

OVER THE HOLIDAYS AND WARM

Beat the blues with home brews

Chevron

by Una O'Callaghan
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If you're a student chances are you find yourself, in these days of inflation and higher taxes, unable to keep your wine cellar stocked with the finest brands.

While you brood over your diminishing stocks of Pinot Chardonnay, consider the following suggestion.

You can brew your own wine or beer for a fraction of the cost of most brands now on the market and the process is really quite simple. The advantages to be gained by dabbling in the art of homebrewing are many and varied, not the least being:

- you get to screw the Ontario Government out of liquor taxes.
- you get to compete with Seagram's air pollution wise.
- you can turn out a superior product to many brands now on the market.
- you don't have to produce proof of age to buy the necessary ingredients.
- home brews rarely produce hangovers unless consumed in enormous quantities.

If you start small, say a five gallon batch of dry red wine or light ale, the equipment required is minimal. The first requirement is a primary fermenter. This can be any vessel which holds at least six gallons, and has not previously been used to store diesel fuel. A plastic garbage pail will do the job nicely.

Other equipment includes a hydrometer, fermentation lock, capping machine, a five gallon carboy for aging, and a few yards of plastic tubing to use as a syphon. Ingredients for both wine and beer can be picked up at Hughes Home Centre (Parkdale Plaza) on Albert street.

Wine is easier to make than beer, except for one hardship; it takes forever. Afficionados have been known to store the stuff for five or ten years, but this seems a bit extreme for the first batch.

It takes at least a month to brew anything that tastes better than communion wine, but after two or three months you should have some good gulping wine.

Because the time involved in aging allows the possibility of bacteria developing, it is important to have complete sterility. So, for example, don't allow the cat to doo-doo in your barrel or carboy. This is not so important in the case of beer, as anyone who has visited a brewery will have noticed.

Home brewed beer is a cinch to



Photo by Rob Brady
Chevron staff

Careful attention of hygiene is of utmost importance. A bag of garbage is extremely useful in distracting flies from your young wine.

make and as the procedure is listed on every tin of malt, it need not be repeated here. Suffice it to say that the resulting glop will be ready to drink in about seven days, if you disregard the conservative instructions on the tin.

Time and expense can be further reduced by drinking the product direct from the primary fermenter and ignoring the strictures on deisel oil.

WINE INGREDIENTS

1-80 oz. tin of red grape concentrate, 5 lbs sugar, 1-lb of white raisins 2 ozs. of acid blend, 5 campden tablets, 1 oz yeast nutrient, 1/2 teaspoon grape tannin, wine yeast.

Dump the whole caboose into the primary fermenter, except the

wine yeast and add 4 gallons of warm water. When cool add the yeast and cover with plastic sheet.

Leave for 6 to 7 days or until specific gravity (measured by hydrometer) is 1.030. Syphon into carboy and attach fermentation lock. Rack in three weeks and again in three months.

BEER INGREDIENTS

1 tin of malt, 1 tin of hop extract, 4 lbs. dextrose sugar, 1 teaspoon citric acid, 2 teaspoons salt, 1 teaspoon ascorbic acid, 1 teaspoon yeast energiser, 1 teaspoon heading liquid, monks yeast.

In a 1 gallon pot put malt, citric acid, salt, hop extract and sugar. Heat to dissolve. Dump into primary fermenter and add water to

bring contents up to five gallons. When water reaches room temperature add yeast and leave for 4 to 5 days. Rack and add heading liquid, ascorbic acid and yeast energiser when S.G. is 1 or less. Bottle.

It should be drinkable within 2 to 3 days. Refrigerate a few hours before imbibing.

All considered, home brewing is a challenge and an adventure, another example of western man's ability to explore, to conquer, and to prevail. The same divine hand which helped to lift two courageous men onto the moon will, we hope, look after your humble undertakings and guide your two billion yeasties on a successful mission.

Step up to THE Bar Naturally!

The Usual? Yup! Schooner

Join me in a MEXICAN LOUVERDRIVE?

Sure!

What is it? A Beer with Tequila poured on top!

Whew! Yeh!

4 Later

You seen... M.M... my... Ha... Hat? Nope!

Geoff