



Bavarian-style
Maerzen
from
Schönrammer.

COMING
JANUARY 5TH



Brewmaster Eric Toft Explains the Bavarian-style Maerzen

The Festbier is a classic Bavarian-style Maerzen. The copper color comes from using malt that has been kilned at a temperature between those that are used for pale (Pilsner-style) malt and for dark (Munich-style) malt. Brewers refer to this kind of malt as Vienna malt. The names indicate the cities of origin where the corresponding styles of beer developed. Pilsner malt is kilned at a lower temperature than Vienna malt, which is kilned at a lower temperature than Munich malt. Despite the name, Bavarian brewers also had their own version of Vienna malt, which was just a paler version of the usual dark malt that was produced.

It used to be (before artificial refrigeration was available) that beer was only brewed between St. Michael's day (approx. beginning of October) and St. George's day (approx. mid-April). Beer brewed in the warmer months was too susceptible to spoiling because beer-spoiling bacteria are more active at warmer temperatures. To ensure that the last beer brewed would last unspoiled over the long, hot summers, brewers made stronger (higher alcohol content as a result of higher gravity) and used higher hopping rates, the hop being a natural preservative. Because this beer was brewed in March (Maerz in German), it was referred to as Maerzen

beer, which was consumed throughout the summer until September / October before fresh beer made from the new barley and hop harvest was finished.

The original Oktoberfest beer was a Maerzen and, although it is today a lot paler than the original, it is referred to as "Wies'n Maerzen", Wies'n being the local terminology for Oktoberfest, as it takes place on the Theresienwiese, or Theresa's meadow. Locals don't talk about going to the Oktoberfest, they talk about going "auf die Wies'n". We originally referred to our Festbier as an Oktoberfest-style beer, but had to stop after the Munich breweries threatened to sue us. Only they are allowed to use the term and they have lawyers that do nothing else but surf the net and look for people "abusing" the term!

The Maerzen-style is nearly extinct, so that's one reason I decided to do the Festbier as a Maerzen. Also, I think it fits the cold winter season, being somewhat darker, stronger, and more fortifying. The English have their heavier beers they call Winter Warmers, so I guess you could say that the festbier is the Bavarian winter warmer.

We do an intensive, expensive decoction mash that ensures a good yield from the malt and a high attenuation (meaning that a lot of alcohol is produced and few residual sugars remain - any perceived sweetness is a result of the alcohol, which delivers a slight sweetness). The hopping rate is high, corresponding to tradition, and we use only very fine aroma hop varieties from the region Hallertau, where we have direct contracts with our farmers.

Original gravity is 14.2 ° Plato and we ferment for 10 days at a maximum of 9°C. After fermentation, the beer is kraeusened on the way to lagering (in the case of Festbier, we kraeusen with Gold!), where it sits for 8 weeks and slowly undergoes a secondary fermentation and thus natural carbonation, beginning first at 3°C, after 2 weeks we gradually cool down so that the last 4 weeks are around -1°C.

TALKBACK

Please drop Mark a line at talkback@uplifiersspirits.com You can opt-in on *Mark Talks* newsletter at the same email.

MARK'S Restaurant Row

Oakland, yes, Oakland CA! On Grand Avenue

Everyone knows about the culinary treats and funk of San Francisco, one of the great cities in our country. Alice Waters put Berkeley on the culinary map and changed the local farmer sourcing movement for the entire country. But no one talks about Oakland. First of all the weather is much better than both those places.

I normally would never review 3 restaurants but it is extremely rare you have 3 great and completely different types of places on one street within 6 blocks of each other. If you drive on Grand Avenue past Lake Merritt up to the Oakland Hills, you will pass by 3 of my favorite hangouts in the world. Every trip up north I attempt to visit all 3. We will start at the high end of the street and work our way down to the Lake.

Camino

3917 Grand Avenue. 510-547-5035

When you walk in you feel like you have entered a Bavarian or English castle's dining hall. The ceiling has got to be 30 feet high and one very long communal table with 3 rows of individual tables sit in front of the large wood burning stove. You will see pork and lamb on the rotisserie and you know you are in for a treat. The menu changes daily depending on the chefs' mood and food he has accumulated that day.

It's rustic open hearth cooking as its finest. Wild mushrooms, wild greens, and Fleisch - wild boar, duck, lamb all done in the open hearth. It is currently crab season at Camino done in the open oven. You feel like you are eating the splendors of a very successful hunting, fishing and gathering trip. The details are amazing. The cocktail mixers are all fresh and handmade. A very well thought out and priced wine list means I always drink a bottle but only after I have had a couple of Schoenramer Pils to whet the appetite.



Grand Tavern

3601 Grand Avenue, 510-444-4644

Two blocks down from Camino is the Grand Tavern. This wonderful location is in a converted California Craftsman house. When the weather is enjoy the days and warm nights. On the your own private salon room. All the you are in a living room in a 1900's get to know someone more intimately. she has from the old country. Temoor often he sucks me in and I try a few too a fan of Upper Bavarian microbreweries. or just go to hang out with friends.



warm he has a front and side patio open to inside you feel like you are hanging out in rooms comfortably designed so you feel like Craftsman house. This is a perfect place to Temoor's mother cooks all the tapas recipes has a penchant for distilled spirits and too many small batches. He happens to also be Take a date you want to get to know better

Sidebar

542 Grand Avenue, 510-368-0410

The rule is the better the view the worse the food except if you can afford the Post Ranch Inn. Sidebar sits across the street from Lake Merritt with a beautiful view. But Mark Drazek, owner and cook, has changed "the rule." I am a huge fan of French Bistros and this is as good as it gets. with floor-to-ceiling windows that open up in the summer giving you a perfect view of the people strolling around Lake Merritt. It is better than Paris. Both lunch and dinner are perfect examples of French Bistro cooking with no attitude and much better pricing. They are so classic they have a "classic" and "modern" cocktail menu. I know Mark's wine list is fantastic because I have been known to taste wine with him when the reps come by. You know me; I always have to help out my friends. Mark always has a couple of Upper Bavarian beer selections also on his list.