

Achieving the Perfect Red – Shepherds Delight

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To brew a beer that turns out red is not a mean feat. The red shade of beer is very narrow, one shade lighter is brown and one shade darker is also brown.

Because this is not a given that you will achieve the red colour, you need to plan your brew. Select your base recipe wisely and have Shepherds Delight on hand.

I have experimented with our red malts (Aurora and RedBack) in our Laboratory to come up with the perfect base recipe so you can achieve the red colour that we are all fascinated and eager to make.

Doug Michael, Gladfield Malt Maltster and Director developed Shepherds Delight malt 4.5 years ago. The objective of developing this malt is to create a malt that would guarantee the red colour. One of Gladfield's most famous malts.

Shepherds Delight is designed for colour and not flavour, and we do not recommend using more than 10% in any recipe.

Over the years some brewers have achieved the red colour using Shepherds Delight, but others haven't. So the reason for our experiment is to create better guidelines on how to use this unique malt. Below is what we have discovered.

The perfect red beer base for flavour, extract and colour is the following:

Gladfield Ale Malt 37%
Gladfield Vienna Malt 30%
Gladfield Aurora Malt 22%
Gladfield RedBack Malt 11%

OG: 1.060

Single Infusion Mash at 65C

You can brew any style of red beer using this base, all you need to change is your water treatment, hops and yeast. We experimented in the Laboratory by adding up to 10% in the mash of Shepherds Delight for colouring purposes. We noticed that between 4 – 6% is the ultimate percentage of Shepherds Delight to achieve the red colour.

Add Shepherds Delight during the mash. Keep up to 6% of Shepherds Delight crushed and ready to go. We added towards the end of the mash with 10 minutes to go and achieved good results.

So in summary, follow our base recipe. It will give you good flavours; colour and efficiency. Keep 4 to 6% of Shepherds Delight crushed and ready to go to add during mash; this will ensure you get the desired red colour in your beer. Use this base recipe to brew whatever red beer style you want, all you need to do is to change your water treatment, your hops and yeast.

