Terminology in Beer Reviews

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine beer reviews to see what descriptors are identified and used to describe beers. Also, the domains APPEARANCE, AROMA, FLAVOUR, MOUTHFEEL and OVERALL IMPRESSION are analysed. The theoretical framework stems from the genre of wine reviews, with additional backbone from beer sensory analysis and established beer terminology. Through analysis of 27 beer reviews in three leading beer magazines, the study shows that most typically object descriptors and property descriptors relating to the raw materials are used. In terms of domains, APPEARANCE and MOUTHFEEL have few descriptors, whilst AROMA and FLAVOUR have a higher number of descriptors and more categories. The domain with more process related and human-like descriptions, as well as more elaborate expressions to entice the consumer, is OVERALL IMPRESSION.

Keywords: beer reviews, beer style guidelines, beer terminology, beer sensory evaluation
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1. Introduction

1.1. Aim and Research Questions

Nearly 1,000 breweries opened in the United States in 2017 (Brewers Association 2018). The industry of craft beer has increased with more than 60 percent in the United States in the last few years and craft beer sales accounts for around 14 percent of total beer sales in the country (Nielsen 2017). For consumers, there is an abundance of beer reviews in newspapers and magazines, a large number of social media posts, and tasting experiences available.

According to the Beer Judge Certification Program (see section 3.2) there are over 100 styles of beer (bjcp.org). The appearance, aromas, flavours and mouthfeel will differ depending on the respective beer style. BJCP exam director Scott Bickham introduces the complex world of sensory experience in the beer world:

Think about how many senses are required to enjoy a beer fully. From the moment the bottle is opened and the beer is poured into a glass, our ears are greeted by the hiss of escaping carbon dioxide. Our eyes are attracted by the sparkling clarity of a Pilsener, the hazy sheen of a Weizen, or the black depth of a stout. We patiently wait for the creamy head to slowly collapse, leaving wisps of Belgian lace on the sides of the glass. As we bring the beer to our lips, our nose detects the aroma of citrusy hops in an American pale ale, bittersweet chocolate in a porter, or perhaps fruity, spicy esters in a Trappist ale. Finally, we imbibe, savoring the malt, hop, and ester flavors before swallowing to let the hop alpha-acids wake the taste buds on the back of the tongue. We take another drink and swish the beer through our mouth to evaluate the body and mouthfeel. Ah, this seems like a well-made beer — but wait! What is that lingering aftertaste? Does it taste like cooked cabbage, or is it perhaps reminiscent of newly mown grass? Is that a hint of paper or leather in the background? What are these flavors and how did they get into your beer?

(Bickham 2001)

Data published by Nielsen confirms that the terminology used to describe beer has a strong impact on sales (Nielsen 2017). However, many consumers are unaware of the buzzwords in the industry though and certain descriptors may leave them confused and uninterested. As expressed by Felix Richter, data journalist at Statista; “Describing a beer as hazy, funky or grassy might sound good on paper; it may not be the smartest marketing move however, considering that few people will understand what you’re trying to say” (Richter 2017).
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How do beer writers and experts describe the aromas and flavours of beer to convey the sensory perception to consumers? The aim of this study is to investigate the terminology used in beer reviews with a focus on how sensory perception is conveyed to consumers.

The research questions are as follows:

• Looking at beer reviews in a number of channels, what descriptors are typically used to describe three selected beer styles?

• Are there differences/similarities in the domains APPEARANCE, AROMA, FLAVOUR, MOUTHFEEL and OVERALL IMPRESSION?

Section 2 outlines the secondary sources including sensory evaluation. Next, section 3 describes established beer terminology, particularly the beer wheel and beer style guidelines, as well as consumer awareness of buzzwords. In section 4, the method and data are explained. The results are presented and analysed in section 5. Finally, the conclusion of the study follows in section 6.
2. Theoretical Framework

Few references have been found on the combination of semantics and beer. To face this challenge, theories on appraisal and sensory perception based on the genre of wine reviews have been used as well as sensory perception in beer.

2.1. Appraisal Theory

To be able to analyse the use of language to communicate sensory perception, Appraisal Theory is used as a framework. This is a particular approach “concerned with the construction by texts of communities of shared feelings and values, and with the linguistic mechanisms for the sharing of emotions, tastes and normative assessments” (Martin & White 2005: 1). Appraisal encompasses all evaluative uses of language, including those by which speakers/writers adopt particular value positions or stances and by which they negotiate these stances with either actual or potential respondents. Martin divides the appraisal resources existing in a language into three broad semantic domains: engagement, attitude and graduation. It is used to show how different genres and text types employ evaluative and rhetorical strategies, for instance by Breit in the genre of wine tasting with the mental processes of “reaction” linked to emotion, “composition” relating to perception and “valuation” as in outcome (Breit 2013: 81). The appraisal framework shows positive polarisation of the texts and significant differences in the appraisal verbalisation through the use of terms related to fruit or oenology. The goals of the valuation is to inform, to allure and to make one feel being a member of an exclusive group of people knowledgeable about wine and as expressed by Breit:

Purely technical oenological terms may seem too “dry” to create a sensation of something exceptional, exotic and highly desired. These qualities do not need to be accurately defined; it is precisely their indefiniteness, which makes the wine so desirable.

(Breit 2013: 85)

To illustrate, evaluation can be expressed explicitly or evocative, through induced feelings. It can be differentiated with for instance evoked sensory sensations, reminiscences from childhood and youth, exotic and alluring affects, enthralling flavours, by a variety of positive adjectives, and by unusual and attractive references.
2.2. Sensory Perception in Wine

As argued by Caballero & Paradis (2015), sensory perceptions play a crucial role in consumers’ daily encounters with the world and they make decisions based on smells, textures, tastes and sounds, for instance when buying products such as clothes or stationary, or in this case, wine or beer. The language in wine or beer reviews intends to describe the experience of drinking that particular wine or beer, and how this is expressed may have an impact on consumer behaviour.

Regarding the use and meaning-making in wine descriptions, the goal of wine reviewers “is to be as precise, apt, succinct and enticing as possible in order to conjure up the right sensations in the readers’ minds in a limited space. Variation along the continuum across the magazines is rather a matter of how entertaining, quick-witted, poetic or creative the wine writer wants to be to satisfy the needs of the intended readership” (Paradis 2010: 2).

The wine critic transforms the sensory perceptions into language and describes and evaluates the experience, an ability that is claimed to distinguish professionals from wine lovers. Paradis & Eeg-Olofsson (2013) investigate the linguistic resources used to describe sensory experience in the genre of wine reviews. Their research shows that reviews usually include the following perceptual domains of sensory experiences: vision, smell, taste and touch, plus more holistic remarks on the percipience of the experience. The authors claim that “[w]e cannot taste something without smelling something, and we cannot taste something without feeling something, and over and above everything is the sight of something” (Paradis & Eeg-Olofsson 2013: 17).

Wine reviews often make use of ontological domains with object descriptors that include visual as well as gustatory and tactile information, see Table 1. For instance, FRUIT includes descriptors such as apple and lemon, whilst BEVERAGES comprises coffee and tea, and MINERALS involves chalk and earth.
In line with cognitive linguistics, Paradis & Eeg-Olofsson also refer to synesthetic metonymies such as smoke, cherries, metaphors such as sweet nose, and similes like, as if, as though, remind and impression. An example from a wine review is “[t]his wine tasted like an iron fist in a velvet glove” (Paradis & Eeg-Olofsson 2013: 11-14).

While the description of the structure of a wine often relies on anatomical language, the overall evaluation of the wine is usually dependent on personification (Suárez-Toste 2007: 58-59). The personality of the wine is evaluated by qualification of human beings, for example brooding, assertive or expressive. See an example from a wine review:

Fermented in 85% new oak and matured in barrel for 18 months. A light yellow colour, this has a complex, restrained nose with nutty, creamy character. Delicious rich, savoury palate is quite elegant with some citrus notes. Impressive and quite classy, but expensive. Very good/excellent.

(Suárez-Toste 2007: 58-59)

Apart from the aroma descriptors and the sensations these objects produce, most of the descriptors in wine reviews are properties organised along scales of opposition (Paradis 2010: 8). The positive terms denote desirable qualities, whilst both too much and too little are negative aspects of a certain property. See Table 2 which indicates scale for acidity.
Interestingly, Breit claims that the most striking characteristic of wine tasting notes is the absence of negatively marked terms and objectionable features and the research shows that the majority of adjectives bring positive connotations (Breit 2013: 84).

2.3. Sensory Perception in Beer

Similar to wine sensory perception, there are four different aspects of beer that come under scrutiny during sensory evaluation, to determine the characteristics of the beer (Brewers Association and BJCP 2015):

- **Appearance**: how does the beer look? The visual aspect takes into account colour, clarity, carbonation and cleanliness.
- **Aroma**: how does the beer smell? Humans can perceive around 10,000 aromas.
- **Flavour**: how does the beer taste? The five tastes are sweet, bitter, sour, salty and umami.
- **Mouthfeel**: how does the beer feel? This takes into account carbonation, alcohol warming, mouth-coating, astringency, viscosity and body.
- **Overall Impression**: describes the essence of the style; those points that distinguish it from other styles and that make it unique.
Below is an example of a beer review, where the reviewer is guiding the reader through the tasting experience:

Pours a very deep dark mahogany with ruby red highlights, and a large tan head of tiny bubbles (almost looks like nitro). The head fades to a thin layer quickly, but more small and medium bubbles are generated when swirled. Moderately roasty (but not bitter) aroma with hints of peanut butter and light toffee; creamy like cappuccino and sweet chocolate. The flavor presents the peanut butter quite well, without the usual peanut butter oiliness, more like PB2 or PBFit powder. A nice debittered roastiness with moderate espresso coffee notes that lingers into an off-dry finish. Medium-high bittering balances out the peanut butter. There is substantial alcohol in this beer, but it is clean ethanol, and pleasantly balances the rest of the flavors. Hops are an afterthought both in the aroma and flavor, and come across as slightly earthy and slight floral. Full mouth-filling body with moderate carbonation, this beer finishes with a long coffee and chocolate note and nuttiness.

(beerconnoisseur.com)

As suggested by Giacalone et al. (2016), in particular the assessment of AROMA and FLAVOUR is crucial for brewers and sensory properties are essential for consumer acceptance. However, the level of expertise is associated with a better (i.e., more specific) use of sensory attributes and experts outperform novice assessors in verbalisation of sensory attributes. As the process of identifying descriptors in beer can be challenging as people smell, taste and react somewhat differently to the same flavours (craftbeer.com), the descriptive vocabulary functions as a reference point and makes the language of beer more accessible.

One of the UK’s most prominent beer writers is Pete Brown. He is the author of nine beer books, as well as broadcaster and consultant specialising in food and drink, has won numerous awards and is also the Chair of the British Guild of Beer Writers (petebrown.net). In a blog post, Brown reflects on tasting and expressing the sensory experience:

The vast majority of people who drink beer don’t spend too much time thinking about what’s going on in the mouth, and that’s fine – beer is a social lubricant, and while you’re drinking it, most of your attention is focused elsewhere. Just like when you read half a page of a book and realise you haven’t taken it in because you’ve been thinking about something else, or there’s music playing and you can’t recall what the last few songs were because you were listening to your friend talking, there’s a big difference between sensory stimulus being picked up by your mouth, nose, eyes etc., and your brain actually paying any attention to it. When we taste beer, as opposed to drinking it, the biggest difference is not in the size or shape of the glass, the sniffing and swirling; it’s in the simple act of directing your attention to the beer itself rather than anything else.

(Brown 2017)
As per Brown’s thoughts on tasting and evaluating beer, giving a number of characteristics is not the same as describing a beer to a reader, or for that person to be able appreciate the beer.

For this study, the following categories of descriptors are included to describe beer:

- Object descriptors: concrete objects, for example *orange, pine*
- Property descriptors: properties associated with objects, for example *sweet, bitter*
- Subjective descriptors: personal and experiential, for example *pleasant, balanced*
- Process descriptors: indicator of development, for example *lingering*
- Personification descriptors: human attributes, for example *thinker*

Next, section 3 presents established beer terminology and consumer awareness of craft beer buzzwords.
3. Established Beer Terminology

According to Caballero Rodríguez et al. (2018: 4), “[e]xpert sommeliers use a conventionalized set of scales to evaluate wine, and, with the exception of the color scale, these all have an oppositional structure.” Similarly, when communicating sensory information in tastings and reviews, beer sommeliers and other beer experts refer to established beer style guidelines and a beer flavour wheel, especially developed for the beer industry in the 1970s. These commonly used tools are described below.

3.1. Beer Flavour Wheel

A system of beer flavour terminology was developed in the late 1970s by joint working groups of the European Brewery Convention, the American Society of Brewing Chemists, and the Master Brewer's Association of the Americas (Meilgaard et al. 1979). Comparable flavour wheels also exist for wine, coffee, whisky and chocolate, breaking down the tasting experience into recognisable flavours presented in a simple format (Dredge 2013).

The purpose of the beer flavour wheel was to enable brewers to communicate the flavours of the beer and also to name and define each flavour note in beer. Combined into a beer flavour wheel, the sensory analysis tool presents descriptors of beer flavours and defects, and how they are related. Ultimately, when developed it was meant as a memory aid and not as a new system of classification of odours and tastes. Figure 1 shows the beer flavour wheel, now used as a standard in the industry.
As with research by Paradis & Eeg-Olofsson (2013) and the use of ontological domains with object descriptors in wine reviews (see section 2.2), the beer flavour wheel includes descriptors such as *fruity* in pink colour with sub-categories such as *strawberry*, *raspberry* and *pear*, or *sweet* in purple colour and sub-categories such as *vanilla*, *jam-like* and *honey*.
3.2. Beer Judge Certification Program

Founded in 1985, the BJCP certifies and ranks beer judges through an examination and monitoring process, sanction competitions, and provides educational resources for current and future judges (bjcp.org). The purpose of the BJCP program is to:

- Encourage knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the world's diverse beer, mead, and cider styles;
- Promote, recognize, and advance beer, mead, and cider tasting, evaluation, and communication skills; and
- Develop standardized tools, methods, and processes for the structured evaluation, ranking and feedback of beer, mead, and cider.

The BJCP Style Guidelines groups styles of beer, mead and cider to facilitate judging during competitions. Furthermore, continuous updates to the guidelines aim to:

address world beer styles as found in their local markets, keep pace with emerging craft beer market trends, describe historical beers now finding a following, better describe the sensory characteristics of modern brewing ingredients, take advantage of new research and references, and help competition organizers better manage the complexity of their events.

(bjcp.org)

Figure 2 shows the BJCP beer scoresheet, as used by certified beer judges in competitions to compare the sample to what is appropriate for that particular style. In addition to information about the judge and any unwanted flavours, the sheet includes sections for AROMA, APPEARANCE, FLAVOUR, MOUTHFEEL, and OVERALL IMPRESSION.
To exemplify how a beer description may look, Figure 3 shows the BJCP style 2C International Dark Lager. It includes the domains appearance, aroma, flavour and mouthfeel, as well as overall impression plus history and commercial examples.
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2C. International Dark Lager

**Overall Impression:** A darker and somewhat sweeter version of international pale lager with a little more body and flavor, but equally restrained in bitterness. The low bitterness leaves the malt as the primary flavor element, and the low hop levels provide very little in the way of balance.

**Aroma:** Little to no malt aroma; may have a light corn character. Medium-low to no roast and caramel malt aroma. Hop aroma may range from none to light spicy or floral hop presence. While a clean fermentation profile is generally most desirable, low levels of yeast character (such as a light apple fruitiness) are not a fault. A light amount of DMS or corn aroma is not a fault.

**Appearance:** Deep amber to dark brown with bright clarity and ruby highlights. Foam stand may not be long lasting, and is beige to light tan in color.

**Flavor:** Low to medium malty sweetness with medium-low to no caramel and/or roasted malt flavors (and may include hints of coffee, molasses or cocoa). Hop flavor ranges from none to low levels, and is typically floral, spicy, or herbal. Low to medium hop bitterness. May have a very light fruitiness. Moderately crisp finish. The balance is typically somewhat malty. Burnt or moderately strong roasted malt flavors are a defect.

**Mouthfeel:** Light to medium-light body. Smooth with a light creaminess. Medium to high carbonation.

**Comments:** A broad range of international lagers that are darker than pale, and not austerity bitter and/or roasted.

**History:** Darker versions of International Pale Lagers often created by the same large, industrial breweries and meant to appeal to a broad audience. Often either a colored or sweetened adaptation of the standard pale industrial lager, or a more broadly accessible (and inexpensive) version of more traditional dark lagers.

**Characteristics:** Two- or six-row barley, corn, rice, or sugars as adjuncts. Light use of caramel and darker malts. Commercial versions may use coloring agents.

**Style Comparison:** Less flavor and richness than Munich Dunkel, Schwarzbier, or other dark lagers. Frequently uses adjuncts, as is typical of other International Lagers.

**Vital Statistics:**
- OG: 1.044 – 1.056
- IBUs: 8 – 20
- FG: 1.008 – 1.012
- SRM: 14 – 22
- ABV: 4.2 – 6.0%

**Commercial Examples:** Baltika #4 Original, Devils Backbone Old Virginia Dark, Dixie Blackened Voodoo, Saint Paul Girl Dark, San Miguel Dark, Session Black Dark Lager, Shiner Bock

**Tags:** standard-strength, dark-color, bottom-fermented, lagered, traditional-style, dark-lager-family, malty

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**Figure 3: BJCP description (BJCP 2015: 4)**

Note that values for ABV and IBU are also included, which may explain why certain terms are used:

- **ABV (Alcohol-by-Volume)** is a measurement of the alcohol content of a solution in terms of the percentage volume of alcohol per volume of beer (craftbeer.com). A high ABV means high alcohol content and common terms may be *warmth, boozy,* and *heat.*

- **IBU (International Bittering Unit)** is a measurement of the bittering substances in beer (craftbeer.com). A high IBU translates to high bitterness and typical terms used may be *bitter, hoppy,* and *astringent.*
3.3. Consumer Awareness

There are tools for beer experts to use when describing beer, but how do consumers respond to the wide array of buzzwords flooding the market? A survey conducted by Harris Poll shows that 70% or more of consumers are aware of craft beer terminology such as traditional, hoppy and drinkable but less conscious of for instance juicy, herbal and tropical (Nielsen 2017). Figure 4 presents consumer awareness level of craft beer buzzwords.

![Figure 4: Consumer awareness of buzzwords (Nielsen 2017). Source: Harris Poll Craft Buzzwords Survey, May 19-23, 2017. *GABF: Great American Beer Festival.](image)

Furthermore, the survey shows that words such as drinkable and traditional are more likely to positively influence a consumer to buy the beer, while sour, hazy and funky are less likely to influence a purchase. Recognising the importance of consumer awareness, Nielsen advises retailers and brewers to build on the terms that consumers are aware of and have the highest influence on sales and to “remember that not every craft beer drinker is a connoisseur. Therefore, it’s important to educate consumers and broaden their awareness rather than add to the growing list of new buzzwords out there for them to decipher” (Nielsen 2017).
Highlighting the importance of addressing consumers appropriately, Brown criticises his own and many fellow experts’ use of industry terms perhaps to impress industry peers instead of simply describing the sensation of tasting the beer to the potential drinker:

A huge chunk of beer writing consists of tasting notes of different beers. But here’s my problem […] too often, tasting beer can descend into a pissing contest about who can pick up and identify what different elements are in the beer. Whether that’s correctly identifying the hops or malts used, or being able to ‘get’ notes of hibiscus, salted caramel, cuban cigars or whatever, I always worry that tasting notes along these lines are more about the taster than the beer. […] Is identifying a series of disparate parts and impressions the same thing as describing a beer, or appreciating it? I don’t think so.

(Brown 2017)

Seemingly, many beer experts are more concerned with providing accurate descriptions as per style guidelines rather than convey the actual sensation of tasting the beer.

Next, section 4 describes the method and data for the study.
4. Method and Data

The aim of this study is to investigate the terminology used in beer reviews with a focus on conveying the sensory experience. The primary sources and method are described below.

4.1. Data

In order to analyse common terminology used in beer reviews, the data for this study consists of written communication in the form of 27 online beer reviews, three for each beer style and magazine, randomly selected amongst a high number of online reviews available at three leading specialised beer magazines; All About Beer Magazine, Beer Connoisseur Magazine and Craft Beer & Brewing Magazine (see all reviews in appendix A-C).

- Established in 1979, the All About Beer Magazine is America’s leading beer magazine. It covers news, trends and events in celebration of beer culture through education, enjoyment and events (allaboutbeer.com).
- The Beer Connoisseur Magazine is described as the world's premier beer magazine with over 8-million readers annually, thus one of the highest read media sources covering the beer industry with the latest news, stories and reviews to both consumers and industry professionals (beerconnoisseur.com).
- The third beer magazine included in the study, the Craft Beer & Brewing Magazine, is also based in the United States. It has the highest newsstand distribution of any magazine in the craft beer market, and is distributed to more than 3,000 brewery and industry professionals (beerandbrewing.com).

The magazines were chosen for their position and reach. They are well-established and have a large audience in the beer industry, including consumers and professionals. The beer reviews included in the study have been written by industry experts, beer judges, tasting panels and staff writers with a knowledge about sensory analysis and industry terminology.
4.2. Methodology

The data used for this study consists of reviews of three specific beer styles. The styles chosen for this study are the following, with a short description to illustrate the different characteristics expected (beerandbrewing.com):

- **Double IPA**, also known as Imperial IPA. This is among the most popular new beer styles. The best of them are considered astonishingly bitter, but balance this with dry malt structure and explosive hop aromatics.
- **Imperial Stout** is one of the richest and strongest of beer styles. Most show a rich black colour, sharp bitterness balanced against notable residual sugar, and waves of dark fruit melded with chocolatey, coffee-like roast, sometimes trending into liquorice notes.
- **Fruit Lambic**, and in this case Kriek, is made by adding large amounts of black Schaerbeek cherries to 6-month old blended lambic beer or sour brown ale. The beer is often acidic and complex, with rosé colouring and attenuated fruit flavours.

The styles were chosen to capture a variety of descriptors based on the characteristics of these particular styles; relating to *hops* and *malt* for Double IPA, *coffee* and *chocolate* for Imperial Stout, and *cherry* and *complex* for Fruit Lambic.

After selection of a number of beer reviews in English, the descriptors used for **APPEARANCE**, **AROMA**, **FLAVOUR**, **MOUTHFEEL** and **OVERALL IMPRESSION** were manually analysed and presented per beer style. The data reflects both descriptors included and the most frequently used terms. The results have also been given context with examples and compared to results in related research in the genre of wine reviews and tasting.

4.3. Validity and Reliability

The beer reviews included in this study have been written by well-established beer judges, beer magazine staff and beer tasting panels. The reviews have been selected randomly, without any knowledge whether the beers reviewed have the required characteristics of the intended styles, and without consideration to the rating (if specified) of that particular beer.
A broader or different selection of beer reviews may have provided different results and showed more consumer-friendly descriptions. Whether these particular beer reviews have actually helped consumers understand what is expected from a certain beer is not known. Furthermore, it has not been established whether consumer behaviour has been affected in any way based on these particular beer reviews.

The following section 5 presents the results of the study.
5. Results and Discussion

The three beer styles featured in the study are presented below. Each part includes a table with descriptors for APPEARANCE, AROMA, FLAVOUR and MOUTHFEEL, as well as OVERALL IMPRESSION, and compared to BJCP’s description of characteristics for that particular style.

5.1. Double IPA

Table 3 shows the descriptors used for Double IPA, BJCP category 22A. ABV is 7.5-10% (high alcohol) and IBU is 60-120 (high bitterness).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Double IPA</th>
<th>Descriptors used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPEARANCE</td>
<td>apricot, big, bright, caramel, clear, creamy, dark, fluffy, gold, golden, haze, hazy, light yellow, lingers, off-white, orange, ruddy amber, thick, tight, unbleached lace, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AROMA</td>
<td>alcohol, biscuit, blueberry hops, bread crust, bright, buttery, candied citrus, candied vanilla caramel wafers, capers, caramel malt sweetness, citrus, clean, crackery, dank, dark, diacetyl, ethanol, floral, fruit, fruity, gin, graham biscuit, grany, grapefruit, grassy, honeysuckle, hop, hop bomb, hops, lemon, lemon peel, lemongrass, lemony, light, malt, mango, melon, onion, orange, orange juice, orange zest, papaya, pear, pine, pine resin, pineapple, resin, spicy, stone fruits, sweet, sweetness, tangerine, white chocolate-dipped, white milk chocolate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLAVOUR</td>
<td>acidic, alcohol, big, biscuit, bitter, bitterness, blueberry, blueberry jam, bread crust, bready, candied citrus, Christmas tree, citrus, dank, dankness, dry, earthy, ethanal, fruit, fruitiness, fruity, graham crackers, grany, grapefruit, grapefruit rind, hop, hop balance, hop bitterness, hop-forward, hopped-up, hopiness, hops, hops bitterness, juicy, lemon, light, malt, mango, orange, orange juice, pine, pine resin, piney, pithy, resin, resin bitterness, rich, spicy, stone fruit, sweet, sweetness, tangerine tropical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOUTHFEEL</td>
<td>alcohol, alcoholic heat, astringency, astringent, big body, biting prickling sensation, boozier, boozzy, dry, heat, light creaminess, medium body, medium-full body, medium-low body, medium-low carbonation, warms, warmth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPRESSION</td>
<td>aggressive, assertive, balanced, beautifully executed, big, big boy, bold, boozier, booziness, boozzy, bright, build, clean, complex, complexity, distinct, drinkability, drinkable, enticing, excellent, forward, fresh, goodness, hangs on, heavier, huge, intense, interesting, Jekyll &amp; Hyde, light, lingering, lingers, massive, moderate, nice, off-balanced, overwhelm, overwhelming, perfect, prevalent, prominent, pronounced, restrained, rich, smooth, solid, stalwart, sturdy, subdued, unexpected, unique, unusual, unwelcome, vibrant, warmth, well-blended, world-class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
See also illustrated in a few examples from beer reviews:

This massive double IPA pours a bright orange color. The off-white head is tight and lingers nicely. This has to be a hop bomb based on the smell. Pineapple, grapefruit and orange zest dominate the nose, maybe with a little pear hiding back there. When it hits your lips you are greeted by the flavors that we found in the nose. While this is a hopped-up beer, it is moderately balanced by an unexpected sweetness. The finish is big, bitter, fruity and perfect for a hophead!

(allaboutbeer.com)

The flavor is mirrored by the aroma with big, bold hop notes that are full of dank, stone fruit and blueberry jam elements. The small amount of malt sweetness balances these massive hop notes. The finish is dry with a lingering fruit character from the hops. It is hard to discern that this is a Double IPA because it doesn’t have that expected overwhelming alcoholic punch. […] This highly hop-forward Double IPA has some interesting hop characteristics that slightly deviate from the usual suspects of citrus notes “du jour.” The hop balance is such that it doesn’t undermine the malt backbone, so you better drink it -- it’s excellent!

(beerconnoisseur.com)

As per the BJCP style guidelines, the first beer style Double IPA is described as “[a]n intensely hoppy, fairly strong pale ale without the big, rich, complex maltiness and residual sweetness and body of an American barleywine” (BJCP 2015: 42). Colour ranges from golden to light orange-copper with good clarity and a persistent off-white head. In the aroma, Double IPA typically showcases hop characteristics such as citrus, floral, pine, resinous, spicy, tropical fruit, stone fruit, berry, and melon. Some versions can have an additional resinous or grassy aroma, and clean malty sweetness may be found in the background and fruitiness may also be detected. Usually, the hop flavour is strong and complex with the same characteristics as in the aroma. A long, lingering bitterness is common in the aftertaste but should not be harsh. This beer is dry to medium-dry and should not be sweet or heavy.
5.2. Imperial Stout

Table 4 presents the descriptors used for Imperial Stout, BJCP category 20C. ABV is 8-12% (high alcohol) and IBU is 50-90 (medium-high bitterness).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Descriptors for Imperial Stout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperial Stout</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPEARANCE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AROMA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FLAVOUR</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOUTHFEEL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL IMPRESSION</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two beer reviews showcase the sensory perception of Imperial Stouts:

Well, it tastes a lot like a stout. One brewed with coffee beans and cocoa, as this one is. It’s more copper than golden in color and it has a thin head that stickily laces the glass. It’s boozy and more thin on the mouthfeel than one might expect. The more you drink the more the coffee takes over with a slap of acidity associated with a cup o’ joe that’s been on the burner too long and then left to get cold over hours. […] Is it really a stout? That’s for you to judge. But, if you just close your eyes and take a drink, you won’t be able to tell the difference.

(allaboutbeer.com)
Rich, decadent, creamy, without being overly sweet or cloying. The peanut butter and coffee are really well done. They add nice complexity but are balanced with the base beer. The overall balance throughout is really well done, the aroma is warm and inviting, the beer rich and complex, and you’re left with a lingering balance of chocolate and peanut butter with roast and coffee.

(beerandbrewing.com)

By BJCP, the second beer style Imperial Stout is defined as “[a]n intensely-flavored, big, dark ale with a wide range of flavor balances and regional interpretations” (BJCP 2015: 36). In terms of appearance, colour ranges from very dark reddish-brown to jet black with a deep tan to dark brown head. The aroma tends to be rich and complex with roasted grains, maltiness, fruity esters, hops, and alcohol. The roasted malt can take on coffee, dark chocolate, or slightly burnt tones, and there may be a dark fruit character present with plums, prunes, and raisins. Here, the flavour may be rich, deep, complex with the same descriptors as for aroma. The malt may also show some supporting caramel, bready or toasty flavours, and the finish can vary from relatively dry to moderately sweet with hop bitterness and warming character.
5.3. Fruit Lambic

Table 5 presents the descriptors used for Fruit Lambic, BJCP category 23F. ABV is 5.0-7.0% (medium alcohol) and IBU is 0-10 (low bitterness).

Table 5: Descriptors for Fruit Lambic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit Lambic</th>
<th>Descriptors used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPEARANCE</td>
<td>amber, cherry soda, crystal clear, deep, deep clarity, deep red, frothy, gorgeous, gushing punk, lacy, low pink, murky red, nice, pink fizzy, reddish-brown, rose, ruby red, rusty, well-formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AROMA</td>
<td>acetic, acidity, aged sherry, almond, banana, black cherry, bubble gum, cherries, cherry, cherry pie filling, cidery, cinnamon, clove, complex, cranberry, creamy, dark cherry, dark soil, depth, earthy, farmyard, fruitiness, fruity, gentle, goaty, grainy, horse blanket, horse-blanket, lactic, lemon, light, malt, mushroom, mustiness, nuts, pie cherries, rich, ripe cherry, sour, sour cherry, sourness, spice, spicy, sweetness, tart, tartness, vanilla, wheaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLAVOUR</td>
<td>acidic, acidity, almond, banana, barnyard, bitterness, bone-dry, cherries, cherry, cherry pie filling, cherry stone, clean, clove, complex, crisp, dark cherry, dark red fruit, deep, dry, earthy, farmyard, fresh, fruit, fruity, funk, funkiness, funky, goaty, grapefruit, hop bitterness, hops, Kool-Aid, lactic, lemon, malt, maltiness, mild bitterness, mild oak, mouth-puckering, oak woodiness, peppery, phenolic, plum, puckering, rich, sherry, sour, sour candy, sourness, spiced, subtle, sweet, sweetness, tame, tannin, tart, tartness, toasted oak, woody, woody vanillin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOUTHFEEL</td>
<td>bone-dry, creamy edge, dry, highly carbonated, light-bodied, warmth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL IMPRESSION</td>
<td>adventuresome, appealing, authentic, bright, brooding, challenging, classic, complex, complexity, easy, enjoyable, epic, good, gorgeous, great, intense, interesting, intriguing, inviting, kiddy-fruit, linger, nice, non-offensive, puckery-y, quaffable, refreshing, restrained, serious, soda-popy, solid, stunning, subdued, subtle, sweet, tame, tasty, typical, uncomplicatedly, uncompromising, well balanced, well-balanced, well-suited, wild, world-class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below are a few examples from the study’s beer reviews of Fruit Lambic:

The cherries did add some nice sweet and tart character, but the base beer seemed a bit tame for a lambic. All in all, it’s a great sour for the masses or those looking to see what sours are all about without getting their taste buds assaulted.

(beerconnoisseur.com)
Tartness overpowers with slight hints of phenolic notes, cherry and grapefruit. A more adventuresome sour—very wild tasting. Tart and dry. This beer requires adjustment—the more I drank it the more I enjoyed it. The complexities of the beer were intriguing, and the tart finish made me want to drink another sip.

(beerandbrewing.com)

The third beer style Fruit Lambic is described as “[a] complex, fruity, pleasantly sour, wild wheat ale fermented by a variety of Belgian microbiota, and showcasing the fruit contributions blended with the wild character” (BJCP 2015: 47). The most traditional styles of fruit lambics include kriek (with cherries), framboise (with raspberries) and druivenlambik (with muscat grapes). Appearance depends on the fruit used, usually with good clarity. The specified fruit should be the dominant aroma, so in this case cherries, which blends with other aromas such as barnyard, earthy, goaty, hay, horsey, and horse blanket. Flavour includes the same tones as in the aroma and the finish is usually dry and tart, but sweetness may be present and a mild vanilla and/or oak flavour is sometimes noticeable.
5.4. Frequency of Terms

Some of the descriptors occur more than once and this additional section presents the most frequently used words plus some unusual terms and expressions. Table 6 presents the most frequently used descriptors per beer style, as well as related terms for that descriptor.

Table 6: Most frequent terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Related terms</th>
<th>Beer style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPEARANCE</td>
<td>bright</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>clear</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hazy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>haze</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>opaque black</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>nitro, dark black, dark as the night</td>
<td>Imperial Stout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ruby red</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>deep red, murky red, reddish-brown, rusty</td>
<td>Fruit Lambic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AROMA</td>
<td>cherry</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>black cherry, cherries, cherry pie filling, dark cherry, pie cherries, ripe cherry, sour cherry</td>
<td>Fruit Lambic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>grapefruit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>citrus, lemon, lemon peel, lemongrass, lemony, orange, orange juice, orange zest</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>cappuchino, dark roast coffee, espresso, mocha</td>
<td>Imperial Stout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chocolate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>dark chocolate, powdered cocoa</td>
<td>Imperial Stout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pine</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>pine resin, resin</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>earthy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>farmyard, goaty, horse blanket, mushroom, mustiness</td>
<td>Fruit Lambic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLAVOUR</td>
<td>cherry</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>cherries, cherry pie filling, cherry stone, dark cherry</td>
<td>Fruit Lambic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tart</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>tartness</td>
<td>Fruit Lambic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>espresso coffee</td>
<td>Imperial Stout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chocolate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>chocolate-covered espresso bean, dark chocolate, dark cocoa, dark-roasted chocolate, milk-chocolate</td>
<td>Imperial Stout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hops</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>hop, hop balance, hop bitterness, hop-forward, hopped-up, hoppiness, hops bitterness</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bitterness</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>bitter, hop bitterness, hops bitterness, resin bitterness</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOUTHFEEL</td>
<td>dry</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dry</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>bone-dry</td>
<td>Fruit Lambic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>warmth</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>heat, warms</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alcohol</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>boozy, alcohol warmth</td>
<td>Imperial Stout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL IMPRESSION</td>
<td>nice</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lingering</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>hangs on, lingers</td>
<td>Double IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lingering</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>lingers</td>
<td>Imperial Stout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>complexity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>complex</td>
<td>Fruit Lambic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rich</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Imperial Stout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>well-balanced</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Fruit Lambic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.5. Insights

The results show that aroma in Double IPA is most frequently described with ontological terms such as grapefruit and pine, in Imperial Stout with coffee and chocolate, and in Fruit Lambic with cherry. Also property descriptors are commonly used, such as earthy, resinous and sour. In the beer glossary developed by DRAFT Magazine (draftmag.com), earthy means having a smell or flavour of soil or woody vegetation, whilst resinous implies pine-or sap-like tastes or aroma. The term sour refers to a tart, sharp, usually acidic and sometimes puckering flavour. The styles also include subjective descriptors, for instance complex for Fruit Lambic, which refers to being multifaceted in flavour and/or aroma.

The flavour of beer is equally complex to aroma, and it is also during this stage of evaluation that bitterness is first perceived. As with aroma, the most frequent terms of flavour are object and property descriptors. Again, common object descriptors relate to the ingredients in beer, hops and malt. Taste sensations are also often described using property descriptors such as hoppy, grainy and spicy. The term hoppy means having a high quantity of hops or hop characteristics such as bitter, floral, citrusy or herbal (draftmag.com). With grainy means the scent of flavours of grain, cereal, rice or barley, and finally spicy refers to having strong tastes or aromas of spices. Fruit Lambic includes subjective descriptors such as mouth-puckering and tame. Also on flavour, the three styles are in line with the description provided by BJCP with Double IPA most frequently described with hops and bitterness, Imperial Stout with coffee and chocolate, and Fruit Lambic with cherry and tart.

As per the BJCP style guides, the domain appearance takes into account colour, clarity, carbonation and cleanliness. The most frequent terms are property descriptors associated with objects such as bright and hazy referring to clarity in Double IPA, as well as colour references opaque black, nitro and dark black for Imperial Stout and ruby red as well as varieties such as deep red and reddish-brown for Fruit Lambic.

Mouthfeel also includes mostly property descriptors with frequent term being dry for both Double IPA and Fruit Lambic, as well as warmth and heat and other references to alcohol. An exception is the use of vicious for Imperial Stout, referring to a human-like trait.
TERMINOLOGY IN BEER REVIEWS

As with AROMA and FLAVOUR, the categories object and property plus subjective descriptors are used to describe OVERALL IMPRESSION. For instance, aggressive translates to forceful and refreshing refers to the sensation of satisfying thirst (draftmag.com). However, some terms are more elaborate and relate to process and development, for instance lingering, or personification such as adventuresome, big boy and wild.

Breit emphasises how positive connotations in wine reviews can make the product more desirable (see section 2.3) and these beer reviews use mostly positive terms and expressions. For instance, nice is one of the most frequent descriptors. Also words relating to intensity or scale are common such as strong – weak, big – small, high – medium – low. Noted is also that very is often used to stress positivity further. See the following examples, the first including the positive nice and the second demonstrating the use of very in contrast to no/not:

A nice mix of floral and fruity bright hops. Grapefruit and honeysuckle. A touch of malt biscuit and bread crust character. The net effect is more amber ale than IIPA, but quite nice.

(beerandbrewing.com)

Very, very tart. If there were more cherries but the same amount of sweetness it would be perfect for me. If you like mouth-puckering sour candy, then you would like this beer. Enjoyable and left me wanting to drink more.

(beerandbrewing.com)

Another notable resemblance to the genre of wine reviews is the use of similes as mentioned by Paradis & Eeg-Olofsson (see section 2.2), for instance using like to compare the characteristic with a certain object. This is illustrated in two examples:

Moderately roasty (but not bitter) aroma with hints of peanut butter and light toffee; creamy like cappuccino and sweet chocolate. The flavor presents the peanut butter quite well, without the usual peanut butter oiliness, more like PB2 or PBFit powder.

(beerconnoisseur.com)

The taste is pleasantly acidic, like a dry wine, with just enough cherry flavor to provide balance. The traditional "barnyard character" is evident in the finish. Serve in flutes as an aperitif with hors d'oeuvres.

(allaboutbeer.com)
TERMINOLOGY IN BEER REVIEWS

Standing out from the rather stiff use of object and property descriptors is particularly the reviewers’ final evaluations included in the OVERALL IMPRESSION part of the appraisals, aimed to distinguish the beer from other styles and mirror what is truly unique with more dynamic expressions to entice the reader. Consider for instance the below:

First thing that catches my eye is the packaging. I like the down-stated classic style label and love the cinnamon roll-esque double dipped bronze and cream colored wax neck. This beer pours a very dark black with deep brown head that when swirled reminds me of a café latte. You pick up the cinnamon quickly in the nose but it in no way overpowers the espresso. Take a sip and bam! The dark-roasted chocolate and coffee notes tango with the spicy cinnamon flavors in perfect harmony. It is so well done you’ll think you can taste the frosting!

(allaboutbeer.com)

Drink this in front of the fireplace, in a snifter, and enjoy it slowly to let it warm up. Or in an outside hot tub when it's snowing. Be sure to have a bunch of nice hot croissants slathered with raspberry jam to snack on - and you'll get a tasty PB and J!

(beerconnoisseur.com)

The more freely expressed views by the beer experts, where the consumer can imagine not just the beer itself but also the situation in which they would drink it (in front of the fireplace), provide a more vibrant description and evokes a sense of curiosity, which is probably more likely to influence the consumer to purchase the products (see section 3.3).

The next section 6 concludes the study.
6. Conclusion

Beer is made from a minimum of four ingredients (water, barley, hops, yeast), and each of these raw materials contribute to a wide range of aromas and flavours. With more than 100 different beer styles available, a broader variety of descriptors in beer reviews might be expected. However, as in the case of wine reviews and as per Brown’s criticism of beer experts’ frequent use of industry terms, the three beer styles in this study include mostly object descriptors relating to the ingredients.

Despite wine and beer stemming from different raw materials and production methods, the results of this study show that beer reviews are comparable linguistically to the genre of wine reviews in terms of the categories of descriptors that are identified and used by the reviewers. Most frequently, object descriptors based around ontological or related words that originate from the raw materials are included. In terms of beer, the descriptors are related to hops, malt and yeast as well as bi-products.

The typical descriptors are also in line with what is expected according to established terminology as per the Beer Flavour Wheel and the BJCP style guidelines for respective style. Double IPAs are explained with words such as hops, grain, fruit and spicy. The Imperial Stouts are typically described with coffee, chocolate, rich and boozy. And the Fruit Lambics are labelled with cherry, tart, earthy and complex.

Not surprisingly as the assessment of AROMA and FLAVOUR is important for brewers and essential for consumer acceptance, as per Giacalone et al., the highest volume of descriptors in the study relates to these two domains. APPEARANCE and MOUTHFEEL both have few descriptors and mostly relating to property, whilst OVERALL IMPRESSION is the most elaborate domain with more process related words such as lingering as well as human-like traits. Presumably, after describing what is expected of the particular beer style, the reviewers have more freedom in the OVERALL IMPRESSION to convey what is truly unique with that beer.
The beer reviews certainly follow what is expected based on the sensory experience in wine reviews, guiding the reader through vision, smell, taste and touch as suggested by Paradis & Eeg-Olofsson. Unfortunately, the reviewers provide somewhat dry and stiff lists of tasting terms, perhaps in order to be accurate or impress each other internally rather than conveying the sensation of drinking the beer. Possibly the reviewers in question have conducted similar training based on industry terminology. If they have indeed studied the same style guidelines, this may also explain the lack of variety in language used.

The study improves the understanding of how sensory perception of beer is conveyed to consumers. Further studies could build on these findings about terminology commonly used in beer reviews and relate to awareness as well as response amongst consumers.
References


Appendix A: Data from All About Beer Magazine

Beer style: Double IPA

Review 1:
Link: http://allaboutbeer.com/review/lorenzini-double-ipa/
Beer: Lorenzini Double IPA
Brewery: Maui Brewing Co.
ABV: 7.6%
IBU: 75

Text:
Drink beer, save sharks. The latest limited can offering from Maui Brewing Co. brings the juice from the island of Maui. With a portion of proceeds from each can benefitting the Shark Research Group at the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, this release tells you all you need to experience when tropical and hops go together. Brewed with blood orange juice, Maui cane sugar, and the combination of Azacca, El Dorado and Sorachi Ace hops, the core ingredients bring an aroma heavy on lemon, orange juice, citrus and a slight astringency. The big, bright IPA is clear and caramel, though not much of the caramel color comes through on the palate. There’s a very acidic finish, as opposed to maybe a traditional hop bitterness, due to the high alpha acids in the hop bill. The lingering orange juice on the finish makes me want another. Mahalo!

Review 2:
Link: http://allaboutbeer.com/review/hopocalypse-double-ipa/
Beer: Hopocalypse Double IPA
Brewery: Drake’s Brewing Co.
ABV: 9.3%
IBU: 100

Text:
This massive double IPA pours a bright orange color. The off-white head is tight and lingers nicely. This has to be a hop bomb based on the smell. Pineapple, grapefruit and orange zest dominate the nose, maybe with a little pear hiding back there. When it hits your lips you are greeted by the flavors that we found in the nose. While this is a hopped-up beer, it is moderately balanced by an unexpected sweetness. The finish is big, bitter, fruity and perfect for a hophead!

Review 3:
Link: http://allaboutbeer.com/article/single-hop-citra-imperial-ipa/
Beer: Single Hop Citra Imperial IPA
Brewery: Flying Dog Brewery
ABV: 10%
IBU: 70

Text:
This beer pours a dark gold color, slightly lighter than most Imperial IPAs, however. The nose is very bright with lemon and grapefruit. Upon first sip, you get a slightly bready and grainy flavor. The hops hit intensely right away with the same citrus notes in the nose. This big boy finishes with some heat and huge bitterness that hangs on.

Beer style: Imperial Stout

Review 1:
Link: http://allaboutbeer.com/review/stochasticity-project-master-of-disguise/
Beer: Stochasticity Project Master of Disguise
Brewery: Stone Brewing Co.
ABV: 9.7%
IBU: 55

Text:
Yup. You read that right. A golden stout. An imperial one as well. Because, why the hell not? In a beer world where we can have black IPA, black Saison, even a black Kölsch, why shouldn’t we have a traditionally dark
beer made and presented in a lighter color. And it’s fitting that Stone, those boundary-pushing scallywags, be the one to release it. As part of the brewery’s side project of beers, there’s the typical long story screened onto the 22-oz bottle that uses big words and flowery sentences. Something about dumb luck … anyway, what’s the freak of brewing science taste like?

Well, it tastes a lot like a stout. One brewed with coffee beans and cocoa, as this one one is. It’s more copper than golden in color and it has a thin head that stickily laces the glass. It’s boozy and more thin on the mouthfeel than one might expect. The more you drink the more the coffee takes over with a slap of acidity associated with a cup o’ joe that’s been on the burner too long and then left to get cold over hours. There’s a citrus hop note that bounces around the palate, never quite settling long enough in one place to make an impression. It finishes with a slight alcohol astringency burn.

One of the great things about American brewers is their willingness to experiment. This is a perfect example of that ingenuity and determination. Is it really a stout? That’s for you to judge. But, if you just close your eyes and take a drink, you won’t be able to tell the difference.

**Review 2:**
Beer: Cinnamon Roll’d W-n-B Coffee Oatmeal Stout
Brewery: Terrapin Beer Co.
ABV: 9.4%
IBU: 50

Text:
First thing that catches my eye is the packaging. I like the down-stated classic style label and love the cinnamon roll-esque double dipped bronze and cream colored wax neck. This beer pours a very dark black with deep brown head that when swirled reminds me of a café latte. You pick up the cinnamon quickly in the nose but it in no way overpowers the espresso. Take a sip and bam! The dark-roasted chocolate and coffee notes tango with the spicy cinnamon flavors in perfect harmony. It is so well done you’ll think you can taste the frosting!

**Review 3:**
Link: [http://allaboutbeer.com/review/woodcut-7/](http://allaboutbeer.com/review/woodcut-7/)
Beer: Woodcut No. 7
Brewery: Odell Brewing Co.
ABV: 12.5%
IBU: -

Text:
Woodcut No. 7 pours like black silk with a true brown head. Smell is complex with soy sauce, wheat toast and the usual coffee and chocolate suspects. Mouthfeel is viscous. This is the complete package with all the flavors you would expect from a Russian imperial stout, with a slight alcohol but a wonderful soft, round finish—probably coming from the new oak. Just like with all of Odell’s beer, it is exciting to open and experience and we are always fighting over the extra, if there is any!

Beer style: Fruit Lambic

**Review 1:**
Link: [http://allaboutbeer.com/review/chapeau-kriek/](http://allaboutbeer.com/review/chapeau-kriek/)
Beer: Chapeau Kriek
Brewery: Brouwerij De Troch
ABV: 3.5%
IBU: -

Text:
Some of you may remember De Troch’s Chapeau as a kind of soda-poppy, kiddy-fruit lambic aimed at people who wanted something sweet and easy. Well, let me tell you … It still is. While the rich cherry aromas promise something quite interesting, the overly fizzy beer just doesn’t deliver. The cherry is uncomplicatedly sweet and trails off into a Kool-Aid finish that’s mercilessly long. Have a pretzel and go get a pilsner.

- Lew Bryson
I’ll state my prejudice right away: I am not a fan of sweetened lambics made with fruit flavors rather than real fruit. And from the looks and smell of this deep red brew, and the “natural cherry flavor” noted on the label, I’d say that’s just what this is. The nose is all cherry pie filling, with vanilla in back, while the taste hits the palate with a slap of fruity sweetness before adding a hint of tartness in the second half and finish. I might pair it with chocolate cake, but not much else.
- Stephen Beaumont

Review 2:
Link: http://allaboutbeer.com/review/cascade-kriek-ale/
Beer: Cascade Kriek Ale
Brewery: Cascade Brewing / Raccoon Lodge & Brewpub
ABV: 7.4%
IBU: -

Text:
If you’re looking for a cherry beer that’s syrupy-sweet, move along. But if you’re seeking a pucker-y, complex kriek, look no further. Cascade’s creation is not for the faint of heart or weak of palate, and that’s a good thing. Pouring a murky red with a frothy head that quickly dissipates, bursts of sour pie cherries and a pinch of cinnamon (although none of the spice is added) race out of the bottle after uncorking. The flavors are very similar to the aromas, with a touch of oak woodiness and a bone-dry finish that leaves you yearning for more. Good thing Cascade Kriek comes to us in a 750 ml bottle!
- Lisa Morrison

Ignore the playfully-colorful label: the nose of this beer confirms that it is a very serious kriek that panders not one bit to commercialism – it’s tart, acetic, earthy and cidery, with a distinct farmyard character that pushes creamy cherry aromas firmly into the background. When tasted, acidity attacks the palate. Subtle cherry flavours and funky farmyard notes sit bone-dry on the tongue while wood ageing ensures some tannin and mild oak presence. The finish continues to be acidic and challenging, with cherry notes becoming more prominent the more you sip. A truly uncompromising drink for lovers of sour ales.
- Jeff Evans

Review 3:
Link: http://allaboutbeer.com/review/cherry-2000-kriek-style-ale/
Beer: Cherry 2000, Kriek-Style Ale
Brewery: North East Brewing Co.
ABV:
IBU:

Text:
Although I dislike the description "Belgian Kriek Lambic Style," the comparison with spontaneously fermented Belgian beer is obvious. Bottled in a sparkling wine bottle with both a cork and a crown, the aroma that escapes when the cork is removed is astoundingly authentic and lambic like. So is the color–rose with strong amber overtones. The slight head disappears immediately, unfortunately too often a characteristic of these distinctive brews. The taste is pleasantly acidic, like a dry wine, with just enough cherry flavor to provide balance. The traditional "barnyard character" is evident in the finish. Serve in flutes as an aperitif with hors d'oeuvres.
- Charles Finkel

A stunning achievement for an American brewery! Indeed, it has many of the complex characteristics associated with lambic-style beers. But I suppose there’s always a twist, and here a hybridized character emerges with hops lending bitterness not usually associated with Belgian-brewed lambics. Dry, well balanced acidity offers some refreshing experiences, particularly with fish, poultry and other white meats.
- Charlie Papazian

It's labeled "Belgian Kriek Lambic Style" but there's no other information. Is it fermented with wild yeast or with a lambic culture from a laboratory? Gorgeous, gushing pink in the glass with a sour aroma and a hint of "horse blanket." Tart and sour in the mouth, followed by a long, quenching finish that becomes dry. There's not a lot of cherry aroma or flavor and it lacks the stunning sourness of a true Belgian kriek, but it's highly quaffable.
- Roger Protz
Appendix B: Data from Beer Connoisseur Magazine

Beer style: Double IPA

Review 1:
Link: https://beerconnoisseur.com/review/88-rating-4th-anniversary-double-ipa-garage-brewing-co
Beer: 4th Anniversary Double IPA
Brewery: Garage Brewing Co.
ABV: 8.3%
IBU: 88

Text:
This hazy Double IPA leads with ethanol and hop bitterness, followed by unusual, but interesting, aromas of white milk chocolate and aggressive resin flavors. It starts with a moderate aroma of lemon peel, well-blended pine resin, candied vanilla caramel wafers, and white milk chocolate. Pine resin and white chocolate-dipped buttery graham biscuit notes come forward after a few minutes. The Double IPA is a hazy ruddy amber color with a creamy unbleached lace-colored head that creates a patchy film on the top of the beer. The first sip is pine resin forward, followed quickly by graham crackers coated in aggressive hop bitterness with a lingering pithy aftertaste. Overtime, heat coats my mouth and warms my lips, tongue, and throat. The medium body combined with medium plus carbonation causes a biting prickling sensation exacerbated by alcoholic heat. Drinkability is a hallmark of the Double IPA style (2015 Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) Category 22A). However, here the diacetyl as well as intense ethanol and resin bitterness character, creates an off-balanced beer. I was able to tame some, but not all, of the aggressive hop bitterness with four-year old Pacific Northwest cheddar. Overall, the whole is greater than its parts.

Review 2:
Link: https://beerconnoisseur.com/review/82-rating-snag-drop-cape-may-brewing-co
Beer: Snag & Drop
Brewery: Cape May Brewing Co.
ABV: 10%
IBU: -

Text:
Snag & Drop by Cape May Brewing refers to itself as a Triple IPA, but this doesn’t exist under the BJCP guidelines, therefore it falls under the high end of a Double IPA and will be judged as such by BJCP 2015 Category 22A. It meets all of the parameters of the double IPA, just a bit boozier. It pours a light yellow color with a golden hue, fluffy white head and a slight haze. The aroma has a light crackery, grainy malt with a wide blend of hop character – pine/resin, floral, candied citrus (orange/lemon/grapefruit) and sweet tropical (mango, papaya). As the beer warms, the fruit fades and the pine resin and grassy notes come forward along with prevalent alcohol. The flavor features the same notes, pine forward and heavier on the candied citrus (orange/lemon). It has a high bitterness without an astringent, dry finish and medium-low body that keeps the malt restrained much better than most triple IPAs I’ve had. These elements, however, also let the alcohol build and overwhelm. This beer was a bit Jekyll & Hyde for me. On the positive side it was clean and smooth with lots of candied citrus & sweet tropical hops and light alcohol warmth. On a more negative note, it had an overwhelming booziness that overtook all of the complexity of the beer, leaving behind pine & bitterness to compete.

Review 3:
Link: https://beerconnoisseur.com/review/95-rating-clencher-buckledown-brewing
Beer: Clencher
Brewery: BuckleDown Brewing
ABV: 8.1%
IBU: 75

Text:
This beer poured a bright golden color with a big, thick white head that displayed excellent retention. No carbonation bubbles were visible in the glass.
In the aroma, a big hop character in the forefront is dank, spicy and lemony. No fruitiness is present and the nose is very clean with a very low caramel malt sweetness.

The flavor is mirrored by the aroma with big, bold hop notes that are full of dank, stone fruit and blueberry jam elements. The small amount of malt sweetness balances these massive hop notes. The finish is dry with a lingering fruit character from the hops. It is hard to discern that this is a Double IPA because it doesn’t have that expected overwhelming alcoholic punch.

The mouthfeel has a light creaminess from the medium-low carbonation, and the medium-full body has no astringency or warmth. Overall, this is a beautifully executed beer.

This highly hop-forward Double IPA has some interesting hop characteristics that slightly deviate from the usual suspects of citrus notes “du jour.” The hop balance is such that it doesn’t undermine the malt backbone, so you better drink it -- it’s excellent!

Beer style: Imperial Stout

Review 1:
Link: https://beerconnoisseur.com/review/judges-review-85-rating-vanishing-point-01-innis-gunn-brewing-co
Beer: Vanishing Point 01
Brewery: Innis & Gunn Brewing Co.
ABV: 11%
IBU: -

Text:
Vanishing Point 01 by Innis & Gunn is a bourbon barrel-aged imperial stout and is being evaluated as a Wood-Aged Beer (2015 BJCP Style Guidelines category 33A). The best wood-aged beers have a solid base style that is well-complemented by the wood and spirits. The Vanishing Point series by Innis & Gunn will be "small batch Limited Editions that are bold and pioneering, pushing the boundaries of brewing". This first edition has been aged in bourbon barrels for six months.

This Imperial Stout pours the expected opaque black color with a small tan head. The aroma is moderate roasted and caramel malts with rich dark and dried fruits of plums and prunes. A hint of vanilla and tobacco are apparent. The body is medium-full, lightly carbonated, and quite smooth. The flavor is rich roasted and caramel malts with dark fruits and hints of vanilla, tobacco and dark chocolate. The finish is lightly bitter with a light tannic astringency and a lingering roasted malt. This is a very pleasant, smooth, rich and deceptively strong (at 11% abv) British-style imperial stout. But, the wood-aging does not impart much character beyond a hint of vanilla and the bourbon is completely absent. Enjoy this beer as a very good British-style imperial stout but do not expect as much barrel and bourbon character as most other bourbon barrel-aged beers.

Review 2:
Link: https://beerconnoisseur.com/review/95-rating-epitaph-heathen-brewing
Beer: Epitaph
Brewery: Heathen Brewing
ABV: 10%
IBU: 92

Text:
For this style expect bold, roast malt, sometimes lightly burnt and definitely with dark fruits and varying sweetness from bittersweet to sweet. A pleasant warmth ensues but the alcohol should not be harsh.

Pours opaque black with a medium, creamy and thick brown head, medium retention with some lacing. Aroma of sweet and rich dark chocolate, lactose sweetness, dates and figs. Light background earthy and woody hop notes round out the initial aroma. Chewy sweet and dark chocolate malt, roast notes, dark fruits similar to the aroma lead to a sweet finish. The balance is clearly to the malt. Full body, medium carbonation and light alcohol warmth.

A warm nuttiness emerges late in the aroma as does powdered cocoa. A light malt bitterness complements the hop bitterness, but the malt and lactose sweetness keep both in check. Some warm alcohol character gives the palate a hint of dryness and keeps this from being too sweet. Bold and rich with a velvety texture, enjoy this beer with a rich cheesecake topped with slightly sweetened strawberries.
Review 3:
Link: https://beerconnoisseur.com/review/mother-earth-brew-sin-tax-imperial-peanut-butter-stout
Beer: Sin Tax Imperial Peanut Butter Stout
Brewery: Mother Earth Brew Co.
ABV: 8.1%
IBU: 66

Text:
Pours a very deep dark mahogany with ruby red highlights, and a large tan head of tiny bubbles (almost looks like nitro). The head fades to a thin layer quickly, but more small and medium bubbles are generated when swirled. Moderately roasty (but not bitter) aroma with hints of peanut butter and light toffee; creamy like cappuccino and sweet chocolate. The flavor presents the peanut butter quite well, without the usual peanut butter oiliness, more like PB2 or PBfit powder. A nice debittered roastiness with moderate espresso coffee notes that lingers into an off-dry finish. Medium-high bittering balances out the peanut butter. There is substantial alcohol in this beer, but it is clean ethanol, and pleasantly balances the rest of the flavors. Hops are an afterthought both in the aroma and flavor, and come across as slightly earthy and slight floral. Full mouth-filling body with moderate carbonation, this beer finishes with a long coffee and chocolate note and nuttiness. Drink this in front of the fireplace, in a snifter, and enjoy it slowly to let it warm up. Or in an outside hot tub when it's snowing. Be sure to have a bunch of nice hot croissants slathered with raspberry jam to snack on - and you'll get a tasty PB and J!

Beer style: Fruit Lambic

Review 1:
Link: https://beerconnoisseur.com/review/brouwerij-bockor-beer/kriek-des-jacobins
Beer: Kriek des Jacobins
Brewery: Brouwerij Omer Vander Ghinste
ABV: 4.5%
IBU: -

Text:
The beer pours a nice, ruby red color with deep clarity, and a slightly pink fizzy head sits atop and dissipates fairly quickly. The aroma is quite nice and inviting with some sour cherry, and a slight lactic sourness coming in second. There are background hints of nuts and some dark soil, which may be a low level of Brettanomyces. It may not sound that great, but it really works. The cherry aroma is not bright and fresh so I believe this beer has some age on it, but I don’t pick up any oxidation. The malt is light and grainy and very difficult to pick out, but it’s there. The hops are nonexistent, as I would expect for the style. The flavor is tart with a dry finish, and the cherry is quite evident, but again doesn’t come across as fresh, which is OK for the style. There is a restrained sweetness that prevents this beer from being overly tart and dry, and it complements the cherry well. The malt in the flavor is also hard to pick apart, just like in the aroma, but you can tell it’s there. The balance between the fruit and the beer itself is very well done and really sets this beer apart. There is a mild bitterness in the finish that washes away fairly quickly. The beer is light-bodied, highly carbonated, and it has a very slight creamy edge to it. For a Kriek, this beer is great because unlike most commercial Kriek I’ve had, this one is not overly sweet, but rather tart, crisp and dry. That is a very refreshing change and well appreciated.

Review 2:
Link: https://beerconnoisseur.com/review/new-belgium-beer/transatlantique-kriek
Beer: Transatlantique Kriek
Brewery: New Belgium Brewing Co.
ABV: 8%
IBU: 8

Text:
The beer pours a crystal clear ruby red color, similar to cherry soda, with a well-formed but low pink head. A low, wheaty malt presence pops up in the aroma but it gives way to the typical (though surprisingly subdued) lactic characters and a very low brett-like trace. The cherry aroma is fairly low and quite lower than I expected based on the color. The flavor is fairly tame, and well-suited as an introductory sour for someone not sure if they want to dabble in sour, tart beers yet. The cherry flavor is enough for you to notice it throughout the entire experience and is reminiscent of fresh cherry pie filling. There is also some lactic tartness, very low brett funk, and low cherry flavors underneath it all. There is a moderate hop bitterness in the finish that serves well to balance out the sourness and cherry, and it leaves you ready to drink more. Overall, the flavor is clean and non-
offensive, the mouthfeel is medium-low with medium-high carbonation, and the tartness is mildly puckering and sensible. Overall, the beer is a good starter beer for those wanting to get into sours. I particularly liked the cherry flavor, which was well-balanced and quite tasty. The only issue I have is that the beer lacked a bit in the lambic category. It could have used just a bit more brett funk and a little more lactic sourness. The cherries did add some nice sweet and tart character, but the base beer seemed a bit tame for a lambic. All in all, it’s a great sour for the masses or those looking to see what sours are all about without getting their taste buds assaulted. I enjoyed the sample as a beer, separate from its style constraints, but for the style, it fell slightly short.

Review 3:
Link: https://beerconnoisseur.com/review/hanssens-oude-kriek
Beer: Oude Kriek
Brewery: Hanssens Artisanaal
ABV: 6%
IBU: -

Text:
In the interest of full disclosure, this was a sample from my cellar that had roughly two years of age on it, in addition to the three-plus years it already matured prior to shipping. Still, this is truly a world-class beer, irrespective of its provenance. Hanssens has been producing some of the most widely acclaimed lambic, especially kriek and gueuze, in recent memory. This beer hits the glass with a deep, rusty, reddish-brown color and throws a very small, rather lacy head. The aromas that waft from the glass are rich with hints of almond, ripe cherry and a gentle sourness. All of the judges picked up on the beer’s age and offered comments on the depth and complexity that it lent the beer’s aromas and flavors. Tim commended the complex aroma, noting that it was brimming with mustiness, bright acidity and an appealing fruitiness, and Tom was impressed with the solid cherry aroma and its interaction with the less-prominent earthy, mushroom notes. As one would expect of a vintage kriek, this beer’s flavor abounded with deep, brooding dark cherry, stingingly dry almond notes and puckering sourness. Rick profusely praised the complex interplay of fruit, cherry stone and cask aging, calling this beer a true classic, while Tim compared the overall experience to listening to jazz – “lots of components, but one true song.” This is undoubtedly an epic brew that any self-respecting beer connoisseur should take great pains to acquire and – if possible – lay down for a while. It will be well worth the wait.
Appendix C: Data from Craft Beer & Brewing Magazine

Beer style: Double IPA

Review 1:
Link: https://beerandbrewing.com/review/melvin-brewing-citradamus/
Beer: Citradamus
Brewery: Melvin Brewing Co.
ABV: 9.5
IBU: 76

Text:
What the brewers say
“Citradamus is Melvin’s world-class IIPA brewed with 100 percent Citra hops, pristine mountain water, and Northwest malt. Flavors of citrus (duh), pine, and total dankness. Dry hopped with ludicrous amounts of Citra for that classic hoppiness that Melvin has become known for.”

What our panel thought
Aroma: “Bright grapefruit aroma up front with some nice tangerine juicy notes. Malt is very subdued but there that comes across as balanced. Hop profile dissipates rather quickly as it warms.”
Flavor: “Juicy and rich tropical fruit character with moderate bitterness and a touch of lingering sweetness. Body is fairly big for style, but finishes relatively dry making you want another sip.”
Overall: “Big and rich and juicy tropical goodness.”

Review 2:
Link: https://beerandbrewing.com/review/double-IPA/
Beer: Double IPA
Brewery: AleSmith Brewing Company
ABV: 8.5
IBU: 84

Text:
What the brewers say
“The flavor imparts orange, grapefruit, and tangerine hops notes with earthy, spicy, and pine undertones. A sturdy malt backbone balances the profound hops bitterness to create an assertive and vibrant beer that offers a bold expression of fresh American hops.”

What our panel thought
Aroma: “Distinct and unique blueberry hops flavors up front, with some nice mango and lemongrass. Light dank, onion hops aroma with a touch a malt sweetness. Capers? Gin? Definitely in the pine family, but more of a cousin.”
Flavor: “Nice hops fruitiness with an even blend of blueberry, mango, and grapefruit rind. The hops bitterness and the light sweetness accentuate a piney hops character (a bit of Christmas tree) that helps balance and dry out the beer. A nice touch of boozy warmth also helps to fill out this beer. Bitterness lingers just a little too long, into the point of unwelcome aftertaste.”
Overall: “A complex hops profile that just barely rises above the intense hops bitterness. It could use some malt to balance it out.”

Review 3:
Link: https://beerandbrewing.com/review/double-hopulus/
Beer: Double Hopulus
Brewery: The Pike Brewing Co.
ABV: 8.5
IBU: 80

Text:
What the brewers say
“This bright apricot-colored beer derives enticing flavors and aromas of stone fruits, pine, and melon from its complex hops blend of Chinook, Falconer’s Flight, Simcoe, and Amarillo. Our brewers have balanced these tastes with rich malt flavors.”

What our panel thought
Aroma: “A nice mix of floral and fruity bright hops. Grapefruit and honeysuckle. A touch of malt biscuit and bread crust character. The net effect is more amber ale than IIPA, but quite nice.”
Flavor: “So the aroma, so the flavor. More prominent grapefruit and a touch of pine character. A more pronounced malt character than often seen in this style, with nice bread crust and biscuit notes. There is a nice bitter through-line that keeps everything grounded in the IIPA category. The bitterness is not astringent but heightens some of the stronger piney and pithy hop flavors.”

Overall: “A solid stalwart of an IIPA that executes well on classic norms of the style. Malt is big across the board, but not too sweet. Drinkable but in no way is this a hops-bomb like most of its competition.”

Beer style: Imperial Stout

Review 1:
Link: https://beerandbrewing.com/review/dark-star/
Beer: Dark Star
Brewery: Fremont Brewing
ABV: 8.0%
IBU: 50

Review 2:
Link: https://beerandbrewing.com/review/ready-to-drink/
Beer: Ready to Drink
Brewery: Tampa Bay Brewing
ABV: 10.5%
IBU: 54

Review 3:
Link: https://beerandbrewing.com/review/bittersweet-nitro/
Beer: Bittersweet Nitro
Brewery: Left Hand
ABV: 8.9%
IBU: 54
“Our big, aggressive bittersweet stout. The coffee’s dark cherry flavors and spicy undertones weave into the rich, imperial milk stout like a chocolate-covered espresso bean melting on your tongue.”

What our panel thought
Aroma: “Earthy and blueberry esters from the coffee along with a touch of the vegetal common in coffee beers. Mostly roast coffee with some black pepper notes mixed in.”
Flavor: “Chocolate, licorice, and dark fruit. The coffee adds a nice dry, roasted background, and the vegetal note from the aroma isn’t as pronounced. Finish has a milk-chocolate sweetness.”
Overall: “Rich, sweet, and almost chewy on the finish with lingering flavors of chocolate, dried cherries, and licorice. The roast, hops bitterness, and alcohol provide a dry spicy character to the finish that keeps it from being overly sweet.”

Beer style: Fruit Lambic

Review 1:
Link: https://beerandbrewing.com/review/kriek-cantillon/
Beer: Kriek
Brewery: Brasserie Cantillon
ABV: 5.0%
IBU:

Text:
What the brewers say
“This kriek 100-percent lambic is blended lambic beer brewed with cherries.”

What our panel thought
Aroma: “Tart sour cherry aroma with a slight cherry sweetness and some horse blanket. A bit goaty with earthy spicy notes and a lemon lactic sweetness. The cherries and sweetness grew as it sat.”
Flavor: “Dry and tart with the sweetness coming through with the acidic tartness in the back. Cherries are the dominant flavor with slight hints of tart grapefruit. Some earthy, woody, goaty notes give some nice complexity to this beer. The finish has a lot going on with some tart cherry sweetness and some lactic acidity. Linger is moderately lasting and dry with slight peppery notes.”
Overall: “Tartness overpowers with slight hints of phenolic notes, cherry and grapefruit. A more adventuresome sour—very wild tasting. Tart and dry. This beer requires adjustment—the more I drank it the more I enjoyed it. The complexities of the beer were intriguing, and the tart finish made me want to drink another sip.”

Review 2:
Link: https://beerandbrewing.com/review/american-kriek/
Beer: American Kriek
Brewery: Samuel Adams / Boston Beer Co
ABV: 7.0%
IBU:

Text:
What the brewers say
“Our take on a Belgian Kriek is aged on Balaton cherries for an intense black cherry character. A rich maltiness and hint of toasted oak balance and mellow the dark red fruit and tart sweetness.”

What our panel thought
Aroma: “Belgian fruity notes of banana and clove braced by aged sherry. Dark cherry and bubble gum on top of lots of spice and earthy notes.”
Flavor: “Banana notes mix with a spiced earthy funkiness that is a welcome surprise after the strong Belgian yeast aroma. The cherries are tart and present but have a sharp edge to them—more plum than fresh cherry. The linger is funky, long lasting, and dry. Sherry and some woody vanillin character are apparent. Finishes with tartness and some sweetness on the tongue.”
Overall: “The flavor doesn’t quite live up to such a pleasant aroma. An interesting mix of Belgian yeast with banana and slight clove, a strong funkiness, and dark cherry flavor. The funkiness overpowers once you take a sip and refuses to let go. The beer had a lot of complexity but each aspect—tartness, cherry, funk—seemed to clash with each other.”
Review 3:
Link: https://beerandbrewing.com/review/kriek-ac-golden/
Beer: Kriek
Brewery: AC Golden Brewing Company
ABV: 5.5%
IBU:

Text:
What the brewers say
“Colorado-grown Montmorency sour and Bing sweet cherries went into our Kriek, which is a blend of golden and burgundy sour ales aged for 12 months in wine and bourbon barrels.”
What our panel thought
Aroma: “Cherry aroma with some wild horse-blanket character. Tart cherry, lemon, acidic, cranberry-like tartness.”
Flavor: “Eye-watering tartness that lasts long into the linger. Some sour cherry in the background. The lactic lemon tartness carries through this beer from the start to the finish. Some subtle sweet cherry notes sit behind the lactic tartness while the carbonation helps provide a little warmth in the finish.”
Overall: “Very, very tart. If there were more cherries but the same amount of sweetness it would be perfect for me. If you like mouth-puckering sour candy, then you would like this beer. Enjoyable and left me wanting to drink more.”