in maintaining tradition over promoting innovation. Not to say there aren't several breweries experimenting with new flavours, but mostly they leave the newfangled risk-taking to the Americans. Why fix and change that which is not broken?

To promote the preservation of European beer culture, several countries have banded together to create organizations such as the European Beer Consumers' Union (EBCU). This union was founded in Bruges in 1990 with three founding members: Campaign for Real Ale of Great Britain, Objectieve Bierproevers of Belgium and PINT of the Netherlands. It sounds like a Monty Pythonesque union with contrived names, but it is a legitimate one with twelve countries as members: the above three, plus Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland and France.

Their aims are simple: preserve European beer culture, its traditions, beer brewing and breweries; promote traditional beers; support the consumption of traditional beers; and represent European drinkers in a campaign for choice,

quality and value. This is not the only pro-quality beer organization in Europe. Others include the Guinness 1759 Society, the British Guild of Beer Writers, and the Brothers of Beer.

The continued production of traditional beers has added one innovation to its traditional facade: beer tours. Beertrips.com, founded in 1998, promotes many beer-tasting experiences in countries like Belgium, France, England, Germany and Austria. If you are interested in experiencing Germany's beers, for example, there is a 10-day tour of Munich's Fruhlingsfest and Bavarian Country Breweries. A personal favourite is the Brewers and Distilleries of Scotland tour. Check the website for details.

Each country in Europe seems to have a beer type focus. In Ireland, they continue to promote their stout beers. Stout is thick and heavy, with an earthy, full-bodied taste. They sell lagers and ales, but the focus and specialty is on beers like Guinness. The Guinness brewery was bought and opened in 1759 in Dublin, Ireland by Arthur Guinness. The original stout is strong and bitter-tasting.

In Spain, lager is the most popular. Spanish lagers are a touch stronger than other countries' lager offerings. Two of their most popular beers are Especial and Extra. Especial is a pilsner beer, quite light in colour and taste while Extra is a pale lager.

Alas, until recently, Sweden had been a beer desert for decades. Their people have choked and sputtered for more to slake their thirst, all to no avail. Histrionics aside, it was the rigidly-controlled regulations for beer brewing that depleted this country's brewers. Since Sweden joined the European Union in 1995, its regulations have grown more lax and the country has transformed itself from a desert to a vibrant and diverse beer culture. The industry in Sweden imports from many other countries; this has inspired a search for their own beer identity. How better to discover a beer identity than to try many things to see what works for the people of the country?

In Holland, the industry continues to produce their own phylum of beer: Bierbok. A good version of this type of beer is difficult to produce. Bokbier is a 16th century beer from Bavaria that has endured and been perfected. It is dark in colour (red-brown to black), sweet on the tongue with a mixture of bittersweet flavours, such as toffee, raisins, licorice, coffee, and chocolate. These are not ingredients, but flavours. It is a beer strong in alcohol with an alcohol percentage of 6.5% to 8%.

When applied to beer brewing, history and tradition are not necessarily dusty,

boring or dry like old history books or documents. Thousands of years ago, beer was a product in development; it was new and ever-changing. Beer brewing traditions live on and interest drinkers because of the exceptional tastes developed over centuries, not in spite of history and tradition.