

# Types of Beer

## **Ale**

Although the term covers a fascinating variety of styles, all ales share certain characteristics. Top-fermentation and the inclusion of more hops in the wort gives these beers a distinctive fruitiness, acidity and a pleasantly-bitter seasoning. All ales typically take less time to brew and age than lagers and have a more assertive, individual personality, though their alcoholic strength may be the same. Ales are best enjoyed at room temperature or slightly warmer.

## **Lager**

The word lager is derived from the German verb “lagern”, which means: to store. During the late middle ages, before the days of refrigeration, fermentation was a hit-or-miss affair, especially during the hot summer months. To ensure a supply of beer for the summer, brewers in the Bavarian Alps stored kegs of spring brew in icy mountain caves. As the beer slowly aged, the yeast settled, creating a drink that was dark but clear and sparkling with a crisper, more delicate flavor. In 1842, lager acquired its familiar golden color when a brewery in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia perfected a pale, bottom-fermented version of the beer. Lagers typically take more time to brew and are aged longer than ales. Lagers are best enjoyed at cooler-than-room temperature.

## **Porter and Stout**

Whether dry or sweet, flavored with roasted malt barley, oats or certain sugars, stouts and porters are characterized by darkness and depth. Both types of beer are delicious with hearty meat stews and surprisingly good with shellfish. The pairing of oysters and stout has long been acknowledged as one of the world's great gastronomic marriages.