

## **Beer Styles – India Pale Ale (IPA) How it started and where it is today**

In the mid 1700's the favorite beer in London was London Porter. Most beers were darker and locally produced. Local breweries produced for the surrounding areas only. As the British Empire expanded the soldiers and ex patriots still wanted to drink ales similar to what they had been used to back home. The 'beer problem' was that when shipped for months at a time the beer would sour. The trip to India was particularly long and rough on the ales. The ships would leave London and sail down the African coast into the tropics, around Cape Horn and up into the Indian Ocean to India. This trip was long and there was no refrigeration so the beer would spoil by the time it was delivered. There was one brewer who was doing something different. His name was George Hodgson, brewer at the Bow Brewery in East London, and he had been making these ales since the 1750's. His copper colored ales were called 'pale ales' because they were lighter than the popular brown ales, porters and stouts. His pale ales were some of the first lighter beers ever made. Hodgson took his pale ale recipe increased the hop content and raised the starting gravity by adding extra grain and sugar. He then dry hopped it as a further measure of preserving it. The result was bitter, highly alcoholic ale that could withstand the long trip to India. Hodgson began shipping Hodgson's India Ale during the 1790s and it was a huge success. The market for beer in India took off with Hodgson having almost complete control for many years. When a new competitor tried to come in Hodgson would flood the market with ale to bring the price so low that no one made any profit. Then the next season he would limit imports to up the price and recover the lost profits and then some. Later, his would establish an import business in India cutting out the middleman there. (Making more profits and not making any friends in the process.)

Eventually, others were able to copy his recipe and have success in India. The first was the Burton on Trent ales. There were several breweries in Burton among them The Salt, Allsopp and Bass. Each already was producing their own Pale ale. An important factor was that Burton lost the Baltic trade it had enjoyed for years due to the Napoleonic wars. So they were looking for new markets. A dinner meeting between one of the directors of the East India Company, Mr. Marjoribanks, and Samuel Allsopp would soon make brewing history. Allsopp was made aware for the India market and got samples of Hodgson's India Ale to see if his brewers could reproduce it. His brewer Job Goodhead was able to make the new beer, in 1822, and within the year Allsopp and Bass were shipping to India. There were many obstacles to Allsopp establishing his beers in India. Among them was shipping the beer to London for export; the shipping kegs and selling in India. The only way to get to London was by the canal ships which was expensive and there always was the danger of theft. The shipping barrels all had to be uniform; this required an outlay of money to get the barrels made. The shipment itself was tough on the beer; the barrels also had to be strong enough to survive the journey. Once in

India the beer had to be approved by tasters and sold. There were many issues with this process but Allsopp persevered. His first few shipments didn't make money but eventually the enterprise was successful. Soon his beers were fetching more than Hodgsons. Letters from India detailed that Allsopp's beers were quickly becoming the local favorite.

The water in the Burton area was one of the major reasons for their success. These waters had a high sulfite content which allowed brewers to make a clearer and bitterer beer. The Burton brewers were able to exceed Hodgson's IPA in clarity, hopping rate and marketability. Sulfites can change the mouthfeel and perception of bitterness which gave the Burton beers another advantage over London beers.

In 1827 the IPAs were only being exported; nothing was sold in the home market. A chance shipwreck, on the Irish Sea, led to locals trying the beer from barrels in the India bound ship. Word spread about these export ales and soon locals were demanding the clear, refreshing bitter ales. The IPAs soon became popular all over Europe. Some local brewers started brewing similar brews in Germany and Norway. By 1880 most beer exported from Britain was India Pale Ale.

American brewers also got in on the IPA trade. Some brewers in the northeast brewed some pale ales similarly to the famous British ales and thrived. Ballantine's India Pale Ale appeared in the early 1900's and Burtons Ale was made for select customers. It wasn't sold; just given to them each fall. The Burtons had been aged and could be part of the inspiration for Fritz Maytag to buy Anchor Brewing in 1965. Unfortunately, this all happened as American tastes were going in the opposite direction. (Toward light lagers.) The ales were changing in Britain also. The tax laws changed, over the years, to make higher alcohol beers subject to more taxes. IPAs had almost disappeared from the American market by the 1960's. They have made a big comeback in the last 20 years.

Today the trends are toward 'bigger' more robust stronger IPAs. The style has come full circle; going back to its roots. Back in the 1990's a group of brewers decided to try and replicate the original Burtons Ale. Mark Dorber, cellarman for the White Horse on Parsons Green (London), England was a key player in the India Pale Ale revival. Dorber organized a seminar on Burton Pale Ales, and from this seminar grew a plan to brew a traditional IPA like those of the mid-19th century.

After reviewing the record books and the historical context, Dawson reformulated a recipe dating back to the 1850s. The brew was to be a piece of living history, ". . . brewed as an essay -- an attempt to recreate the color, flavor, and high condition of the 19th century Pale Ales that made Burton the preeminent brewing town in Britain and, for a time, the world". The resulting brew, The White Horse India Pale Ale, is pale,

sparkling, and intensely bitter. Its original gravity is 1.063 (7% alcohol). Roger Protz, noted beer writer and authority on classic English styles, described the beer as having massive and pungent hop bitterness with a nose like a Kent hop field. The beer has a rich and fruity mouthfeel, with a finish dominated by Kent Goldings. Dorber reported that the ale is holding up well after five months in the cask. The ale has maintained strong bitterness, and the rich, fruity aromas have enhanced with age. Let us hope that the success of the White Horse IPA will encourage and further nourish the return of India Pale Ale. (From brewingtechniques.com)

This event happened in the 1990's and since that time the style has become more like the original IPAs made in the 1700's and 1800's. In England there is renewed interest in making the style in the traditional methods resulting in IPAs much like the IPAs we are seeing today in the US. IPA is one of the favorite styles in America today. Just when you think you have seen everything someone comes up with a different variation or idea. There Are Double IPAs, Triple IPAs, Black IPAs, many different barrel aged IPAs and Belgian IPA's. (They are brewed with Belgian yeast strains.) The sky is the limit and we can look forward to the next new IPA idea or variant.

India Pale Ale was a solution to a great beer problem. More than any other style, IPA's character is defined by the function it served in history. We can identify trends in the current production of these fine ales. The trends indicate that interest in this classic style is on the upswing and that brewers want to present India Pale Ales with the important characters of high bitterness, high alcohol content and high hop aroma.

**ABA Style Definition:** American-style India pale ales are perceived to have medium-high to intense hop bitterness, flavor and aroma with medium-high alcohol content. The style is further characterized by fruity, floral and citrus-like American-variety hop character. Note that fruity, floral and citrus-like American-variety hop character is the perceived end, but may be a result of the skillful use of hops of other national origins. The use of water with high mineral content results in a crisp, dry beer. This pale gold to deep copper-colored ale has a full, flowery hop aroma and may have a strong hop flavor (in addition to the perception of hop bitterness). India pale ales possess medium maltiness which contributes to a medium body. Fruity-ester flavors and aromas are moderate to very strong. Chill and/or hop haze is allowable at cold temperatures. ABV - 5.5 - 6.3%

## Porter

Porter – or rather, the beer that came to be known as Porter – was first brewed in the early 1700s, but how exactly its creation came about has been a matter of some debate. For many years, the accepted story was one written in 1802 by John Feltham. According to Feltham, it was 1730 when a brewer named Harwood noticed the popularity of a drink called “three-threads”, which was made by mixing one part each of sweet and lightly hopped “ale”, more bitter “beer”, and a strong pale ale known as “twopenny”. In order to assist publicans who were tired of pulling beer from three casks, Harwood created a single beer that combined these three styles, and “called it Entire or Entire-Butt, meaning that it was served entirely from one cask.” Harwood’s beer quickly became popular with the many porters who worked carrying goods throughout London.

It’s more likely that Porter was a strong beer developed by brewers blending different mash runs from the same malt, with the resulting beer being called “Entire”. Since strong beers of the time were commonly stored in large casks called butts for aging, the name “Entire Butt” was sometimes used. And while there was a brewer named Ralph Harwood who made Porter, it doesn’t seem likely that he created the style, especially considering the small size and limited success of his brewery.

The name Porter came from the beer’s popularity with porters and others in the working class, but that popularity soon extended to the more refined citizenry as well. By the mid-to-late 1700s, Porter had become the world’s first truly global beer, as its strength and body made it resilient enough to be shipped throughout Europe, to the American colonies, and as far as China and Australia. Originally brewed in London only, Porter soon was being brewed all around the British Isles. In Dublin at St James Gate Brewery Arthur Guinness brewed his first batch of Porter in 1778. By 1800 Guinness dropped all other styles to brew Porter s only. The various strengths were given names; Plain Porter, Stout Porter and Double Stout Porter.

By the late 1800’s the popularity of Porter had started to wane in England. Many breweries that built their fortune on the style added other ales to their line-up, and by the 1900s, most British breweries had abandoned Porter altogether. In Ireland, Guinness Plain Porter remained popular into the 1930s, but by the 1960s, their Stout had become a clear favorite, and in 1973, Guinness brewed their original Porter for the last time.

The style almost died out but in the 1970’s CAMRA and Michael Jackson’s writings rekindled interest in the style. Within 10 years there were more than 60 bring brewed in the British Isles alone. The style was becoming popular in America too. In 1972 Anchor brewed Anchor Porter for the first time; it is still made today. Porter became a major style in the craft beer movement. Many craft brewers brew Porter and it remains a highly popular dark beer today. ([beerbeatsbites.com](http://beerbeatsbites.com))

## Barleywine

The earliest Barley Wines were not well defined, but were simply the strongest beers a brewery made, usually using the first mash runnings. Parti-gyle brewing doesn't sparge after the mash; the wort is removed and the grains reused for lighter beers. Today barley wine production makes use of modern brewing techniques creating a variety of big, complex ales that can be aged like fine red wine. Barley Wine was originally called first sort, malt wine and malt liquor to indicate both their relative strength and their distinctiveness as compared to wine, and later as old ale, stock ale or simply strong ale. Other names have been used, such as stingo, wee heavy and even winter ale. It wasn't until the early part of the 20th century that the name Barley Wine began to take hold. One of the earliest, and perhaps most famous, was Bass No. 1, which was labeled Barley Wine beginning in 1903, according to most accounts.

Barley Wine is brewed mostly from pale malt. The full flavor and rich color come from the amount of grain, 2 to 3 times the amount for pale ale, and the length of the boil which caramelizes a lot of the sugars, deepening the color and the flavor. It is also heavily hopped to balance, often up to and over 100 IBUs.

In the US Barley Wine is almost always referred to as barleywine-style ale. (A government required name.) In America, over fifty brewers currently bottle a version of Barley Wine, and undoubtedly many more make only a draft interpretation.

Anchor's Old Foghorn was the first Barley Wine in America, at least after Prohibition. It was first brewed in 1975. And while it's essentially an English-style Barley Wine, the only hops used are our native citrusy Cascades, making it one of the most successful single-hop beers. It's also well-hopped, for an English-style, at around 65 IBUs.

Sierra Nevada Bigfoot has become the standard that all American Style Barleywines are judged by. Michael Jackson said "Bigfoot captures the imagination, and its character is as big as the name implies, with a huge hoppiness in its earthy aroma, a chewy palate, and a great depth of flavor."

**ABA Style Guidelines:** American style barley wines range from amber to deep copper-garnet in color and have a full body and high residual malty sweetness. Complexity of alcohols and fruity-ester characters are often high and counterbalanced by assertive bitterness and extraordinary alcohol content. Hop aroma and flavor are at medium to very high levels. American type hops are often used but not necessary for this style. A caramel and/or toffee aroma and flavor are often part of the character. Characters indicating oxidation, such as vinous (sometimes sherry-like) aromas and/or flavors, are not generally acceptable in American-style Barley Wine Ale, however if a low level of age-induced oxidation character harmonizes and enhances the overall experience this can be regarded favorably. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures