

Style

Beer doesn't show the vast range of varying characteristics that its cousin wine does — still there are great differences in color, body, and flavor from one beer to the next. These differences are due to the types and amounts of grain and flavorings used, to the quality and constituents of the water employed, and simply to brewing methods. Beer can be made into a very light, almost flavorless beverage (like many of the American "lite" beers), or it can be made into something dark and rich and extremely bitter (like Guinness Stout, for instance). There are even beers in Belgium — some of which are sealed with corks, like wine bottles — that are flavored with macerated bitter cherries!

What are the best beers in America today? That is, of course, a matter of personal opinion. I don't much like most of the regular mass-market American beers, simply because they don't have much of what I have come to think of as beer flavor. I do favor Anchor Steam Beer and Albion Ale, as well as the medium-dark Bohemia Ale from Mexico (which, since I live in Southern California, is virtually a regional beer for me.) For the fun of it, I held a wine-tasting-type judging of beers with some friends of mine not long ago, and Heineken's came out Number One almost unanimously, for its rich blend of flavors and its good, full body. Other beers we rated highly included Carlsberg (Denmark), Beck's and Würzburger (Germany), Harp Lager (Ireland), and Asahi (Japan). I also enjoy Kronenberg, a pleasant, medium-body beer with a vaguely sweet aftertaste, from the Alsatian region of France.

The aforementioned H.L. Mencken, apparently a dedicated brew sampler, covered the field best when he noted, "There is no bad beer; some kinds are better than others."

Popcorn: The Most Popular Munchie

BY JOHN KROUT



Everyone goes for popcorn. It's the most economical of people-pleasers. But it has to be made right. None of that ancient, soggy, chewy, lumpy, starchy junk that's sold in most movie theaters. No, no; popcorn must be hot, crunchy and unburnt... and that isn't as easy as most people think.

The kernels must heat evenly on all sides, so choose a pot or skillet with a thick bottom that spreads heat uniformly. A thin bottom will inevitably develop hot spots where kernels char, and black popcorn carbon is a miserable cleanup headache as well as a waste of good kernels.

Cooking oil should surround each kernel and provide even heat. Too little oil promotes burnt corn; too

much produces a soggy mess. One major popcorn marketer says that a volume ration of 3 parts oil to 1 part popcorn is perfect for his product; your mileage will probably be lower, depending on the brand of corn. A good test: drop one or two kernels in the bottom and add a layer of oil just deep enough to cover them, and no more.

Those first two kernels can save some effort. Turn on the heat before adding the full load. When they pop, the oil is hot enough for the main event. Any burner setting from medium to high should work; if cooking with gas, the flame should definitely touch the pot.

Pour in the corn and slap on the lid. A lid with a steam hole helps the popcorn stay crisp, because the steam of several hundred popped kernels is substantial, and most of the cooking oil is vaporized too.

Naturally, when the popcorn starts flying, some unpopped kernels lift off as well. Sooner or later a layer of popped material prevents the unpopped from falling back for another hot oil bath, so the pot needs to be shaken to help the unpopped make it back to the bottom. A good rattle or two every thirty seconds will do, though some fanatics insist on constant agitation.

When the sound has slowed down to about one pop per second, shut off the heat and get the pot off the burner. Expect the last few kernels to pop as the pot cools.

Pour the finished product out for the grateful masses and start the next batch immediately — if the first bowlful is a hit, a popcorn frenzy will probably strike.

"Some Call It Preppy"

BY BYRON LAURSEN



We asked everybody! Several people, anyway. From Harvard Squares to Rambling Wrecks (from Georgia Tech). We even gave the Beavers (of Oregon State) a shot. Menfolk. Womenfolk. Sophomores, Texans and normal people, too. *Ampersand's* Very First Annual Survey of Campus Style covered ten diverse campuses all across the country, water-witching for signs of trends to come, probing for the favorites of the day, divining the Great American Collegiate Closet. And what'd we get? Too many alligators, that's what! We couldn't see the trends for all the pesky Izod Lacoste alligators crawling over the questionnaire forms like cockroaches on a BLT abandoned yesterday in a New York apartment. Some of you loved 'em! (The alligators, we mean, not the cockroaches.) Some of you couldn't stand the sight of 'em. It confused us horribly. One editor began to make deplorable noises into his Selectric, then left to enroll in a truck driving correspondence school.

But the more thoughtful of us began to notice things: like, perhaps the preppy/classic/all-must-look-same movement reflects a tough

economy.

Money for clothes has to be aimed at sure bets these Reaganismic days. Furthermore, even if sameness reigns, the focus on fashion is strong. Fashion, as much for collegians as anyone else, remains a primary way of telling the world what you want it to think about you. In the eloquent words of a male Purdue sophomore, "People seem to be more aware of

the physical appearance, then handle the mental aspects later."

"Almost anything goes these days," says another Purduvian man. "I hear the mini skirt is back! Where is it?"

It is not on the hips of the 21-year-old Purdue woman who listed the resurgent mini under "Things I would never wear." Other a-thousand-times-no items included sparkles or beaded looks (says an Oregon State senior woman), hot pants and/or "trampy" clothes (women from Tulane) and plaid pants, velour shirts, tank tops or fat ties for a 20-year-old Georgia Tech man in his junior season.

"Prep stuff" and "ALLIGATORS" made the never-wear lists, too. But more frequently they were on

lists of choice for date wear, party clothes and going-to-class togs. The Izodian reptiles also appeared often in the "Going Out of Style" questionnaire slot. So go figure. Likewise, miniskirts were perceived both as coming into and going out of favor. So were designer jeans.

Luckily, since lasting fashion value turned up as a major concern, we asked what each respondent thought had stayed in style over the last three years. Here are some of the more interesting answers:

Women cited "rustic" styles, Levi's, designer jeans, designer "anything," bulky sweaters, oxford shirts, "renaissance" styles, narrow leg pants, classic sweater-and-blouse combos and, of course, the preppy look. A University of Texas woman, about to gun for an advertising career, ended her discussion of lasting styles with a strong practical note: "I'm more conscious of my clothes," she said, "because I'll be interviewing soon. I have to spend more \$ on quality items."

Men listed tweeds as perpetually stylish, a long with button-downs, cords, penny loafers, topsiders, wool jackets, thin silk ties, "neat looking stuff as opposed to sloppy," jeans, and the ever-popular navy blazer. "I used to be very fashion oriented — what is 'in' today," says a junior man from Georgia Tech. "Now I am more into the classical look (some call it preppy)."

But the same student listed preppy clothes as the worst thing a woman could wear. So did yet another Georgia Tech man, who stated a preference for women in "semi-tight" jeans and shirts "(not crotch-grabbers)." Interestingly, no women added gratuitous comments on what men should not wear.

The fashionable folks on these pages are UCLA students, most of 'em, whose pictures say more about style than any words could. The pictures are by Linda Epstein, and they were taken in M & J Country Shoe Store in Westwood, CA, under the astute direction of coordinator Elizabeth Freeman.

