

HOW TO MAKE BEER

It's not as hard as you might think to brew it yourself, writes **Nick Mulgrew**

"There's no better feeling in the world than tasting your very own beer," says Lynnae Endersby of Cape Town's Beerlab, one of a handful of new SA retailers catering to a foaming interest in home brewing. Of course, sorghum-based beers like umqombothi have been made at home for hundreds of years. Enterprising shebeeners made their own beer and other alcoholic drinks to get around prohibition laws during apartheid, and to save a buck or two. More recently, however, home brewing has become en vogue, thanks to the growth of local microbreweries and "craft beer".

A typical home-brewing kit contains the basic equipment and ingredients to make 20 litres of beer. It's as easy as putting a large kettle on the stove, pouring in a few things and transferring everything to a sterilised plastic bucket. Once fermentation is complete, usually after a few weeks at a cool temperature, you can bottle your beer.

"People who have never home brewed think it's really complicated and you need a degree in engineering or chemistry," says Endersby. "But it's so easy to get started."

Once you've started, big things might follow. Two years ago, Ant Cawood and his brother-in-law Andrew opened a shop called Beerguevara in their home after becoming frustrated by the limited varieties of malt and hops available to home brewers. Today they are Cape Town's acknowledged all-grain home-brewing specialists, with a branch in KZN.

"We started running free home-brewing workshops from our kitchen, advertised on Facebook," says Cawood. "They would be fully booked within two hours of posting the event."

Beerguevara's workshops take brewers through every aspect of the all-grain brewing process. "I love the creativity of it," says Cawood. "There are over a hundred different hop varieties, each with their own distinct characteristics. There is an amazing variety of malts to choose from that add specific colour, taste and texture to your beer, not to forget the myriad strains of yeast, each with their own unique signature."

There are home-brewing clubs all over SA. "New brewers don't have to go it alone," says Dion van Huissteen, chairman of KZN's East Coast Brewers.

If you're new, right now is the perfect time to start. Winter's cooler air means you don't need any specialised or expensive temperature equipment to make good beer.

And once you're set up, you can make beer for from as little as R3 a bottle. Making something delicious and well crafted can become an addiction.

2. SPARGE: Add even hotter water to your mash, halting the conversion process and circulating the grain. Then, drain the wort off of the grain.

5. FERMENT: Chill wort and transfer to a fermenter. Aerate the wort, then pitch your chosen strain of yeast.

6. WAIT: Fermentation can take anything from a week to several months. Keep your fermenter at the right temperature, otherwise the yeast will smell.

1. MASH: Steep crushed grains in hot water. This makes the malt enzymes convert starch into sugars so that yeast can convert into alcohol. The resulting sweet liquid is called wort.

3. BOIL: Bring wort to a rolling boil and add hops according to your recipe. (If you're brewing from extract, you will skip mashing and sparging and add malt extract at the beginning of the boil.)

4. STERILISE: Sterilise absolutely everything that comes into contact with your wort after it has been boiled. Nothing spoils beer better than bacteria.

7. BOTTLE: Once fermentation is complete, prime your beer with additional sugar and bottle it. Leftover yeast will feed on the sugar and carbonate your beer in the bottle. (Otherwise known as bottle conditioning.) Don't forget to sterilise your bottles!

8. DRINK: After a few weeks at the right temperature, your beer will be ready to drink — and maybe share.



JLF DESIGN/SPARX

STORES (kits, books, workshops, et cetera; all deliver nationally)

Beerguevara Cape Town and KwaZulu-Natal, www.beerguevara.com;

BeerLab Ndabeni, Cape Town, www.beerlab.co.za;

The Winemaker's Club Gordon's Bay, Western Cape, www.winemakersclub.co.za;

Toppies Alberton, Johannesburg, www.tbco.co.za;

The Beer Keg Kya Sands, Johannesburg, www.thebeerkeg.co.za;

Brewcraft Boksburg, Johannesburg; branches in Durban, Cape Town, Vaal Triangle and Pretoria, www.brewcraft.co.za;

Tradeger Brewing Concepts Germiston, East Rand, www.tradeger.co.za;

Brewmart Pretoria, www.brewmart.co.za;

DIY Beer Brewing Pretoria, www.diybeerbrewing.co.za;

Beerkit Port Elizabeth, www.beerkit.co.za.

CLUBS
SouthYeasters Homebrewers Club Western Cape, www.southyeasters.co.za;

Wort Hog Brewers Gauteng, www.worthogbrewers.co.za;

East Coast Brewers KwaZulu-Natal, www.eastcoastbrewers.za.org

BOOKS

How to Brew by John Palmer;

Brewing Better Beer by Gordon Strong;

The Complete Joy of Homebrewing (4th ed.), by Charlie Papazian.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Homebrewtalk.com; Wortsandall.co.za

SWEET ENDINGS

Like child's play, this dessert is really easy to whip up for dad this Father's Day



NO-BAKE CHOCOLATE PUD

176g packet of Oreo chocolate biscuits (or other chocolate biscuits)

80g butter, melted

1 x 250g tub cream cheese, softened

60ml (4tbsp) caster sugar

30ml (2tbsp) milk

250ml (1 cup) cream, lightly whipped

1 packet chocolate pudding made with

310ml full cream milk

To Serve:

Grated chocolate and maraschino cherries, optional

In a food processor, crush the biscuits until you have fine crumbs. If you don't have a food processor, place them in a plastic bag, tie a

loose knot and crush with a rolling pin. Line a medium loaf pan with plastic wrap or make it freeform on a baking sheet. Combine the chocolate crumbs and butter in a bowl and then press into the base of the loaf pan. Place in the fridge and allow to set. Combine the cream cheese, sugar and milk in a bowl using a metal whisk. Add half of the whipped cream and spread this mixture over the biscuit base. Make up the chocolate pudding using the milk measurement and spoon over the cream cheese mixture. Top off with the remaining cream. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 2 hours. If desired, serve sprinkled with grated chocolate and cherries. Cut in slices. Serves 8-10