



**Boa's Beer Sampling Series
Session 15: Celebration of Spring
March 26, 2011**



Falling between winter, with its heavy winter warmers, and summer, with its light wheat beers, spring is a flexible beer drinking season. Spring beers span the styles – 11 styles are offered in this beer tasting.

1. Magic Hat Vinyl Lager, South Burlington, Vermont (5.1%)

Vinyl sails in on her shining wings as the spinning sun returns. She is the season-shifter, bursting from her cocoon to sing the ancient song of vernal yearning and to summon spring's sweet green return. Her metamorphosis becomes our own. Her thirsts are shared by all. Drink in her mysterious elixir as the revolution blooms again. An easy-drinking Amber Lager from Magic Hat Brewing Company.

2. Clown Shoes Clementine, Ipswich, Massachusetts (6.0%)

Clementine is a Witbier conceived in a dream, in the middle of a blistering beat-down of a day. Hazy in appearance and healthily carbonated, it utilizes Chambly yeast to energetically shape its wheat malt base. Incorporated in the brewing process is clementine, sweet orange peel, a hint of coriander, and Summit hops, which together smack that mean day upside the head with a refreshing clown shoe.

3. St. Patty-whacker Stout, RAW Brewing, Washington, D.C. (4.5%)

This is a dry Irish "cream" stout that will have you shouting "Shore 'n begorrah!" Brewed with 4 different specialty malts, this beer features a creamy almost nitrogen-infused head and ruby-black color. Your palette will be "whacked" by the chocolate and roasted malts followed by a soothing, velvety finish. Also goes well with whiskey for Irish car bombs (perform at your own risk). "Thirst is a shameless disease so here's to a shameful cure." Brewed by Rich Wysocki.

4. Simcoe Spring Ale, Peak Organic Brewing Company, Portland, Maine (5.4%)

Organic beer is made without the aid of chemicals or genetically modified organisms. This brew is a classic Pale Ale, single-hopped and dry-hopped with Simcoe hops. The beer has a restrained malt profile, so the hops really pop, like flora in the spring.

5. 'Darkness' Irish Stout, Brewed by David Rabine, Ellicott City, Maryland (~5.0%)

This is a traditional Irish Stout with a smooth finish closer to a Murphy's than a Guinness (at least the type of Guinness we get here in the States, I hear it is better at the source). This black brew features full body taste with a tone of chocolate and roasted yumminess. This stout has a creamy/malty flavor with a dry finish and goes down easy. The yeast was a substitute due to availability (an Irish Ale versus the recommended London Ale strain) but I'm very happy with the result. This could be the base recipe for future stout experiments such as chocolate or vanilla bean. The recipe was found online at beerrecipes.org.

6. Harpoon Celtic Ale, Boston, Massachusetts (5.4%)

This Irish Red Ale is Harpoon's salute to St. Patrick. The brew features a deep amber color, with a malty and complex flavor. Celtic Ale has a moderate hop finish that, along with the generous amounts of malt, makes for a medium bodied, smooth, rich beer.

7. AARSH Imperial Red Ale, Clipper City Brewing Company, Baltimore, Maryland (7.0%)

The Mutiny Fleet showcases unusual beer styles. These are the biggest and boldest Heavy Seas beers and are produced in small batches. This imperial version of an Irish Red Ale is brewed with three kinds of grain then pulled through a pot of gold with two kinds of hops. Slainte!

8. Brewer's Best IPA, Brewed by Virgil Rabine, Ellicott City, Maryland (~5.0%)

This caramel-colored IPA is boldly hopped with ample carbonation. This brew sports a tangy fruit flavor with a hoppy finish that bites you back. This beer spawned from an "everything you need in a kit": Brewer's Best IPA. The description from the box: "Big, bold and beautiful. Plenty of Crystal and Victory malt flavors, topped with tons of hops."

9. Aprihop, Dogfish Head Brewing Company, Milton, Delaware (7.0%)

Aprihop is a fruit beer for hopheads! It is an American IPA brewed with Pilsner and Crystal malts massively hopped in the continuous fashion. The flavor is complimented by the addition of Apricots.

10. Chatoe Rogue First Growth Creek Ale, Rogue Ales, Newport, Oregon (6.3%)

Rogue Ales made this beer with its own home-grown hops and barley – the GYO on the label is a Rogue term for Grow Your Own. This brew features a malty aroma, dark mahogany-brown color, and rich, malty sweetness that finishes dry on top of a lush cherry flavor.

11. Gordon Biersch Maibock, Palo Alto, California (7.1%)

Maibocks are customarily served during spring festivals in the month of May, but we can't wait that long for spring. The Maibock style tends to be lighter in color and less malty than a traditional Bock, and may be hoppier and more bitter, but still with a relatively low hop flavor. Gordon Biersch Maibock achieves its rich malty flavor from dark roasted caramel malt, and lots of it. The rich flavor from the malt complements the moderate level of bitterness to create a perfect balance.

12. Monk's Blood, 21st Amendment Brewery, San Francisco, California (8.3%)

Monk's Blood is a dark Belgian-style Strong Ale that is aged on oak. The recipe for this brew includes dark Belgian candi sugar, cinnamon, vanilla bean, and dried black mission figs.

Boa's Beer Sampling Series – Past Sessions

Session 1: October 2, 2004, Octoberfest Beers

Session 2: January 8, 2005, Holiday Beers

Session 3: June 18, 2005, Summer Beers

Session 4: September 10, 2005, Fruit Beers of New England

Session 5: December 3, 2005, IPAs

Session 6: June 17, 2006, Wheat Beers

Session 7: December 2, 2006, Porters and Stouts

Session 8: June 1, 2007, Belgian Beers

Session 9: December 1, 2007, Winter Seasonal Beers

Session 10: July 5, 2008, American Beer

Session 11: October 24, 2008, Oktoberfest (German beers)

Session 12: April 18, 2009, Spring Beers

Session 13: December 5, 2009, Decemberfest

Session 14: June 12, 2010, Celebrating the World Cup