



# 2024 COMPETITION RULES

VERSION 3



A close-up photograph of a person's hands. The left hand holds a silver beer can with a gold and white geometric pattern. The right hand, wearing a clear plastic glove, holds a small glass filled with golden beer. The person is wearing a dark grey t-shirt with a colorful 'City B' logo. The background is slightly blurred, showing a green light and a white circular light fixture.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABOUT THE COMPETITION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>KEY DATES .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ELIGIBILITY &amp; PRICING .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>WHAT BEERS QUALIFY? .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ENTRY RULES .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>REGISTRATION PROCESS .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>AMOUNT OF BEER TO PROVIDE .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>BEER DROP-OFF .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>AMERICAN CANNING OPPORTUNITY .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>JUDGING .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>AWARDS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>MARKETING GUIDELINES .....</b>	<b>14-15</b>
<b>CODE OF CONDUCT .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>CATEGORIES &amp; SUB-STYLES.....</b>	<b>17-46</b>
<b>TCBC SUB-STYLES .....</b>	<b>47-49</b>
<b>PLANNING TEAM .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>QUESTIONS/CONTACT .....</b>	<b>51</b>





# ABOUT THE COMPETITION

Celebrating its first year in 2022, the Texas Craft Brewers Cup is the premiere professional beer competition run and organized by The Texas Craft Brewers Guild to showcase the outstanding quality and variety of Texas craft beer and the brewers that make them.

Building on the success of the first two years of the competition, a planning committee of brewers and experienced beer judges from across the state have contributed to updating our 30 unique medal categories which will serve as our starting categories for the third year of the competition. With a few notable exceptions (such as the always interesting Decadent Beer category) each category contains a variety of BJCP and Great American Beer Festival defined sub-styles to allow participating breweries to best match and categorize their entries.

The following pages of this guide should give you the information you need to successfully submit your entries and compete in the Texas Craft Brewers Cup.

Good luck in the competition!



# KEY DATES

## BEER REGISTRATION

- Opens Tuesday, **Nov. 14, 2023**
- Closes Friday, **Dec. 15, 2023**
- Deadline for any registration info changes is **Dec. 29, 2023**

## ENTRY DROP-OFF

- **Jan. 15-19, 2024** at designated consolidated brewery drop-off points
- **Jan. 8-19, 2024** for qualified direct shipments (see page 10 for details)

## JUDGING

- Friday **Feb. 2, 2024** (Welcome & evening session)
- Saturday, **Feb. 3, 2024**
- Saturday, **Feb. 4, 2024**

## AWARDS CEREMONY

- Saturday, **Feb. 17, 2024**





# ELIGIBILITY & PRICING

Participation in the Texas Craft Brewers Cup is open to all licensed and operating **Texas breweries** that meet the Texas Craft Brewers Guild's **Craft Brewer** membership definition (regardless of membership status):

## **SMALL**

Annual production of 2 million barrels of beer or less, or equivalent volume of beverage alcohol. Production includes any beer produced by or for the Texas brewery or breweries, and breweries outside of Texas that are a part of the same controlled group of breweries for purposes of determining eligibility of the Texas brewery or breweries for the federal beer excise tax rate.

## **INDEPENDENT**

The brewery is not partially owned or controlled directly or indirectly by an alcoholic beverage industry member or a natural person that does not otherwise qualify under this section.

## **BREWS AND SELLS BEER**

A brewer holding an approved and currently effective Brewer's Notice and associated register number issued by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau ("TTB") that sells at least 5 barrels of beer brewed with traditional or innovative ingredients annually. Traditional beer ingredients are hops, malt, and yeast.

*Out-of-state brewers, breweries in planning, homebrewers, and other breweries who do not meet the above criteria are ineligible.*

## **ENTRY FEE**

The standard entry fee is \$100/entry.

## **MEMBER DISCOUNT**

Texas Craft Brewers Guild members will receive a 35% discount (meaning each entry will be \$65) by entering discount code **tcbgmember24** during registration. Don't forget your discount code as it can result in a savings of up to \$350! All competition registrations must be manually approved by Guild staff who will verify membership status for discount code eligibility. **Guild members: please remember to use the discount code at checkout as retroactive discounts/refunds will not be available.**

If your brewery is not a current member of the Texas Craft Brewers Guild and would like to save money on competition registration--while also accessing all of the Guild's other great membership benefits--you can [\*\*learn more about joining\*\*](#) today!





# WHAT BEERS QUALIFY?

All beers entered in the Texas Craft Brewers Cup must be brewed in Texas by an operating brewery that meets the Texas Craft Brewers Guild's **Craft Brewer** membership definition (see Eligibility & Pricing on previous page).

All entries must be beer brewed with traditional beer ingredients: hops, malt, water, and yeast. Additional ingredients are allowed, but must meet the following criteria:

- At least 51% of the fermentables must be derived from grain. Beverages made with malt substitutes, honey, fruit or fruit juices, or anything other than grain as the majority of fermentables are not eligible to participate.
- Competition beer entries must contain hops. Exceptions to this include gruit or other historical beer styles that traditionally use other herbs or spices (such as heather or yarrow).
- For the health and safety of our judges, all beer entries comply with all TTB regulations, including formula approval requirements (as stated in Title 27, Chapter 1, Part 25, Subpart F, §25.55 of the Code of Federal Regulations).





# ENTRY RULES

## **NUMBER OF BEERS YOU MAY ENTER**

We will cap the initial beer registration at **10 entries per brewery** (up from 8 in previous years).

*After the initial registration deadline clears, if there is room to allow additional entries, we will contact all registered breweries and inform them of the updated entry limit and deadline for submitting additional beers.*

## **MULTIPLE LOCATION RULES**

If you operate multiple locations, you are still limited to 10 entries total for your company.

## **BEERS PER CATEGORY**

You may register multiple beers per category, as long as each entry is a different beer (i.e. don't enter the same beer more than once in a category, or really, in the whole competition).

## **CATEGORIES PER BEER**

Just to make sure we are getting the message across, don't enter a beer more than once in the competition. Pick a single style category for each beer you enter and enter it only once. For example, don't shotgun a single IPA that blurs the line into the American IPA category, the Hazy IPA category, and the Strong Hoppy beer category. Please pick a lane and stick with it.

## **POTENTIAL FOR CHANGES**

While a lot of intentionality has gone into developing the categories and associated sub-styles for the third year of the competition, it is not possible to know exactly how many beers and how many styles will be entered in the competition until...well, they're entered in the competition. While variation in category size is to be expected, in the event that a category is too small to be sufficiently competitive -or- in the event that a category is too large to be reasonably judged, conference organizers reserve the right to combine or break-up categories as necessary. Brewers will be notified in the event of any category changes. Beers will be judged in accordance to their sub-style (identified by the brewer during registration) within a given category. A beer's sub-style alignment will not change under any potential category reconfiguration.





# REGISTRATION PROCESS

PLEASE VISIT OUR [COMPETITION WEBSITE](#) FOR REGISTRATION PAGE LINK

## STEP 1: REGISTER YOUR BREWERY

You first need to register your brewery before you can register entries. Be sure to list the brewery name the way you wish to see it on the awards page after the competition. This includes upper case and lower case letters, and any specific punctuation or abbreviations you want to use with your brewery name. *If you participated in a previous Texas Craft Brewers Cup or another competition using the Beer Awards Platform (BAP), you should be able to login to your existing account and skip ahead to Step #2.*

## STEP 2: REGISTER ENTRIES

After you set up your brewery, you can add your entries. Once again, the information you enter for the beers is the information we will use for any public display. Please be sure to provide accurate data for your entry. You can significantly reduce the time it takes to register by reviewing the categories and sub-styles laid out in this document before you start registration so you can determine the right category and sub-style for each of your entries.

## STEP 3: PAYMENT

If your brewery is a Guild member, be sure to add code **tcbgmember24** (which will apply to each entry), then click the Place Order button. You will then be taken to a payment screen to check-out with your credit card.

## STEP 4: LABELING

When you have completed your order on the registration page, you can print the labels for your beers. The system will print 6 labels for each entry. If you are sending fewer than 6 containers for an entry, simply discard the extra labels. Please affix the appropriate label to each individual bottle or can with tape at the top and bottom of the label.

## STEP 5: CHANGES

You can edit your entry information up until December 29, 2023 at 5:00 PM. **Please do not change the category for any beer you have entered.**





## AMOUNT OF BEER TO PROVIDE

For each entry, please send at least **64 oz.** of beer. We highly recommend you send **at least four containers** for each entry as this will help ensure we have fresh beer for the judges to evaluate in later rounds.

If you are entering a category that you think will be a high volume category (e.g. American IPA, Hazy IPA), having multiple containers is paramount.

We recommend the following packaging/sample combinations:

- 6 x 12 oz bottles or cans
- 4 x 16 oz cans
- 4 x 500 ml bottles
- 3 or 4 x 22 oz bottles
- 3 or 4 x 750 ml bottles
- 2 x 32 oz crowler cans (allowed but not recommended)

*Sorry, we cannot accept growlers!*





# BEER DROP-OFF

## DROP-OFF POINTS

Consolidated beer drop-off points will be available in the following major cities the week of **January 15-19, 2024**:

- **Austin:** Meanwhile Brewing
- **Houston:** Eureka Heights Brew Co
- **Dallas:** Oak Highlands Brewery
- **San Antonio:** Freetail Brewing Co. (S. Presa St. location)

Additionally, West Texas brewers can drop their entries off at Tall City Brewing in **Midland** between January 15-21, or, bring them to the **El Paso** Guild Gathering at Flix Brewhouse on January 15. Our thanks to Stephen at Tall City for personally driving these entries to Austin.

The Guild will rent a refrigerated truck to pick-up entries from consolidated drop-off points in Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio, and bring them to Austin for cold storage and sorting prior to judging. There is no additional cost to brewers for this service. Breweries outside of these major hubs are encouraged to coordinate with neighboring breweries on driving entries to the nearest consolidated drop-off point (see West Texas example above).

Special accommodations can be made for breweries located more than three hours from the nearest drop-off point who would prefer to ship their beers via third party carrier to Austin. *All regulatory and financial burdens and shipping/handling risks associated with shipping samples are the sole responsibility of the entering brewery. C.O.D shipments will not be accepted and entries must arrive between January 8th & January 19th.* Please contact the Guild to discuss shipping if this applies to you.

## LABELING

When you complete your registration, you can print the labels for your beers. Please affix each label to the appropriate entry with **tape at the top and bottom of the label.**

## PACKING REQUIREMENTS

All entries must be packaged and labeled before you arrive at the drop-off location.

If you are sending 12 oz. or 16 oz. cans, you must fill a case flat (even if you need to add extra beers to fill the flat) and tape another case flat on top (i.e. tape all the way around the bottom and top case flat to hold the packaging together). The drop-off locations will not be able to provide these case flats to you, so please plan ahead.

For other packaging sizes please use a case box appropriate to the packaging format of your beer. Your entries will be placed on a pallet with all the other entries from your drop-off location. Putting your entries in a case box makes it much easier for the drop-off locations, who are volunteering to help with this process. Only sending one entry? Put it in a case box and add non-entry beer to the rest of the box. Our volunteers will appreciate the bonus and your beer will be safer since full boxes add shipping stability.





## CANNING OPPORTUNITY

Our friends at American Canning have graciously offered to can beer from kegs so you can enter those beers in TCBC. American Canning should have openings for canning on **January 15th and 16th**. For more information on timing and availability, please contact Jeremy Hill at [jeremy@americancanning.com](mailto:jeremy@americancanning.com).

Their facility is located just three miles from the Austin drop-off location - Meanwhile Brewing - so what could be easier?

Here are a few "know before you can" tidbits for you from the American Canning team:

- Please make sure all kegs brought in for contest entry are in trash cans and have PLENTY of ice to help with canning efficiency and quality. If a keg does not run due to high temp/high carb, we will have to pull it and move on, so your preparation is important. Carbonation of the beer should not exceed 2.8 volumes.
- Only bring 1 keg per TCBC submission. Our goal is to get the best packaged examples of each submission. Time permitting, we will finish each keg, but we are not able to run multiple kegs of the same beer.
- Please be timely for your scheduled appointment as others will be right before and right after you. If you are late you may have to move to the back of your scheduled day or end up with partially run kegs for the sake of ensuring we get to everyone. Again, our primary goal is to get the necessary quality cans for submission, but we would like to be able to finish each keg for everybody. More beers to have in the parking lot together!
- We are unable to package any products with live bacteria or other critters. Please do not bring anything that contains live yeast or anything outside of clean micro – your fellow brewers will be awfully mad at you if you do!
- The on-site team won't be well versed on the requirements for submissions – please reference page 9 of this guide to ensure you get enough of each submission. Breweries are responsible for labeling their own product per TCBC requirements. As a side note, we will only package in 12oz cans.
- Please do not bring any products that will not be submitted to TCBC. This is a complimentary service we offer to ensure local breweries are able to submit their samples for competition.
- We are a production facility, please make sure to be aware of your surroundings (forklifts, pallet jacks, etc.) and please wear closed-toe shoes!

Canning will be done at the American Canning facility in SE Austin (8001 Industry Way, Austin, TX 78744.)





# JUDGING

- The Texas Craft Brewers Cup will be judged by a slate of judges made up of brewers, industry veterans, and BJCP certified judges. Judging will take place in Austin February 2-4, 2024.
- With a few notable exceptions, beers in our 30 awards categories will be judged against the criteria laid out in either the **Beer Judge Certification Program** or **Great American Beer Festival's** official description of the sub-style identified in our style guidelines.
- The competition will be blind. Judges will not know what beers they are judging. A small number of competition staff and volunteers will be privy to that information and will ensure that judges do not have visibility to it.
- Judges will be completing score sheets for all entries in the first round of judging. If a category is large enough to require additional rounds, second and third round comments will not be provided to the brewer.
- Brewers will receive their first round scoresheets electronically after the awards have been announced. Scoresheets will contain characteristic sliders for Aroma, Flavor, Appearance, and Mouthfeel as well as brief descriptions for any flaws (if present) and overall feedback. Like most professional brewing competitions, brewers should not expect the kind of detailed, corrective brewing guidance that is more typical of homebrew competition scoresheets.
- We strongly encourage all judging teams to award a bronze, silver, and gold medal for each category. Ties or honorable mentions will not be permitted.
- Judges who own or are employed by a brewery that is also an entrant in the competition will be required to disclose the categories their brewery is competing in (which we will double check). Judges will be strictly prohibited from judging categories their beers compete in.
- Interested in becoming a judge? [Learn more here!](#)





# AWARDS

The Texas Craft Brewers Cup awards ceremony will be held on the evening of **Saturday, February 17 at the Hilton in Downtown Austin** as the closing event for the Texas Craft Brewers Guild's Annual Meeting & Trade Show. Conference registration (open to Guild members) will include access to the Awards Ceremony. Stay tuned for registration information.

*A limited number of Awards Ceremony only tickets will also be available for non-Guild members or breweries who wish to bring additional team members to the awards.*

## AWARD TYPES

### MEDALS

Judges will be strongly encouraged to award a Gold, Silver, and Bronze medal in each category. And these medals don't come on your average ribbons. Rather, in true Texas style, Texas Craft Brewers Cup medals have been crafted into custom, commemorative, large-and-in-charge bolo ties!

### BREWERIES OF THE YEAR

Each medal awarded will have an equivalent point value (1 point for Bronze, 2 points for Silver, 3 points for Gold) used to determine Brewery of the Year award winners. All participating breweries will be asked to enter their 2022 year-end sales numbers while registering for the competition. These numbers will help organizers to determine a natural cutline to divide breweries into two similarly competitive groups based on brewery size (one for the very smallest breweries, and one for more mid-size to larger folks). This demarcation will be determined and announced after registration closes. Brewery of the Year cups will be awarded to the two breweries who each earn the most points in their respective groups. In the event of a tie within one of the groupings, first round scoresheets for the tied breweries' medalizing beers will be tallied to determine the brewery with the highest scored medalizing beers.

### AMBASSADOR OF CRAFT AWARDS

The Texas Craft Brewers Cup awards ceremony will also be an opportunity to recognize individuals for their dedication to advancing the Texas craft brewing industry. Stay tuned for upcoming announcements about the nomination process for the third annual Ambassador of Craft awards.





# MARKETING GUIDELINES

Medal winning breweries are encouraged to use their Texas Craft Brewers Cup awards in PR, social media, and advertising campaigns. In order to protect the Texas Craft Brewers Guild and the Texas Craft Brewers Cup's brand assets, all breweries planning to make any reference to the Texas Craft Brewers Cup are required to comply with the marketing guidelines below. As part of a collective effort to preserve the integrity and prestige of the competition, any public references to Texas Craft Brewers Cup awards are governed by these rules:

1. Texas Craft Brewers Cup marketing guidelines allow only for the promotion of awards won from the competition and do not grant any participating brewery permission to utilize information contained in judge scoresheets in any public or promotional manner, including information on an entry's advancement through the various rounds of judging, or any other information conveyed in the judges' feedback. **This information is confidential and for internal brewery use only.**
2. Always refer to the competition by its complete and accurate name: **Texas Craft Brewers Cup**. (Texas Craft Brewers' Cup, Texas Craft Beer Cup, TX Craft Brewers Cup, Texas Craft Brewers Guild Cup, TX Beer Cup or any other abbreviation or inaccurate title should not be used.)
3. Texas Craft Brewers Cup brand assets and medal graphics should be used exactly as they are supplied to winners and should not be altered in any way that changes their shape, color, text, aspect ratio, etc. If you need alternative files for specific print uses, please email [info@texascraftbrewersguild.org](mailto:info@texascraftbrewersguild.org).
4. All references to an award must include a mention of the category in which the medal was received, the specific type of medal (i.e., gold; silver; bronze ), the year it was received (i.e. 2024) and the name of the beer as entered in the competition for the year in which the award was received. For example "Our (beer name) took (medal color) in the (category name) at the 2024 Texas Craft Brewers Cup."
5. Each required item in bullet #4 must be referenced in a font size large enough to be read and in direct conjunction with the reference to the award.
6. Promotions or any other mentions of Texas Craft Brewers Cup may not mention the name of any judge or judges serving as a part of the competition.





# MARKETING GUIDELINES CONTINUED...

7. Texas Craft Brewers Cup's standard marketing guidelines do not grant permission to use competition medals or artwork on any merchandise promoting the win (shirts, hats, glassware, etc.). Individual arrangements may be made with explicit written approval from TCBG contingent on review of merchandise artwork.
8. These rules do not waive any right to trademark or copyright material of the Texas Craft Brewers Guild.
9. Following precedent established by the Great American Beer Festival, in an effort to address concerns about beer names and related marketing properties that contain sexually explicit, lewd, or demeaning content that reasonable adult consumers would find inappropriate, beer names entered into the Texas Craft Brewers Cup should meet the guidelines in the Brewers Association Marketing and Advertising Code. In the event that the brand name of a medal winning beer entered in the Texas Craft Brewers Cup is found to not meet the Marketing and Advertising Code, the brewery that entered the medal winning beer is entitled to keep the medal but is not allowed to promote the win using any Texas Craft Brewers Cup or Texas Craft Brewers Guild brand assets.
10. Failure of any brewery, or of any person acting on a brewery's behalf or at a brewery's direction, to comply with these rules may result in suspension from participation in the Texas Craft Brewers Cup for a duration to be determined at the absolute discretion of Texas Craft Brewers Cup organizers. When in doubt, please email [Info@texascraftbrewersguild.org](mailto:Info@texascraftbrewersguild.org) if you have any questions about this agreement.
11. The Texas Craft Brewers Guild reserves the right to amend these marketing guidelines as any FAQs or situations arise. These guidelines are aimed at ensuring usability and flexibility for brewers promoting their wins, while also protecting the Texas Craft Brewers Guild and the Texas Craft Brewers Cup brand assets and the integrity and prestige of the competition.

*After the awards, medal winning breweries can visit the **Promote Your Win** page on the Texas Craft Brewers Guild website for medal graphics, awards photos, and press releases.*





# CODE OF CONDUCT

We celebrate beer in positive, supportive ways for all.

The Texas Craft Brewers Cup is produced by the Texas Craft Brewers Guild. As an official Guild event, all participants are expected to conduct themselves professionally while contributing to a welcoming environment built on trust and mutual respect.

All participants taking part in the competition's judging, awards ceremony, and other associated events and activities are expected to abide by the Guild's Code of Conduct.

The Guild will not tolerate any forms of discrimination, harassment, assault, threats of assault, sexual harassment, sexual assault, threats of sexual assault, damage to property, theft of property or services, inappropriate behavior towards fellow industry members or venue staff, or any other behavior that is illegal, unethical, or reflects poorly on us as a competition or community. We ask that all members use good judgment to make safe choices at all times. The Guild makes no warranty, express or implied, about the guaranteed participation of any staff, volunteers, attendees, or sponsors.

**[Read the full Code of Conduct here.](#)**





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 1: Pilsner

*50 entries in 2023*

This category is meant to focus on all the types of Pilsner beer that are commercially available and not covered elsewhere in the guidelines. Contemporary Pilsners are included in this category. Successful examples in this category will exhibit a distinct lack of fruity esters and DMS. These are well attenuated beers. For Bohemian styles very low levels of diacetyl, if present, are characteristic of this style and may accent malt character. Low levels of sulfur compounds may be present. Please note that traditional beers that utilize ale or “top-fermented” yeast strains are more appropriately entered elsewhere.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Czech Premium Pale Lager: BJCP - 03B
- German Pils: BJCP - 05D
- American-Style Pilsener: GABF - 39a
- Contemporary American-Style Pilsener: GABF - 39b
- International-Style Pilsener: GABF - 40
- Bohemian-Style Pilsener: GABF - 46





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 2: American & International Light Lager

*New category split for 2024: in 2023, there were 41 entries across combined American & International Lager/Light Lager categories.*

This category encompasses all the light lager beer, including those designed to be low calorie beers that are commercially available and not covered elsewhere in the guidelines. International and contemporary versions are included in this category. Corn, rice, or other grain or sugar adjuncts are often used but all-malt formulations are also made. These beers are often high in carbonation, fruity esters are usually absent but may be present at very low levels. Diacetyl should not be present. These beers are characterized by an extremely high degree of attenuation. Please note traditional beers that utilize ale or “top-fermented” yeast strains are more appropriately entered elsewhere.

Sub-styles in this category:

- American Light Lager: BJCP - 1A
- German Leichtbier: BJCP - 5A
- Australasian, Latin American or Tropical-Style Light Lager: GABF - 36d





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 3: American & International Lager

*New category split for 2024: in 2023, there were 41 entries across combined American & International Lager/Light Lager categories.*

American and International lagers that do not fit into the broader European continental styles of lager represented in other categories (e.g. Session and Standard German & Czech Lagers). Corn, rice, or other grain or sugar adjuncts are often used but all-malt formulations are also made. These beers are often high in carbonation, fruity esters are usually absent but may be present at very low levels. Diacetyl should not be present. These beers are characterized by an extremely high degree of attenuation.

Sub-styles in this category:

- American Lager: BJCP - 1B
- International Pale Lager: BJCP - 2A
- Unfiltered European-Style Lager: GABF - 34b





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 4: Golden, Blonde, & Light Ales

*39 entries in 2023*

Covers golden, blonde and light ales that are commercially available, fairly light in color, and are not covered elsewhere in the guidelines. Traditional examples often display persistent head retention. Small amounts of wheat or rye can be used in brewing beers of this style. Please note traditional beers that primarily utilize lager or “bottom-fermented” yeast strains are more appropriately entered elsewhere. Please also note that Kölsch beers should be entered into Category 5.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Cream Ale: BJCP - 1C
- English Golden Ale: BJCP - 12A
- Blonde Ale: BJCP - 18A
- English-Style Summer Ale: GABF - 57a





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 5: Kölsch

*27 entries in 2023*

Color is typically golden – bright without haze. Head formation and retention is good. The hop aroma is low and subtle, typically characteristic of noble hops, ranging from mild fruit to herb & spice. Kölsch is characterized by a slightly dry, subtly sweet and low hop flavor. Mild fruitiness is typical for this style, tending towards a subtle white wine-like character. Low amounts of wheat or rye can be used in brewing, contributing a bread-like character. Fruity esters, while normally part of this style, should be subdued and in balance with the other flavor components. No caramel character.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Kölsch: BJCP - 5B



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 6: Session and Standard German & Czech Lagers

*New category split for 2024: in 2023, there were 59 entries across combined Session and Standard German & Czech Lagers and Session and Standard Dark German & Czech Lagers categories.*

This expansive category is meant to focus on pale and amber, lower and moderate alcohol German, Austrian, and Bohemian styles that are commercially available and not covered elsewhere in the guidelines. Unfiltered or “zwickel” versions are acceptable. Please note that traditional beers that utilize ale or “top-fermented” yeast strains are more appropriately entered elsewhere. Please also take note that styles such as German/Bohemian-style Pilsner, Kolsch, and Weissbier are more appropriately entered into categories 1, 5, and 28, respectively.

Sub-styles in this category:

- International Amber Lager: BJCP - 2B
- Czech Pale Lager: BJCP - 3A
- Czech Amber Lager: BJCP - 3C
- Munich Helles: BJCP - 4A
- Vienna Lager: BJCP - 7A
- Historical Beer - Kellerbier: BJCP - 27





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 7: Session and Standard Dark German & Czech Lagers

*New category split for 2024: in 2023, there were 59 entries across combined Session and Standard German & Czech Lagers and Session and Standard Dark German & Czech Lagers categories.*

Like the prior category (Session and Standard German & Czech Lagers), this category focuses on lower and moderate alcohol German, Austrian, and Bohemian styles that are commercially available and not covered elsewhere in the guidelines. However, the sub-styles included here are darker than their pale and amber cousins.

Sub-styles in this category:

- International Dark Lager: BJCP - 2C
- Czech Dark Lager: BJCP - 3D
- Munich Dunkel: BJCP - 8A
- Schwarzbier: BJCP - 8B



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 8: Strong German & Czech Lagers

*29 entries in 2023*

This is a catch-all category meant to focus on higher alcohol German, Austrian, and Bohemian styles that are commercially available and not covered elsewhere in the guidelines. Unfiltered or “zwickel” versions are acceptable. Please note that traditional beers that utilize ale or “top-fermented” yeast strains are more appropriately entered elsewhere.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Festbier: BJCP - 4B
- Helles Bock: BJCP - 4C
- German Helles Exportbier: BJCP - 5C
- Märzen: BJCP - 6A
- Dunkels Bock: BJCP - 6C
- Doppelbock: BJCP - 9A
- Eisbock: BJCP - 9B
- American-Style Maerzen/Oktobertfest: GABF - 44c
- Dortmunder/European-Style Export: GABF - 48a
- German-Style Oktoberfest/Wiesn: GABF - 48b





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 9: Classic UK Styles

*39 entries in 2023*

This is a broad, catch-all category designed to represent numerous ales from the British Isles. From pub classics of Southern England like Pale Ale and Best Bitter to malt forward ales of Scotland, this category was designed for wide representation of ale of the United Kingdom. The judging is simplified to allow some freedom in interpretation by modern brewers while still honoring the spirit of British, Scottish and Irish beers of old. Some Historical categories are included here, and judging will focus on drinkability and the ability of the aroma, flavor, and mouthfeel to capture the classic UK style while not necessarily zeroing-in on a specific subcategory. Hop forward American equivalents are better suited for categories 12, 13, and 14.

### Sub-styles in this category:

- Ordinary Bitter: BJCP - 11A
- Best Bitter: BJCP - 11B
- Strong Bitter: BJCP - 11C
- English IPA: BJCP - 12C
- Dark Mild: BJCP - 13A
- English British Brown Ale: BJCP - 13B
- English Brown Porter: BJCP - 13C
- Scottish Light: BJCP - 14A
- Scottish Heavy: BJCP - 14B
- Scottish Export: BJCP - 14C
- Irish Red Ale: BJCP - 15A
- English British Strong Ale: BJCP - 17A
- Historical Beer - London Brown Ale: BJCP - 27
- Classic English-Style Pale Ale: GABF - 57b
- English-Style India Pale Ale: GABF - 57c
- English-Style Pale Mild Ale: GABF - 71a
- Special Bitter or Best Bitter: GABF - 71d
- American-Style Extra Special Bitter: GABF - 72a
- English-Style Extra Special Bitter: GABF - 72b

#### Reference Sub-Style Guidelines:

[Beer Judge Certification Program \(BJCP\)](#)

[Great American Beer Festival \(GABF\)](#)



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 10: Stout & Porter

*27 entries in 2023*

This combined category includes most Stout and Porter styles that are commercially available and not covered elsewhere in the guidelines. Note that Barrel Aged, Imperial, Coffee, Chili, Chocolate, Sour, Fruited and Pastry versions of these beers are NOT included in this category. High alcohol versions of these styles, such as Baltic Porters and Imperial Stouts should be entered in category 17.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Irish Stout: BJCP - 15B
- Irish Extra Stout: BJCP - 15C
- Sweet Stout: BJCP - 16A
- Oatmeal Stout: BJCP - 16B
- Tropical Stout: BJCP - 16C
- Foreign Extra Stout: BJCP - 16D
- American Porter: BJCP - 20A
- American Stout: BJCP - 20B
- Robust Porter: GABF - 93
- Export Stout: GABF - 94b





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 11: Session & Standard Hoppy Pale Ales and Lagers

*38 entries in 2023*

This category encompasses low- to medium-ABV, hoppy styles including American pale ales, international pale ales, and hop-forward lagers. Beers entered into this category may be clear or hazy depending on individual sub-style guidelines. Though the ABV is lower, there should be no harsh hop-derived astringency and the beer should be easy-drinking and refreshing. Other characteristics of these beers, such as variety of hops used, vary and should refer to the individual style guidelines for further details about entering into this category. Lagers not presenting significant hop-forward character, including moderately hopped styles such as American-Style Pilsner and American Lager, are more appropriately entered into Category 1 or 3, respectively. IPAs and higher alcohol hoppy beers are more appropriately entered into categories 12, 13, 14 or 15.

Sub-styles in this category:

- American Pale Ale: BJCP - 18B
- Other Hoppy Lager: GABF - 42
- India Pale Lager or Cold India Pale Ale: GABF - 43
- International-Style Pale Ale: GABF - 58a
- Classic Australian-Style Pale Ale: GABF - 58b
- Australian-Style Pale Ale: GABF - 58c
- New Zealand-Style Pale Ale: GABF - 58d
- Juicy or Hazy Pale Ale: GABF - 61

Reference Sub-Style Guidelines:

[Beer Judge Certification Program \(BJCP\)](#)

[Great American Beer Festival \(GABF\)](#)



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 12: American IPA

*54 entries in 2023*

A bitter and moderately strong American pale ale, showcasing American and/or New World hop varieties. The balance is hop-forward, with a clean fermentation profile, semi-dry finish, and a supportive malt base allowing for a creative range of hop character to shine through. Hop flavors and aromas are often described as citrusy, piney, resinous, tropical, and fruity, and are the signature element of this beer, while being most noticeable in the flavor and aroma of the beer. Malt flavor and aroma are present and balanced, but are secondary to the hops. Versions of this style brewed with darker malts, non-traditional ale yeasts, fruits, lactose, spices or other flavorings should be entered in the appropriate Specialty Hoppy category (category 15), or Decadent Beer categories (category 29).

Sub-styles in this category:

- American IPA: BJCP - 21A
- New Zealand India Pale Ale: GABF - 59
- American-Style Strong Pale Ale: GABF - 62





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 13: Hazy IPA

*61 entries in 2023*

This style category includes all IPAs brewed in what is usually referred to as “East Coast Style” or “New England Style” IPAs. Beers in this category are typically hazy to very hazy in appearance, in which the haze may originate from any number of ingredients and/or processes, and should be visually appealing. These beers are typified by very high and intense American and/or New World hop aroma and flavor that presents itself as tropical, fruity, and/or juicy. The use of high-protein malts and adjuncts (like oats and wheat) is common in these beers, giving them a full mouthfeel, even when malt flavor is subdued. Compared to classic American IPAs (category 10) , these beers will be sweeter and less bitter, with a more pronounced ester profile. Low bitterness, relative to classic American IPAs, is a hallmark of this style, yet the best examples of this style are not overly sweet or heavy. Versions of this style brewed with darker malts, non-traditional ale yeasts, fruits, lactose, spices or other flavorings should be entered in the appropriate Specialty Hoppy category (category 15) or Decadent Beer categories (category 29).

Sub-styles in this category:

- New England IPA: BJCP - 21C
- Juicy or Hazy Strong Pale Ale: GABF - 63
- Juicy or Hazy India Pale Ale: GABF - 65



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 14: Strong Hoppy Beer

*22 entries in 2023*

Anticipated to be a large category, there are only three sub-categories, all with a little overlap. The ultimate goal is to represent high-gravity beers with intensely hoppy character, but lacking the full-bodied and complex maltiness of the American Barleywine subcategory (part of category 17 - Barleywine and Strong Ale). Both clear (Double IPA and Imperial India Pale Ale) and hazy (Juicy or Hazy Imperial India Pale Ale) sub-styles are included in this umbrella category.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Double IPA: BJCP - 22A
- Imperial India Pale Ale: GABF - 67
- Juicy or Hazy Imperial India Pale Ale: GABF - 68





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 15: Specialty Hoppy

*23 entries in 2023*

This is a broad category that encompasses all hop-forward beers, regardless of strength, that are either darker in color or utilize speciality ingredients or yeast that otherwise might disqualify the beer from other traditional IPA categories. Classic and contemporary styles that might be appropriately entered into this category include Cascadian Dark Ale, Black IPA, Belgian IPA, India Red Ale, and Imperial or Double Red Ale. Please note that Fruited IPAs may be entered into this category, as well. However, the focus of the beer should be the base IPA style and/or hoppy character, where the fruit compliments the beer.

Otherwise, an intensely fruited beer with low to moderate hop character may be better suited for category 20 or category 29, depending on the focus of the beer. Aggressively hopped American-style stouts or porters should not be entered here and are more suited for category 10.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Specialty IPA - Belgian IPA: BJCP - 21B
- Specialty IPA - Black IPA: BJCP - 21B
- Specialty IPA - Brown IPA: BJCP - 21B
- Specialty IPA - Red IPA: BJCP - BJCP - 21B
- Specialty IPA - Rye IPA: BJCP - 21B
- Specialty IPA - White IPA: BJCP - 21B
- Specialty IPA - Brut IPA: BJCP - 21B
- Double Hoppy Red Ale: GABF - 70a
- Specialty IPA - Other: TCBC (see page 47)
- Fruited IPA: TCBC (see page 48)



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 16: Amber and Dark Beers

*29 entries in 2023*

This category covers amber to dark beers that are typically balanced in their malt and hop characteristics and do not have the hop-forward character of beers represented in category 15. Combining both ale and lager offerings, choosing the appropriate sub-style to classify your entry will be critical for the judges to accurately evaluate your beer.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Altbier: BJCP - 7B
- American Amber Ale: BJCP - 19A
- California Common: BJCP - 19B
- American Brown Ale: BJCP - 19C
- Historical Beer - Kentucky Common: BJCP - 27
- American-Style Amber Lager: GABF - 44a
- Franconian-Style Rotbier: GABF - 51a
- American-Style Dark Lager: GABF - 52a
- American-Style Black Ale: GABF - 77a





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 17: Barleywine & Strong Ale

*26 entries in 2023*

Covers high-alcohol British ales along with regional derivatives from other parts of the world (Baltic Porter, American Barleywine, etc.). All beers in this category should be high in alcohol content, while hop content and roast character will vary based on the sub-style entered.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Baltic Porter: BJCP - 9C
- Old Ale: BJCP - 17B
- Wee Heavy: BJCP - 17C
- English Barleywine: BJCP - 17D
- Imperial Stout: BJCP - 20C
- American Strong Ale: BJCP - 22B
- American Barleywine: BJCP - 22C
- Wheatwine: BJCP - 22D
- American-Style Imperial Porter: GABF - 17a
- Imperial Red Ale: GABF - 70b
- British-Style Imperial Stout: GABF - 97a



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 18: Belgian & Farmhouse Ales

*34 entries in 2023*

This category contains styles that are malt-forward yet balanced, and are highly flavored by the characterful yeast and, optionally, the (light) addition of spices. These types of ales often contain multiple types of grains and cereals in the grist and can be quite hazy. Many of the styles have the characteristic spicy phenolic typical of some French- or Belgian-type yeasts, though some examples can have a non-phenolic yeast character.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Witbier: BJCP - 24A
- Belgian Pale Ale: BJCP - 24B
- Bière de Garde: BJCP - 24C
- Belgian Blond Ale: BJCP - 25A
- Saison (Standard): BJCP - 25B
- Belgian-Style Table Beer: GABF - 15b
- Belgian-Style Session Ale: GABF - 15c
- American-Belgo-Style Ale: GABF - 24
- Belgian-Style Speciale Belge: GABF - 84a
- Other Belgian-Style Ale or French-Style Ale: GABF - 84d
- Classic Saison: GABF - 86
- Specialty Saison: GABF - 87
- Other Belgian-Style Strong Specialty Ale: GABF - 89d
- Belgian-Style Fruit Beer: GABF - 91a





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 19: Belgian Abbey Ales

*25 entries in 2023*

Characterized by very high attenuation, high carbonation, and interesting yeast character that can dominate the flavor profile, including varying levels of fruity esters and spicy phenolics. These are all malt-forward, though some pale styles can be hoppy as well. Abbey-style ales generally have a lower phenolic level than other Belgian and Farmhouse ales.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Belgian Golden Strong Ale: BJCP - 25C
- Belgian Single: BJCP - 26A
- Belgian Dubbel: BJCP - 26B
- Belgian Tripel: BJCP - 26C
- Belgian Dark Strong Ale: BJCP - 26D
- Belgian-Style Quadrupel: BJCP - GABF - 89c
- Belgian-Style Dubbel: BJCP - GABF - 90a
- Other Belgian-Style Abbey Ale: BJCP - GABF - 90c



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 20: Fruit & Field Beer

*28 entries in 2023*

This catch all category is a very wide range of Fruit and Field beers including, but not limited to, Spice, Herb, Vegetable, Squash (Pumpkin) and Coconut styles that are commercially available and not covered elsewhere in the guidelines. Note that Puree, Pastry and Dessert beers belong in category 29. Beers entered in this category will require explanation from the brewer in order to be judged appropriately. Beers containing Chocolate or Coffee should be entered into Category 21.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Fruit Beer: BJCP - 29A
- Fruit and Spice Beer: BJCP - 29B
- Specialty Fruit Beer: 29C
- Spice, Herb, or Vegetable Beer: BJCP - 30A
- Specialty Spice Beer: BJCP - 30D
- Honey Beer: GABF - 13
- American Fruit Beer: GABF - 2
- Fruit Wheat Beer: GABF - 3
- Pumpkin/Squash Beer: GABF - 5a
- Pumpkin Spice Beer: GABF - 5b





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 21: Chocolate & Coffee

*33 entries in 2023*

This catch all category is a very wide range of Chocolate and Coffee beers. Appearance, aroma, and flavor will be variable according to the base beer style, but the coffee and/or chocolate character should be both evident and complimentary to the character of the base beer. Note that Puree, Pastry and Dessert beers belong in category 27. Beers may contain low to moderate amounts of other herbs & spices, but chocolate and/or coffee must be the preeminent characteristic. Beers entered in this category will require explanation from the brewer in order to be judged appropriately.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Coffee Stout or Porter: GABF - 10
- Chocolate Beer: GABF - 8
- Coffee Beer: GABF - 9



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 22: American & European Sour

*29 entries in 2023*

Beers entered in this category should demonstrate a substantial level of acidity/sourness. The source of this acidity/sourness is not limited and may be derived from a range of lactic-acid producing bacteria, as well as brettanomyces. While prominent and focused acidity is an essential feature of the beers in the category, successful examples will balance acidity against the other elements of the beer. The ultimate goal is a refreshing, congruous, and innovative sour beer. As such, as long as acidity is the primary focus, beers may include fruits, spices, or other flavorings. Wood and Brettanomyces character, or other flavors driven by a mixed fermentation, are allowed, but these characteristics should be secondary to the acidic character in the beer. As such, beers with prominent mixed-culture, Brett, or wood characters should be entered elsewhere. Beers entered in this category may require substantial explanation from the brewer in order to be judged appropriately.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Berliner Weisse: BJCP - 23A
- Gose: BJCP - 23G
- Mixed-Fermentation Sour Beer: BJCP - 28B
- Straight Sour Beer: BJCP - 28D
- American Sour Ale: GABF - 25
- Fruited American Sour Ale: GABF - 26
- Leipzig-Style Gose: GABF - 78a
- Specialty Berliner-Style Weisse: GABF - 79
- Contemporary Gose: GABF - 80
- Other Belgian-Style Sour Ale: GABF - 88e
- Catharina Sour: BJCP - X4





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 23: Brett & Mixed Culture

*11 entries in 2023*

This category encompasses a wide range of beers that have notable wild yeast character from the use of non-Saccharomyces yeast and bacteria not already covered in other Classic Styles. Beers in this category may utilize a wide range of fermentation and blending techniques that include 100% Brettanomyces fermentation, traditional mixed culture fermentations, spontaneous fermentations, or a combination of the above. Funky notes of Brettanomyces or other non-traditional yeast character should be present and expressed as barnyard-like/feral compounds, horsey, goaty, leathery, phenolic, fruity and/or acidic aromas and flavors. Strong sulfur compounds, including DMS, should not be present, nor should chlorophenols (band aid, rubber), THP (corn nut, mousey, Cheerios), or undesirable, “sick” acidic notes from fatty acids or bacteria. As a point of differentiation, beers in this category should be Brett/wild yeast forward as opposed to acid-forward or wood-forward. Acid levels in these beers may vary from very low to medium-high, but they should be in balance with or secondary to the wild/ Brett character. Likewise, wood-aging is an acceptable component of beers in this category, but strong oak or barrel-related flavors should be secondary. As long as the Brett/mixed cultures is the primary focus, fruit should be allowed for entries in this category. In addition, as long as the Brett/mixed cultured flavor are present, styles mentioned in other categories, such as a saison, may be better entered into this category. Beers entered in this category may require substantial explanation from the brewer in order to be judged appropriately.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Lambic: BJCP - 23D
- Gueuze: BJCP - 23E
- Fruit Lambic: BJCP - 23F
- Brett Beer: BJCP - 28A
- Wild Beer: GABF - 20c
- Mixed-Culture Brett Beer: GABF - 28
- Contemporary Belgian-Style Spontaneous Fermented Ale: GABF - 88c



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 24: Wood & Barrel-Aged Sour & Brett Beer

*13 entries in 2023*

This category includes any beer that has a substantial acidic and/or wild yeast character AND has a substantial oak or barrel- related character. Successful examples in this category will pleasantly balance the barrel and/or spirit character (including oak, Bourbon, gin, rum, wine, vermouth, brandy, tequila, etc) with the sour and/or funky base beer. This category may include beers with fruits, spices, or other flavorings. The intensity of the barrel-related character will vary with the base beer, but it should be prominent and well integrated in the finished beer. As such, styles specifically listed in category 22 or 23 may be better suited in this category, depending on the prominence of the wood character. For example, oak-forward interpretations of Flanders red ales or lambic/gueuze may be entered here. The intensity of the acidic or mixed-fermentation character may vary from moderate to intense. Beers entered in this category will require substantial explanation from the brewer in order to be judged appropriately. Where requested, brewers should note process, ingredients (including the types of barrels used), and objectives in order to best present the beer for competition.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Flanders Red Ale: BJCP - 23B
- Oud Bruin: BJCP - 23C
- Wood- and Barrel-Aged Sour Beer: GABF - 32
- Fruited Wood- and Barrel-Aged Sour Beer: GABF - 33





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 25: Smoke & Chili Beer

*19 entries in 2023*

This category contains both classic and modern beers that feature smoke and/or chili pepper as a flavor element. Smoke can come from various sources with smoked malt being the most common, but the smoke flavor and aroma should be in harmony with the base beer. If additional ingredients such as fruits, vegetables or spices are included, or if a non-standard method of smoking is used, the brewer must describe it in the entry. Examples from BJCP Historical and German categories are included. Chili beers should feature chili pepper flavor while retaining an enjoyable base beer experience. Some beers entered in this category will require explanation--specifying the type of chili for example--from the brewer in order to be judged appropriately.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Rauchbier: BJCP - 6B
- Classic Style Smoked Beer: BJCP - 32A
- Specialty Smoked Beer: BJCP - 32B
- Smoke Porter: GABF - 35b
- Bamberg-Style Weiss Rauchbier: GABF - 35c
- Bamberg-Style Helles Rauchbier: GABF - 35d
- Bamberg-Style Maerzen Rauchbier: GABF - 35e
- Bamberg-Style Bock Rauchbier: GABF - 35f
- Chili Beer: GABF - 6



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 26: Barrel & Wood Aged Beer

*27 entries in 2023*

This category is for specialty beers with flavor and aromas characteristic of wood- or barrel-aging. If a barrel (or wood) has previously been in contact with wine or a spirit, and that character is evident in the beer, the brewer must declare it in the entry. The overall impression is of a harmonious blending of all elements: base beer, wood or barrel, etc. If the beer is acid- or wild yeast focused, it should be entered into Category 22. Beers entered into this category may require explanation, including the type of base beer, to be judged appropriately.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Wood-Aged Beer: BJCP - 33A
- Specialty Wood-Aged Beer: BJCP - 33B
- Wood- and Barrel-Aged Pale to Amber Beer: GABF - 29a
- Wood- and Barrel-Aged Dark Beer: GABF - 29b
- Wood- and Barrel-Aged Strong Beer: GABF - 30
- Wood- and Barrel-Aged Strong Stout: GABF - 31





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 27: Experimental, Hybrid & Specialty Beer

*16 entries in 2023*

The Experimental, Hybrid & Specialty Beer category is intended for those beers that do not fit anywhere else. As the number of Specialty-Type categories is quite large, most beers are expected to be entered elsewhere unless there is something quite unusual or unique about them. Please check the other Specialty-Type categories first before deciding to enter a beer in one of these styles. The brewer must specify the ingredient(s), the process, and/or the technique(s) that makes the beer Experimental, Hybrid or (extra special) Specialty.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Alternative Grain Beer: BJCP - 31A
- Alternative Sugar Beer: BJCP - 31B
- Mixed-Style Beer: BJCP - 34B
- Experimental Beer: BJCP - 34C
- Experimental India Pale Ale: GABF - 19
- Ginjo Beer or Sake-Yeast Beer: GABF - 20b
- Peated Scotch Ale: GABF - 98b
- Rare or Historical: TCBC (see page 49)



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 28: Wheat or Rye

*39 entries in 2023*

The Wheat or Rye category contains clean, refreshing beers made with malted or unmalted wheat and/or rye, in both the American and German traditions, including Historical Roggenbier. Examples that have added fruit or other flavors should be entered in the Fruit and Field Beers category. Appearance, aroma, and flavor will be variable according to the base beer style. Beers entered in this category will require explanation from the brewer in order to be judged appropriately.

Sub-styles in this category:

- American Wheat Beer: BJCP - 1D
- Weissbier(/Weizen): BJCP - 10A
- Dunkels Weissbier: BJCP - 10B
- Weizenbock: BJCP - 10C
- Historical Beer: Roggenbier: BJCP - 27
- Rye Beer: GABF - 12a
- German-Style Rye Ale: GABF - 12b
- Light American Wheat Beer without Yeast: GABF - 1a
- Dark American Wheat Beer without Yeast: GABF - 1b
- Light American Wheat Beer with Yeast: GABF - 1c
- Dark American Wheat Beer with Yeast: GABF - 1d
- German-Style Leichtes Weizen: GABF - 36c
- South German-Style Kristal Weizen: GABF - 82a
- South German-Style Bernsteinfarbenes Weizen: GABF - 82c





# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 29: Decadent Beers

*21 entries in 2023*

Stepping outside of both BJCP and GABF style guidelines, this catch-all category is composed of beers that are commonly considered to mimic the flavors of the pastries, desserts, or fruit for which they are named. They will be judged as described below. Also considered will be the drinkability of the beer, its novelty and balance as well as lack of flaws and infection.

Pastry and Dessert beers are designed to smell and taste like their namesakes. These types of beer will be judged, on the most part, subjectively on how closely they match the concept and flavor of the pastries or desserts for which they are named. The base beer may be considered if it can be discerned. Such as with pastry stouts they must resemble the pastry and the Stout. Puree beers, or smoothie beers as they may be called, are often named for the fruit(s) they contain. Puree beer viscosity may vary greatly from brewery to brewery. Puree beer should not be confused with fruited beer in that there is an increased amount of residual fruit (mostly as pureed fruit pulp). Puree beer often has a thicker texture than most beer or even fruited beer. By default, these beers will mostly be judged subjectively. The brewer must specify which fruits are used.

### Style Characteristics:

- Alcohol by Volume - Flexible
- Bitterness - Flexible
- Original Gravity (OG) - Flexible
- Final gravity - Flexible
- Color -Flexible



# CATEGORIES & SUB-STYLES

## Category 30: Legislative Pro-Am

*New category for 2024*

The TCBC Legislative Pro-Am Category is focused on beers brewed as collaborations between a Texas Legislative Office and Texas Craft Brewers Guild member brewery. The Category is open to all styles that would fit elsewhere in the Texas Craft Brewers Cup, and not open to any beverages such as wine, cider, or seltzer that would be outside the specs of a current TCBC category. Beers will be judged by appropriate style guidelines selected by the entering brewery. This category will not count toward your entry cap or the brewery of the year score tallied in the standard Texas Craft Brewers Cup rules. Awards for this category and a tasting of entered beers will happen after the Texas Craft Brewers Guild Annual Lobby Day during a reception around the Texas State Capitol.

Sub-styles in this category:

- Your beer should match any category and sub-style presented in the category list above.





# TCBC SUB-STYLES

## CATEGORY 15 | SUB-STYLE: SPECIALTY IPA: OTHER

### SUB-CATEGORY EXPLANATION

This sub-style is used for Specialty IPAs that do not fit into the pre-defined list of specialty IPAs laid out in this parent category.

### OVERALL IMPRESSION

Recognizable as an IPA by balance – a hop-forward, bitter, dryish beer – with something else present to distinguish it from the standard categories. Should have good drinkability, regardless of the form. Excessive harshness and heaviness are typically faults, as are strong flavor clashes between the hops and the other specialty ingredients.

### AROMA

Detectable hop aroma is required; characterization of hops is dependent on the specific type of Specialty IPA. Other aromatics may be present; hop aroma is typically the strongest element.

### APPEARANCE

Color depends on specific type of Specialty IPA. Most should be clear, although certain styles with high amounts of starchy adjuncts, or unfiltered dry-hopped versions may be slightly hazy. Darker types can be opaque making clarity irrelevant. Good, persistent head stand with color dependent on the specific type of Specialty IPA.

### FLAVOR

Hop flavor is typically medium-low to high, with qualities dependent on typical varieties used in the specific Specialty IPA. Hop bitterness is typically medium-high to very high, with qualities dependent on typical varieties used in the specific Specialty IPA. Malt flavor generally low to medium, with qualities dependent on typical varieties used in the specific Specialty IPA. Commonly will have a medium-dry to dry finish. Some clean alcohol flavor can be noted in stronger versions. Various types of Specialty IPAs can show additional malt and yeast characteristics, depending on the type.

### MOUTHFEEL

Smooth, medium-light to medium-bodied mouthfeel. Medium carbonation. Some smooth alcohol warming can be sensed in stronger versions.

Alcohol by volume - Flexible  
Bitterness - Flexible  
Original Gravity (OG) - Flexible  
Final gravity - Flexible  
Color - Flexible



# TCBC SUB-STYLES

## CATEGORY 15 | SUB-STYLE: FRUITED IPA

### COLOR

Straw to very dark, varying widely with ingredients used

### CLARITY

May range from clear to very high degree of cloudiness. Starch, yeast, hop, protein and/or other compounds can contribute to a wide range of hazy appearance within this category

### PERCEIVED MALT AROMA & FLAVOR

Very low to medium- low malt aroma and flavor may be present, and may exhibit attributes typical of various adjuncts and specialty malts

### PERCEIVED HOP AROMA & FLAVOR

Medium to very high hop aroma and flavor are present, with attributes typical of hops from any origin

### PERCEIVED BITTERNESS

Low to very high

### FERMENTATION CHARACTERISTICS

Fruity esters are low to high and may contribute to an overall highly fruity impression regardless of the presence of fruit(s) used and can contribute to the perception of sweetness and be complementary to the hop profile. Yeast choices can vary widely as can sensory outcomes; very low to low phenolic or other attributes typical of wine, champagne or Brettanomyces yeast strains may be present but are not required. Carbonation can range from average to high, with higher levels often associated with a crisp mouthfeel. Diacetyl and DMS should not be present.

### BODY

Very low to medium, depending on grist and yeast choice, enzymatic treatment, finishing adjunct(s) and other fermentation parameters. Mouthfeel can vary widely from light to full and from dry to silky.

### ADDITIONAL NOTES

This sub-category includes fruited versions of classic American and Juicy Hazy IPA, and Imperial IPA categories. They range widely in color, hop and malt intensity and attributes, hop bitterness, balance, alcohol content, body and overall flavor experience. These beers exhibit attributes typical of their fruit addition, in harmony with hop impression and overall flavor experience. Lactose may be used to enhance body and balance, but should not lend to, or overwhelm, the flavor character of these beers. Classifying these beers can be complex. Within the framework of these guidelines, coconut is defined as a vegetable, so beers containing coconut are categorized as Field Beers. Beers brewed with honey are categorized as Honey Beers as part of the Fruit & Field beer category. Spiced or fruited versions of these beers made with unusual fermentables are categorized as Experimental India Pale Ale in the Experimental, Hybrid, and Specialty Beer parent category.

Alcohol by volume - Flexible  
Bitterness - Flexible  
Original Gravity (OG) - Flexible  
Final gravity - Flexible  
Color -Flexible





# TCBC SUB-STYLES

## CATEGORY 27 | SUB-STYLE: RARE OR HISTORICAL

### **COLOR**

Varies with underlying style

### **CLARITY**

Varies with underlying style

### **PERCEIVED MALT AROMA & FLAVOR**

Varies with underlying style

### **PERCEIVED HOP AROMA & FLAVOR**

Varies with underlying style

### **PERCEIVED BITTERNESS**

Varies with underlying style Fermentation Characteristics: Varies with underlying style

### **BODY**

Varies with underlying style

### **ADDITIONAL NOTES**

Beers in this category include established historical beers and/or brewing traditions from any era or part of the world that don't fit within another beer style defined within these guidelines. Some Historical beers that could fit categories such as Experimental, Herb & Spice, Field Beer, etc. may be categorized as historical beers. This category pays tribute to beers that incorporate unique brewing ingredients and/or techniques that were used in the past. Within the framework of these guidelines, examples of Historical Beers include South American Chicha, Nepalese Chong/Chang, African sorghum- based beers, and many others.

Alcohol by volume - Flexible

Bitterness - Flexible

Original Gravity (OG) - Flexible

Final gravity - Flexible

Color - Flexible



# COMPETITION PLANNING TEAM

## JUDGING COORDINATOR

**Charles Vallhonrat** - Former Texas Craft Brewers Guild Executive Director (Retired)

## TEXAS CRAFT BREWERS GUILD STAFF

**Caroline Wallace** - Executive Director

**Meg Ellis** - Membership & Business Development Manager

**Travis Bailey** - Government Affairs Associate

## CATEGORY DEVELOPMENT BY

**Will Jaquiss** - Meanwhile Brewing (Austin)

**Collin Zreet** - Funky Picnic Brewery & Cafe (Fort Worth)

**Andrew Genitempo** - St Elmo Brewing (Austin)

**Chris Nicholson** - Roadmap Brewing (San Antonio)

**Michael Ferguson** - For the Culture Brewing (Houston)

**Janine Weber** - Ovinnik Brewing (Houston)

**Aaron Inkrott** - Saint Arnold Brewing Company (Houston)

## AND OVERALL DIRECTION FROM PUBLIC RELATIONS & MARKETING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Karen Killough** - Vista Brewing (Driftwood)

**Lennie Ambrose** - Saint Arnold Brewing Company (Houston)

**Sheila Garcia** - Hold Out Brewing (Austin)

**Stephen Alexander** - Tall City Brewing Co. (Midland)

*Special thanks to **Ben Edmunds** of the **Oregon Beer Awards** and all the good folks behind the **Great American Beer Festival**, the **North Carolina Brewers' Cup**, and the **New York State Craft Beer Competition** for generosity with their time, experience, and wisdom!*





**THANK YOU FOR ENTERING THE  
COMPETITION & GOOD LUCK!**

Questions? Email [Info@texascraftbrewersguild.org](mailto:Info@texascraftbrewersguild.org)