

# Beer Pairing for Live-Fire Cooking

by Megan Krigbaum

## Beef

Strategy: When beef meets woodfire, it develops darker flavors as the meat becomes nicely caramelized. Look for beers that mimic that depth and sweetness with malt complexity. Lighter versions, like ambers and brown ales are best with braises, whereas stouts and porters will go with charred meats.

## Lamb

Strategy: Lamb's in the earthy, gamey range of the flavor spectrum, making it a good companion to beers that also have a wild side. Look for Euro-style farmhouse ales and lambics for loins and chops and something brooding and roasty for substantial roasts.

## Pork

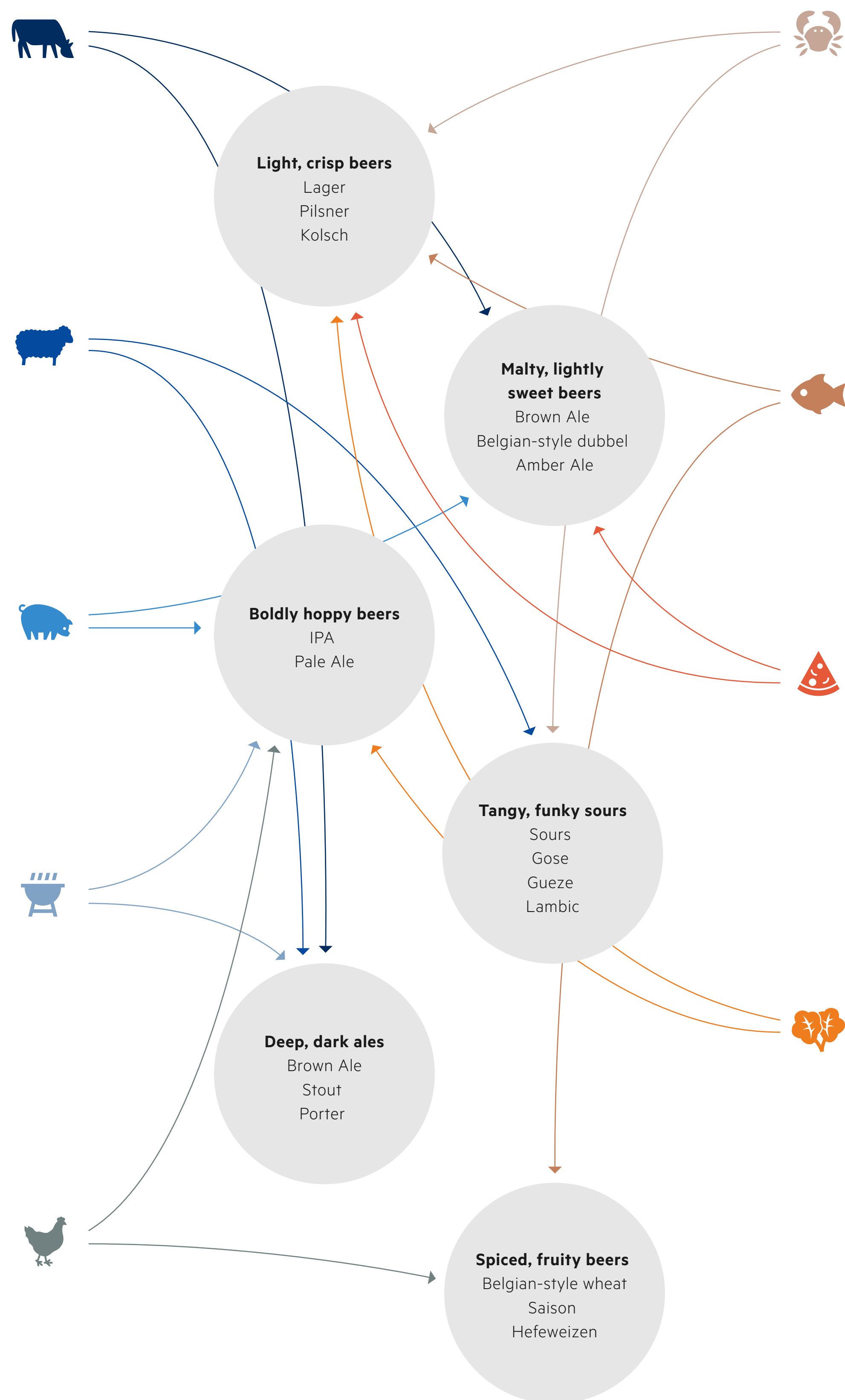
Strategy: Hop-forward beers are a twofer when it comes to pork; they not only have bubbles to cut through fattiness but a serious bitterness, too. On the other hand, malt-forward beers can bring a toastiness to the equation that will complement pork's umami flavors.

## BBQ / Smoked Meats

Strategy: There is nothing mild about tangy pulled pork shoulder or an expertly smoked brisket. So that the beer doesn't get lost in the equation, match the intensity of barbecue with equally full-bodied brews. Something with dark-roasted malts or a hefty dose of hops ought to do the trick.

## Chicken / Turkey

Strategy: Use beer as a nifty flavor highlighter. Pour a grassy, hoppy beer with chicken dishes that are particularly herb-centric. And with a spice-rubbed turkey, choose an aromatic, spicy wheat beer. The whole is better than the sum of its parts with these complementary pairings.



## Shellfish

Strategy: Anyone who's been to New England in the summertime knows that there's little better than a super cold bottle of lager with a seaside clambake. Calling on taste memories is a great way to think about pairings without being overly cerebral. In the same way, a citrusy gose can mimic a big squeeze of lemon overtop a buttery lobster roll.

## Whole Fish

Strategy: The saltiness of a crisp-skinned whole fish can be amplified with a mineraly, brisk beer, like a pilsner or a kölsch. To subdue this sea-spray quality, look to more saison-style brews, that bring juicy lemon or orange flavors.

## Pizza

Strategy: Malty beers have a strange affinity for the inherent sweetness of tomato sauce (something to be remembered when it comes to wood-roasted meatballs and lasagna, too) and thus are exemplary with pizza. But if it's a Friday night and it feels right to pick up a six-pack of crisp Peroni on the way home, well, no one can fault you for that either.

## Vegetables

Strategy: Beers that are more hop-forward than malt-forward really work with the green or earthy characteristic of roasted vegetables. This equaled bitterness allows all of the other flavors of the vegetables to really stand out. For more substantial veggies, like sweet potatoes or beets, look for a pale ale or an IPA that is matched in weight, too.