

Notes from the Professor of Beer

1. Generally speaking, ales are like red wines and lagers are like white wines. This means lagers, which are typically less aromatic and flavourful should be matched with lighter tasting foods and ales, which are generally more robust and complex should be matched with fuller tasting foods.
2. Choose your beer based on your surroundings, food choices and feelings (Is the weather cold? Do you feel like seafood tonight? Has it been a stressful week and you feel like something to take the edge off?)
3. Always pour your beer into a glass. Bottles have narrow openings and do not allow much carbonation or aroma to be released – meaning it finds a great home in your stomach – leading to a feeling of fullness
4. Always pour with an inch or two of foam head. Aside from a great appearance, foam allows all of the wonderful aromas to leave the beer and go to you. It protects beer from oxygen (big enemy) and keeps some of the carbonation in (fresher, longer) and lets some out (not so much bloating)
5. Never judge a book by its cover! Some dark beers are neither full bodied or filling. Some lighter golden coloured beers have intense flavours and complex aromas.
6. When tasting beer, learn to follow these simple guidelines.
 - a. Look (check out the colour, clarity and foam)
 - b. Smell (look for aromas to help to set up your tasting experience)
 - c. Taste (roll it around in your mouth and swallow)
 - d. Taste again (the second time will show you some flavours and aromas that you may have missed the first time)
7. Experiment and learn for yourself – try different beers with different foods. After all, tasting is a purely personal experience. Only you can decide whether you like something.
8. Beer is great all by itself but paired with the right food creates an outstanding culinary experience that expands the flavours and aromas of both.
9. The secret to tasting beer is time. Take the time to select a type that interests you – historically, culturally, by style or by country. Then take the time to find a friend to enjoy the beer with – as drinking beer is a social event that is to be savoured.
10. Cook with beer. Beer is a wonderful flavouring ingredient that can be used to marinade, baste, and braise any meat. Rich robust ales are great in stews; chili and flavourful wheat beers are a fine addition to seafood dishes. Don't forget to enjoy the beer with the meal.

