A BRIEF BEER & FOOD MATCHING CHART

Key to Symbols:
- Color approximates actual beer
- Shaded circles = range of variation
- Alcohol/volume: 3%
- Hop Bitterness: 15 IBU
- Flavor impact: Delicate
- 70+ Intense
- Flavor impact includes: original gravity, sweetness, bitterness, maltiness, roastiness and fermentation character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beer Type</th>
<th>Flavor Impact</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Hop Bitterness</th>
<th>Flavor Impact</th>
<th>Glassware</th>
<th>Serving Temp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monterey Jack</td>
<td>4.5–7 °C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Milder</td>
<td>40–45 °F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Porter</td>
<td>4.5–7 °C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Milder</td>
<td>40–45 °F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambic</td>
<td>4.5–7 °C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Milder</td>
<td>40–45 °F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilsner</td>
<td>4.5–7 °C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Milder</td>
<td>40–45 °F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubbel</td>
<td>7–10 °C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Milder</td>
<td>40–45 °F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Ale</td>
<td>4.5–7 °C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Milder</td>
<td>40–45 °F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stout</td>
<td>4.5–7 °C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Milder</td>
<td>40–45 °F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lager</td>
<td>4.5–7 °C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Milder</td>
<td>40–45 °F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Three basic principles should be considered; these are listed below. Each one is important, but there is no 1-2-3 order for the pairing process. Start with either a specific beer or food, then seek a suitable partner according to the following guidelines:

1. **Match Strength with Strength.** Delicate dishes work best with delicate beers, and strongly-flavored foods demand assertive beers—no surprise there. Intensity of flavor is not any single thing, but a sum of the taste experience. In beer, it may involve alcoholic strength, malt character, hop bitterness, sweetness, richness, roastiness and more. In food, richness (okay, let’s just say it—fat), sweetness, cooking methods, spicing, texture and complexity all play a role.

2. **Find Harmonies.** Combinations often work best when they share some common flavor or aroma elements. The nutty flavors of an English-style brown ale and a handmade cheddar cheese; the deep, roasted flavors of imperial stout and chocolate truffles; the clean caramelly flavors of an Oktoberfest lager and roasted pork are all examples of this.

3. **Consider Sweetness, Bitterness, Carbonation, Heat (Spice) and Richness.** Certain qualities of food and beer interact with each other in specific, predictable ways. Taking advantage of these interactions ensures that the food and beer will balance each other, with one partner not throwing the match out of whack. These are specific interactions, different from the intensity-matching mentioned above. One sort of has to parse these out one-by-one as the situation demands, and find flavors that will enhance one another. The chart below lays out the specifics.

Foods that have a lot of sweetness or fatty richness (or both) can be matched by a various elements in beer: hop bitterness, sweetness, roasted/toasted malt or alcohol. Carbonation is also effective at cutting richness.

Malty sweetness cools the heat, so if you’re leaning to a hoppy beer with spicy food, make sure it has plenty of malt as well.

**Beer and Food: Specific Interactions**

- **Hop Bitterness**
  - Interaction: Balances
  - Food: Sweetness, Richness (fat), Umami

- **Roasted Malt**
  - Interaction: Balances
  - Food: Spiciness (chili heat), Acidity

- **Carbonation**
  - Interaction: Balances
  - Food: Spiciness (chili heat)

- **Alcohol**
  - Interaction: Emphasizes
  - Food: Spiciness (chili heat)

**What About Complement and/or Contrast?** The complement aspect is covered by step 2, Find Harmonies. Contrast is always present to some degree, and may dominate the relationship or not. It’s usually the case that contrasting and complimentary relationships exist, as they are not mutually exclusive. Most of the major players in contrast are covered by the interacting elements noted in step 3, above. Be aware, however, that having some degree of contrast doesn’t remove the need to match intensities as described in step 1.