



Everett's Wines, Spirits & Beer

Monthly Newsletter

March 2008, Issue #5

Faith and Begoor! It's March again, and that means it's time for St. Patty's day!

Who doesn't love St. Patrick's day? Spring is just around the corner, you get to pinch people who forget to wear green, and the Guinness flows like water! Now the morning after... well we can worry about that later.

This issue is dedicated entirely to St. Patrick's day and Ireland. In it you will find a wine segment on mead, a piece on Irish whiskies, a primer on Guinness beer, and a Do's and Don'ts guide to Irish travel with a Guinness beef stew recipe thrown in for good measure!

Last month I asked for any reader feedback, be it comments, suggestions, or anything else. I got some good responses, but due to lack of space I can only include one. And it's fitting for this issue:

Hi Bryan,

Thanks for the newsletter. I am especially interested in the Do's and Don'ts guide to traveling in Ireland that you will be putting out in the next newsletter. We are heading to Ireland for the first time on April 4 and we could sure use the tips since we have never been there. We will be in Southern Ireland and the following are on the agenda: The Burren • Blarney • Killarney • The Ring of Kerry • Bunratty

One of my lifelong dreams has been to sit in a real Irish pub with a real Guinness in my hand. So, I will be fulfilling that dream and seeing what Ireland is all about. So, your tips coming in March could not happen at a better time for us.

Great newsletter!

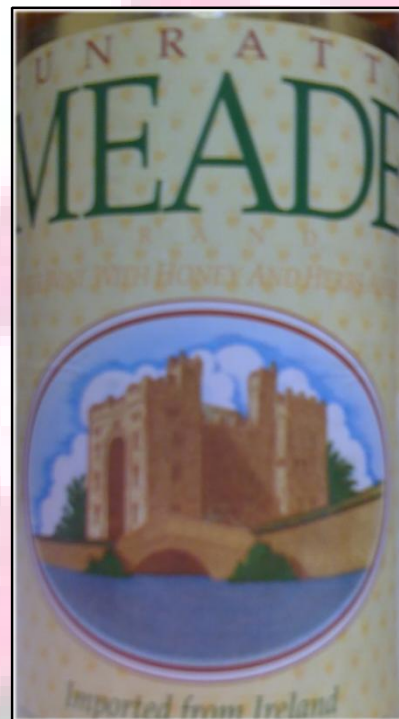
Regards,

Rocky Hukle
Lake Summerset

Thanks for the comment Rocky! I'm glad you enjoy the newsletter. You'll love Ireland, I'm sure, and I hope my mini guide can help you along the way! And be careful kissin' that Blarney Stone! It's pretty high up!
-Bryan

Wine

Well I looked really hard to find a wine topic that related to Ireland. After some brain pain inducing thought, I finally remembered mead! Mead, as I'm sure you know, is wine that is made from honey.



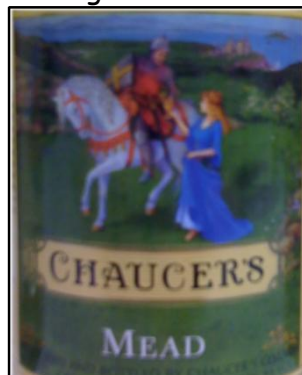
There are many varieties of mead, from many countries around the world. Who did it first? Well it wasn't Ireland (although they did give us whisky distilling, but we'll talk about that in the next column). The earliest examples of mead can be traced back to the ancient Middle East. Mead has been a popular beverage the world over for many centuries.

Mead was especially popular in England and Ireland and can be found in many classic stories and tales from English and Irish writers, such as in Geoffrey

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

Ireland has such a love of mead that it is in fact tradition for a man and a woman to toast their marriage on the next full moon after their wedding with mead. Can you guess what popular term we derived from this? Yep, "honeymoon"!

While you can find a form of mead in almost every country on Earth, Ireland's mead is particularly tasty. Moderate in alcohol, smooth, and just enough sweetness make Irish mead stand out from the rest.



Chaucer's Mead isn't from Ireland, but it's tasty and smooth nonetheless.

Spirits

Though whisky is thought to have been around before the 1400's, it's earliest known written records are in Irish Gaelic scripts left behind by monks from around this time (a brief glance of history certainly shows that monks of various cultures were awfully inventive when it came to creating intoxicating substances, but that's a story for another issue). "Whisky" is actually a Gaelic word for "water".

Jameson and Bushmills are the two biggest brands of Irish whisky, and probably the two you've heard most about. Jameson, to my taste, is usually smoother than most Irish whiskies with one exception. Bushmills 10 Year is incredibly smooth, and can actually rival many bourbons in terms of taste and elegance. For the money, this is my Irish whisky of choice every time.



So the Irish gave us whisky, and the word honeymoon. Did you know they also created **moonshine**?



Something you may or may not have heard of is Potcheen. Potcheen is un-aged Irish whisky, and is named after the small pot distilling method they used to make it. (Potcheen literally means "little pot") Potcheen was banned in Ireland in the 1600's, but not because it was bad for you or made people do crazy things (though I'm sure it contributed to more than a few pub brawls in its day). It was outlawed as a way for the government to force distillers to use large, commercial stills (which are still mainly used

today). Using big stills simplified taxation on the alcohol industry. Though it was outlawed, Potcheen's tradition was kept alive by the people in the countryside and mountains who continued to craft and distill it. Today, Potcheen is legal again and is made by several companies.



Beer

This picture is not fake! At Guinness in Dublin, The bartenders are so talented at drawing pints that they can actually pour them in such a way as to create shamrocks and harps in the head!

When you think of Ireland, undoubtedly the images of a pub and a pint of Guinness come to mind! As well they should! When I got out of the airport in Dublin, walked past a statue of a flying pig (no lie) and got on a bus, the first thing the driver said was "Welcome to Oyerland! First stop, the pub on the side of the road!" Turns out he was right; I was having my first ever real Irish Guinness at 11am on a Monday morning!

Guinness has one of the oldest histories in Ireland. In fact, the Irish symbol of the harp was actually the Guinness family symbol. Ireland wanted to use it, so Guinness obliged and flipped theirs around. This is why the Guinness harp and Irish harp are mirror opposites.



The traditional beer of Ireland in the Stout. Stouts tend to be full bodied (but lighter compared to English stouts), dark red in color, and have flavors of roasted malts and coffee. Guinness is also unique because it can float on top of other beers, like in a Black & Tan. You can also try many other combinations like a Black & Blue (Guinness on Blue Moon) and a Black Hoe (Guinness on Hoegaarden).

If you need a pint glass, we currently have Guinness glasses with 4 different logos. At \$2 a piece, everyone at the party can have a pint!



Extra

Some handy things to remember when travelling in Ireland:

Do:

Eat in Pubs. It's the best bang for your buck. Restaurants tend to be overly expensive and, due to the smoking ban, food quality in pubs has dramatically increased in recent years. Also, if a pub has a flagship beer or meal, always pick that. Quite a few pubs have their own craft beers which can be very fun to try.

In Dublin, go on the literary pub crawl. A couple of actors will take you through Dublin and explain several historical landmarks while also hitting several well known pubs. Fun and educational!

Some other places to see outside of the usual sights (i.e. Blarney, etc) are **Kilmainham Jail** (played an important role in Ireland's long fight for independence), **Glendalough** (an ancient monastery located in County Wicklow), **St. Patrick's Cathedral** (in Dublin), and any museums (especially the **National Museum of Ireland**). Museums are completely free of charge and can be a great way to learn about the deep history of the country. **Dublin Castle** is also a fairly educational tour.

Utilize call shops! They are much more cost effective than a cell phone. Most shops have phone rates ranging from 5¢ to 10¢ per minute, and internet access as low as a 1-3 Euros an hour!

Don't:

Talk about politics, especially after a few pints. (In Europe in general American politics are a pretty hot topic. It's best to stay away from the subject as there is little chance on avoiding a heated argument)

Don't ask for a Black & Tan (half Guinness, half Harp) or an Irish Car Bomb. Both of these drinks are offensive to the Irish. If you want a Black and Tan, ask for a Half & Half.

Don't Tip! Tipping is not a part of the culture, and the waiter or bartender will just give it back to you.

Guinness Beef Stew

Servings: 1

Preparation Time: 10 min

Cooking Time: 90 min

Ingredients:

- 120 g chuck steak raw lean beef, cut into 3 cm cubes
- 2 tsp plain white flour
- 2 tsp Always Fresh Olive Oil Pure Olive Oil
- 1/2 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 2 tsp brown sugar
- 1 whole fresh carrot, peeled and thickly sliced
- 1 whole dried bay leaf
- 1 whole stock cube, (beef), dissolved in 1 cup (250ml) hot water
- 125 ml Guinness Guinness

Instructions:

- Place the steak in a bowl and toss with flour. Heat oil in a small non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add onion and stir-fry for 2 minutes or until soft. Add beef and stir-fry for 2 minutes further or until lightly browned.
- Add garlic, sugar, carrot, bay leaf, stock and Guinness. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 1 1/4 hours or until steak is tender and sauce has thickened. Stir occasionally, adding extra water if necessary. Taste and season with salt and pepper.

(For another good recipe, try searching for "Guinness pork chops" on Google.)

And there you have it. Our first St. Patrick's issue comes to a close. Hopefully you learned a bit of useful information should you ever travel to the Emerald Isle. As always, questions, comments and feedback can be sent to everettsnewsletter@hotmail.com. See you next month!

