



La Vie Est Belle Bière de Noël

(Life is Beautiful Christmas Ale)



In that black starry night where the silhouettes of the wavering trees whisper in the wind the approach of the winter solstice, occasional snowflakes from some blustery squall dance in that turbulence like the twinkling of the holiday lights reflecting from the seductive curves of your tulip chalice, and through that bewitching black beverage the effervescing bubbles announce their presence with a creamy white head above the rim of your glass. In an instant you are captivated by that charismatic beverage, and suddenly the madness of life's frenetic pace melts away with your first sip, where the rich maltiness drifts into deep caramel and toasty grains, leaving a sweet impression while the mind-altering aromas exhibit a balance between a subtle spiciness and the sumptuous fruitiness of raisins, plums and dried cherries, which reminds you in ways impossible to forget that life is beautiful....

Just the Facts, Ma'am:

BJCP Style: 26D. Belgian Dark Strong Ale
Original Specific Gravity: 1.095 - 1.099
Final Specific Gravity: 1.016 - 1.020
Alcohol by Volume: 10.4%
Color: 31 SRM (Graceful & Black!)
International Bittering Units: 32
Time to Awesome Drinkability: 10 weeks!

Your recipe kit includes the freshest malt, hops and yeast. If you are not going to brew your recipe immediately, it is important to refrigerate your yeast and hops. If your recipe includes bags of malt syrup, these should be refrigerated too. Bags of dried malt do not require refrigeration. Also, all grains are best stored at dry room temperature.

Ingredients:

Fermentables:

Malt Bag 1

4.4 lbs. Light Malt Extract Syrup

Malt Bag 2

3.3 lbs. Munich Malt Extract Syrup

3.3 lbs. Vienna Malt Extract Syrup

1 lb Amber Belgian Candy Sugar

1 lb Extra Dark Candi Syrup (D-240)

Grains & Wort Additives:

6 oz Château Monastique Malt (Crushed)

4 oz Double Roasted Crystal Malt (Crushed)

4 oz Carabrown Malt (Crushed)

2 oz Black Prinz Malt (Crushed)

Hops:

½ oz Polaris Hops (Bittering, 65 Minutes)

½ oz Saaz Hops (Bittering, 30 Minutes)

½ oz Saaz Hops (Flavor & Aroma, 5 Minutes)

Yeast:

Liquid Yeast: Wyeast 3787 Trappist High Gravity

Wyeast 1214 Belgian Abbey Ale Yeast

Or

Dry Yeast: Mangrove Jack's M41 Belgian Ale Yeast

SafBrew BE-256 Belgian Abbey Dried Ale Yeast

Brewing Supplies & Flavors:

1 Muslin Bag

5 oz Priming Sugar

Pre-Brew Day Checklist:

If you are using Wyeast liquid yeast, you should make a yeast starter before beginning this brew. Making a yeast starter allows you to propagate to a greater (and necessary) cell count to ensure complete fermentation. You can find the complete yeast starter instructions at www.boomchugalug.com/yeaststarter.htm

Brew Day Checklist:

On brew day, you will require the following equipment:

- Brew Pot - A 5 gallon brew pot is ideal, but never use a pot that is less than 4 gallons.
- Long-handled spoon or paddle for stirring the boiling wort.
- Primary Fermenter - A 6½ gallon (or greater) food-grade plastic bucket with lid, or a 6½ glass carboy.
- Airlock
- Blow-Off Tube
- Stopper (if using a carboy)
- Funnel (if using a carboy)
- Hydrometer (Optional, if you want to measure your specific gravity)
- Sanitizing Solution
- Scissors

If you choose to rack the beer into the secondary fermenter, you will require the following equipment:

- 5 gallon carboy (glass or plastic)
- Siphon Setup
- Airlock
- Stopper

The Magical Procedure:

Liquid Yeast Activation Before Brewing:

If you are fermenting with liquid yeast, you must activate the yeast packet before it is ready to pitch. Always check the manufacturing date stamped on the yeast packet. Yeast that is less than 1 month old may be activated on brew day. A yeast that is more than 2 months old may require additional preparation time. Always make sure your yeast has been properly activated before using. Please see www.boomchugalug.com/wyeast.htm for complete liquid yeast activation instructions.

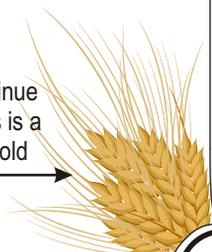
Time to Brew!

Total Boiling Time: 65 Minutes. While your wort is boiling, you should sanitize your fermentation equipment, such as your primary fermenter, airlock, scissors, stopper, etc. After you have sanitized your fermenter, fill it with 2 gallons of cold water, into which you will later add your hot boiled wort.

Note: High-gravity beers can ferment vigorously, thus increasing the risk of foam-over the top of the fermenter. Therefore, we recommend using a blow-off tube during the primary fermentation.

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Flip the sheet to continue
The magic. Also, this is a
good time to pour a cold
one! →



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1. Place the crushed grains in the muslin bag and add to 2½ gallons of water. Measure the water volume carefully to ensure you extract the proper amount of hop bitterness during the boil.
2. Heat water until the temperature is between 150° and 170°F. Steep the grains between this temperature range for 30 minutes. Steeping longer than 30 minutes does not hurt.
3. Remove and discard the grains, and bring this mixture to a boil. When boiling begins, remove the pot from the heat and add Malt Bag 1. To prevent scorching, stir until all of the malt is dissolved. Then bring this mixture to a boil. Watch for boilovers!
4. When boiling begins again, add ½ oz of Polaris hops. Boil these hops for the entire 65 minutes. During this boil time, take note of the approximate starting volume in the brew pot. As the boil progresses, try to maintain this approximate starting volume by adding additional boiling water to the kettle to make up for this volume lost to evaporation.
5. With 30 minutes remaining in the 65 minute boil, add ½ oz of Saaz hops.
6. With 5 minutes remaining in the 65 minute boil, pause the brew timer and remove kettle from the heat. Add the candy sugar, candi syrup and Malt Bag 2. Stir until dissolved and bring this mixture back to a boil. When boiling begins, boil for the final 5 minutes.
7. With 1 minute remaining in the boil, add the final ½ oz of Saaz hops.

Chill out, Man! (Chill the Wort)

1. At the end of the 65 minute boil, cool the wort to approximately 75°F as quickly as possible. With extract brewing, the easiest way to quick-chill the wort is to place your brew pot into a sink full of ice. For complete instructions using this method, please see www.boomchugalug.com/cooling.htm.
2. Add your chilled wort to the 2 gallons of water already in your fermenter.
3. Add any extra water needed to bring the total volume in your fermenter to 5 gallons.
4. If you would like to measure the specific gravity, now is a good time. To get an accurate reading, it is important to make sure all of the heavy wort extract you added to the fermenter has been completely mixed in the water.

Pitch the Yeast! (Into the Wort, But Not Out the Window!)

1. When your wort has cooled to 75°F (70° - 78°F is okay), aerate the wort before adding the yeast. Simply close the fermenter and swirl around to mix in oxygen. If you are swirling a carboy, it is helpful to place the carboy on a thick, folded blanket to avoid damaging the vessel.
2. After aerating, pitch (add) the yeast. Use the sanitized scissors to cut open the yeast packet. If you are using liquid yeast, sanitize the pack before opening. If you are using dried yeast, simply sprinkle the yeast over the wort. No mixing is necessary with dried yeast.
3. Close the fermenter, attach the blow-off tube, and keep the fermenter warm (between 70° - 78°F) until you see fermentation beginning, such as the airlock bubbling once every 30 seconds. Wrapping the fermenter with a blanket is an easy way to keep the fermenter warm.

Primary Fermentation:

There are several ways to know when fermentation has begun. First, you will begin to see bubbling through the airlock. If you are using a carboy, then you will usually see the yeast begin to form a layer over the beer's surface.

1. Once fermentation begins, move the fermenter to a room with the proper temperature. The ideal temperature to ferment this beer is between 64° - 78°F. Do not let the temperature drop below 64°F. If you do, fermentation

- may stop too soon. That's a bummer, man.
2. Active fermentation may take as long as two weeks after pitching the yeast, although fermentation may finish in 3 to 5 days.
3. If you choose to siphon the beer to secondary carboy for additional clearing and maturation, do so when fermentation begins to slow. Once fermentation is complete, allow the beer to rest for another 10 - 14 days before bottling.

Time to Bottle!

There are several ways to tell when fermentation is complete (besides your drooling). If you correctly pitched the yeast and fermentation quickly began, and if the beer fermented vigorously and the fermenter was always within the correct temperature range (64° - 78°F), then fermentation should finish in two weeks or less. You should see virtually no activity in the airlock. For example, if the airlock only bubbles once a minute or longer, then fermentation should be complete. If you are unsure if fermentation has ended, you may use your hydrometer to measure the specific gravity. If your specific gravity does not change after two or more days, then fermentation is complete and you are ready to bottle!

1. Before bottling, sanitize your bottling bucket, auto siphon (or racking cane), hose, bottle filler, caps and bottles. Glass bottles may be sanitized one day in advance by baking them in the oven. Instructions for bottle baking may be found at www.boomchugalug.com/baking_bottles.htm
2. Dissolve 5 ounces (weight) or 3/4 cup of priming sugar (dextrose / corn sugar) in 16 oz water. Boil for 5 minutes.
3. Pour the sugar solution into the bottling bucket, and siphon in the beer. Siphon carefully, trying to minimize splashing and aeration of the beer. Also when siphoning, be sure to leave behind the sediment at the bottom of the fermenter. When done siphoning, gently stir the beer in the bucket to make sure all of the sugar solution has been dissolved. Your racking cane makes a convenient stirring wand.
4. Elevate your bottling bucket, and attach your siphon hose and bottle filler to the bucket's spigot. Fill the bottles to about 1 inch from the top, and cap each bottle.

Carbonation and Maturation!

Now that your bottles are primed and capped, the remaining yeast will undergo a second fermentation in the bottle whereby they eat the priming sugar and produce carbon dioxide, which is trapped in the bottle to produce the carbonation. While your beer is carbonating, it will also be clearing and maturing - the young, rough undeveloped flavors develop into your magical beverage! Your wondrous elixir reaches awesome drinkability about 8 weeks from the day you began the brew, but don't be surprised if it keeps getting better as time goes on.

1. Place your bottles in a dark place at room temperature (62° F - 75° F), and wait at least two weeks for the beer to carbonate. It is important that you keep the beer between 62° F - 75° F for carbonation to develop. If the beer cools below 62° F, it may not properly carbonate. In brewing, this is officially known as the buzzkill. Keep it warm, let it carbonate!
2. Get your bottle opener handy dude (or dudette), because it's time to drink a beer! When pouring the beer into your glass, be sure to leave the bottle's sediment behind. That sediment is the yeast which carbonated your beer, and if you pour it into your glass, you'll make the beer cloudy and taste yeasty.
3. Once your beer is carbonated, you may store it in a cool place. Keep in mind that home-brewed is unfiltered, and unfiltered beers actually continue to improve with time. If your beer seems rough-around-the edges or tastes yeasty, these qualities usually morph into a smooth, clean beer over time. Cheers!

