

# Germany celebrates 500 years of beer purity law

By JONA KALLGREN  
Associated Press

INGOLSTADT, Germany — To some it's the real deal, but to others it's a bland brew, but thanks to a 500-year-old rule everybody can be sure what's in German beer.

Chancellor Angela Merkel was among those toasting the anniversary of a law that allowed only water, hops and malt as ingredients — yeast was added to the list later.

Praising the law at a ceremony in Ingolstadt, southern Germany, Merkel half-jokingly quoted religious reformer and bon vivant Martin Luther, who said that "he who has no beer, has nothing to drink."

Records have that in 1516 Duke William IV of Bavaria signed a beer purity law in the city that was eventually adopted throughout Germany. It's still on the books, albeit with some exceptions, today.

The law originally stipulated that only barley should be used for beer. Other grains, such as wheat, were considered too valuable as food to be turned into beverages, according to Nina Anika Klotz, editor of beer magazine Hopfenhelden.

Another argument was consumer protection: brews that contained ingredients such as fungus and herbs sometimes had "quite undesirable results," said Klotz.

Critics say the so-called Reinheitsgebot — whose name means divine commandment in German — is little more than a marketing trick dreamed up in the early 20th century to promote German beer against foreign



In this photo taken April 21 a brewer handles hop-pellets and barley in the brewery 'Griessbraeu' in Murnau, Germany.



In this photo taken April 21 a waiter fills up a beer in the brewery 'Griessbraeu' in Murnau, Germany.

competitors.

While brewers in neighboring Belgium merrily make beers containing coriander and orange peel, for example, such ingredients are theoretically "verboten" in Germany. This has proved particularly frustrating for a young guard of craft beer enthusiasts trying to break into the German market.

But some old-fashioned brewers feel stifled by the

law, too.

Helmut Fritsche, owner of Klosterbrauerei Neuzelle brewery some two hours west of Berlin, started what became known as the Brandenburg Beer War after authorities ruled that his black beer was illegal because it contained sugar.

"We fought for ten years," he said. "Fought with the federation of brewers, with the state government, until



A musician holds a bierstein during a celebration of the 500th anniversary of the German beer purity law in Kaltenberg near Geltendorf, southern Germany, April 23.



In this photo taken April 21 brewer Michael Gilg controls a sample of wort in his brewery 'Griessbraeu' in Murnau, Germany.

the highest administrative court in 2005 decided that our black beer, that includes a pinch of sugar, could be called beer."

Fritsche now brews many beers with added natural ingredients, such as cherries, asparagus and even potatoes. "What do we want beer

as a product to represent? We want it to represent flavor. And we shouldn't inhibit the variety of flavors. Of course we should never add ingredients that are dangerous to humans," he said.

Fresh ideas may be needed if German brewers don't want their income to dry up.

While Germans are still ranked second — just after the Czechs — annual beer consumption per capita has fallen from 141 liters in 1991 to 98 liters last year.

At least one novelty seems to have the blessing of mainstream breweries, though. Last year, the share of alcohol-free beer rose to 5.6 percent from 5.4 percent in Germany thanks to its growing popularity among consumers.



These savory egg, meat and vegetable treats are ideal for a Mother's Day breakfast in bed.

AP Photo/J.M. Hirsch

## Easier breakfast in bed on Mother's Day

By MELISSA D'ARABIAN  
Associated Press

Breakfast in bed is a love language in our home. Anytime there is a special occasion to celebrate — a birthday, Mother's Day, Father's Day, whatever — the rest of the family follows an unspoken agreement to meet early in the kitchen to craft a breakfast-in-bed tray. I'm always first to the kitchen, and as I get the project rolling my daughters show up one at a time, bleary-eyed and clutching handmade crafts or cards and some flowers picked from the garden.

As the team leader for many of the breakfasts our family has orchestrated over the years, I've developed a few best practices. And my No. 1 tip: Do the bulk of the work the night before. Overnight breakfast recipes are key. The (critical) decorating of the tray with small kiddos sucks up a surprising amount of time, leaving precious little space for complex recipe execution in the morning.

Tip No. 2: Serve something a little special. Stepping outside the routine breakfast menu has incredible power to make the whole morning feel like a party.

Tip No. 3: Keep in mind the logistics of eating off a tray while mostly reclined in bed. Cereal, aside from breaking rule No. 2, is just about impossible to eat in bed

### EASY OVERNIGHT INDIVIDUAL EGG STRATA

**Start to finish:** 45 minutes, plus overnight chilling

**Servings:** 8

- 8 slices of white whole-grain bread
- 2 small breakfast sausage links or 1 large link chicken sausage, mild or spicy (uncooked), casings removed
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup finely chopped button or mixed mushrooms
- 4 ounces frozen chopped spinach, thawed and excess liquid squeezed out
- 1/4 cup (2 ounces) light cream cheese
- 1/4 cup salsa
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 whole eggs
- 2 egg whites
- 3/4 cup low-fat milk
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper
- 2 medium tomatoes, cut into 8 thin slices
- 1/4 cup shredded Gruyere, Swiss or cheddar cheese

Cut the crusts off the bread, then cut the crusts into 1/2-inch cubes and set aside.

Use the palm of your hand to lightly press the slices of bread flat, making them thin and a little doughy. Coat the cups of a muffin pan with cooking spray, then gently press 1 slice into each cup, creating

8 little crusts. Set aside.

In a medium saute pan over medium-high, cook the sausage, crumbling with a spoon, until no longer pink, about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and mushrooms and cook until fragrant, about another minute. Add the spinach, cream cheese and salsa, then cook for another 2 minutes (the mushrooms will not be fully cooked). Remove from the heat and stir in the mustard. Allow to cool for several minutes.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, egg whites and milk until frothy. Add the slightly cooled mushroom and sausage mixture and stir to combine. Season with generous pinches each of salt and pepper. Place a few cubes of bread crust in each muffin cup, then spoon the egg mixture on top. You may not need all of the bread crusts. Lay 1 slice of tomato on top of each tart, then 1/2 tablespoon of cheese over that.

Cover the muffin tray with foil and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. When you are ready to serve, heat the oven to 350 F. Bake for 15 minutes covered, then remove the foil and continue baking until the eggs are firm, another 10 to 15 minutes.

*Nutrition information per serving: 170 calories; 50 calories from fat (29 percent of total calories); 6 g fat (2.5 g saturated); 0 g trans fats; 75 mg cholesterol; 430 mg sodium; 19 g carbohydrate; 2 g fiber; 5 g sugar; 10 g protein.*

without spilling. And while you don't need to be limited to finger food, think twice before getting too cozy with messy and liquid-based meal ideas. (It takes weeks for the smell of maple syrup to leave a comforter after a serious spill. Listen to the voice of experience on this one.)

So what dish covers all these bases? And is healthy? Egg strata, which layers bread, eggs, meat and veggies all in one dish. I make mine in a muffin tin, which results in perfect portioning, pretty presentation and the flexibility to pick up

breakfast with your hands or use a fork and knife. I use white whole-grain bread and a combination of eggs and egg whites to keep the nutrient profile reasonable. So even your morning breakfast party can boost your day with protein and fiber.

## Banana bread pudding is the treat moms want

By KATIE WORKMAN  
Associated Press

I'm always at a bit of a loss about what to say about Mother's Day, not to mention similar holidays that feel slightly (more than slightly?) manufactured.

I'm not a curmudgeon about them, exactly, but I'm a bit skeptical of the external forces that say, "THIS is the day you need to celebrate your sweetheart/father/mother/uncle's neighbor's dog/cousin, and you'd better do it right!" Go out? Stay in for breakfast in bed? The pressure! Who needs it?

But on the flip side, I definitely would be sad if the kids ignored the holiday completely. And because I am always firmly entrenched in the kitchen, I do get a bit excited when they elbow me out and take over the culinary detail for the day.

Not seeing the mess — and knowing that my husband will be there to help put the kitchen back together when they are finished — is an even

greater thrill. I really don't care what they decide to make. In this case, it really is the thought that counts. But if they are at a loss for ideas, I might leave a copy of this recipe on the counter a few days ahead of time.

I originally made this for my friend's 50th birthday, and we were all a bit in love. It's a simple kid-friendly dish to make. Egg cracking, measuring, whisking, banana mashing, bread cutting (easy with even a kid's knife, and the cubes don't have to be perfect at all), all very doable. Younger kids will need an adult on hand to help get the dish in and out of the oven, but other than that this is a dish that any enthusiastic kid would be thrilled to serve up to Mom.

*Katie Workman has written two cookbooks focused on easy, family-friendly cooking, "Dinner Solved!" and "The Mom 100 Cookbook." She blogs at <http://www.themom100.com/about-katie-workman/>*

### BANANA BREAD PUDDING

**Start to finish:** 1 hour 40 minutes (20 minutes active)

**Servings:** 6

- Butter or cooking spray, for the pan
- 1 loaf challah bread (about 1 lb), cut into cubes
- 4 large eggs
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 4 very ripe bananas, mashed

Heat the oven to 350 F. Coat a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with butter or cooking spray.

Arrange the challah cubes on a rimmed baking sheet. Toast in the oven for 10 minutes, or until the outsides firm up just a bit. Remove the challah from the oven, but leave the oven on.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, cream, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon and salt. Add the mashed bananas and mix well. Stir in the bread cubes, then let sit for about 10 minutes so the bread absorbs some of the liquid.

Transfer the bread pudding to the prepared baking dish. Bake for about 50 minutes, or until the pudding is set and puffy, and the top is golden brown. Let cool on a wire rack for 15 to 20 minutes, or until it firms up a bit, but is still warm.

*Nutrition information per serving: 670 calories; 230 calories from fat (34 percent of total calories); 25 g fat (13 g saturated); 0 g trans fats; 215 mg cholesterol; 680 mg sodium; 93 g carbohydrate; 2 g fiber; 48 g sugar; 18 g protein.*