



Beer Drinks — Tapping a New Source of Profits

Americans love beer. It is the most frequently requested alcoholic beverage for men, and second only to white wine for women. So it would stand to reason that by now we've plumbed the depths on how to best market beer to our clientele. We already pour it into tall, frosty mugs, what else is there? The fact is there's much more that can be done.

"Blending different types of beers together has long been standard practice in English and Irish pubs," says Steve Abbott of Guinness Import Company, whose job it is to assist publicans in developing authentic Irish pubs, which includes consulting on food and drink. "Beer drinks, such as the Black & Tan and Half & Half, are extremely popular throughout Europe, Canada and Australia. They're delicious concoctions that look as great as they taste. Actually marketing beer drinks is a creative and innovative way of stimulating sales."

The artful skill of mixing beers together requires balancing the attributes of one brew with the characteristics of another. The key to success is using two beers with appreciably different properties—body, taste, texture, sweetness and bitterness.

An excellent example is the **Black & Tan**, a savory blend of stout and ale, typically Guinness and Bass draughts respectively. This memorable drink originated in England in 1919 and is named after the British constables who served in Ireland at the time. The Guinness Stout and Bass Ale have different densities, or specific gravities. The beers will layer one on top of the other—the nearly black Guinness floating atop the copper colored Bass—thereby creating a dramatic appearance. Hoist the combination and the heavier beer will slide along the angle of the glass such that both brews are consumed simultaneously. Set the glass down and the layers remain intact. The effect is captivating.

The venerable **Half & Half** is an equal mix of pilsener and bitter ale drafts. The light, dry lager smoothes the bitter edge of the ale, rendering the combination well-suited to American tastes. Another classic concoction is the **Black Velvet**, created in 1861 at the *Brook's Club* in London. It's a superb tasting blend of Guinness draft and chilled champagne. Substitute hard cider, such as Woodpecker, Strongbow, and Dry Blackthorn, for the champagne to create a **Black Velveteen**. Mix hard cider with the ale or lager of your choice to make a **Snake Bite**.

Send us your comments at amo@barmedia.com

If refreshing is what you're after, consider the **Shandy Gaff**, a mix of beer and ginger ale. Substitute lemon-lime soda to make a **Lemon Top**, or float a jigger of Rose's Lime Juice to make a **Lager and Lime**.

The American Entries

While beer drinks may have their origins abroad, American mixologists are starting to see the light.

"We've had considerable success marketing beer drinks as house specialties," states Tracy Finklang, corporate beverage director for *Rock Bottom Brewery*. "It's a creative way to work some fun into the mix. People love them. With our broad selection of microbrews, devising tempting combinations is something of a no-brainer."

Whereas an Englishman devised the now famous beer drink, the **Dog's Nose**, a sedate blend of dry gin and ale, it was undoubtedly an American who first concocted the **Bloody Bastard**, a spicy mix of Bass Ale, horseradish and Bloody Mary mix with a peeled shrimp garnish. It's more of a meal with an attitude. Add Stolichnaya Limonnaya and Pertsovka to make a **Bloody Russian Bastard**.

The **Rock 'N' Bock** is made with equal parts of Rolling Rock and Shiner Double Bock, a dark, full-bodied beer brewed in Shiner, Texas. Two other specialties to consider are the **Snakebite**, an equal mix of Harp Lager and hard apple cider, and the **Purple Death**, a blend of Bass Ale, Chambord and cider.

Experiment and create your own unique combinations, or consult the following beer recipes for inspiration. Tapping into beer's enormous popularity is a dynamic and lucrative way to escape the ordinary.

How To Pour The Perfect Black & Tan

"Pouring a perfect Black & Tan is the mark of a professional barkeep," says Steve Abbott of Guinness Import Company. "The drink is delicious. Guinness and Bass taste great together. The real clincher, as you Americans

say, is the drink's rather dramatic presentation. You can expect other guests to order one after seeing the visual display."

You needn't have dual citizenship to pour a perfect Black & Tan. What you will need is a bit of practice mastering the technique. Pouring the beers directly into the glass will cause them to mix, thereby ruining the layering effect. Here then is the proper method of pouring a Black & Tan straight from the people at St. James Gate in Dublin.

- Fill a pint glass half full with Bass Ale.
- Clip the Guinness Spoon over the rim of the glass.
- Pour Guinness Draught full speed over the back of the spoon. Fill right to the top just proud of the rim of the glass.
- Serve to your guest while the Guinness is still cascading.

Black & Tan

Ale or beer glass, chilled
1/2 fill draught Bass Pale Ale
1/2 fill draught Guinness

Black Velvet

Beer glass, chilled
1/2 fill with Guinness Stout
1/2 fill with hard apple cider

Black Velvet

Beer glass, chilled
1/2 fill with Guinness Stout
Fill with Champagne

Bloody Bastard

Bucket or house specialty glass, ice
(Salted rim optional)
2 oz. Bass Ale
Fill with Bloody Mary mix
Add 1/2 Tbs. horseradish
Lime wedge and peeled shrimp garnish

Gold And Lager

Beer glass, chilled
1 1/4 oz. Goldschläger
Fill with draft lager

Half & Half

Beer glass, chilled
1/2 fill with Bitter Ale
1/2 fill with Pilsener

Lunch Box

Beer glass, chilled
1 oz. Di Saronno Amaretto
1 oz. orange juice
3-4 oz. draft beer

Orange Julius

Presentation shot glass, chilled
1/4 fill Vodka
1/4 fill Di Saronno Amaretto
1/4 fill orange juice
1/4 fill draft beer

Purple Death

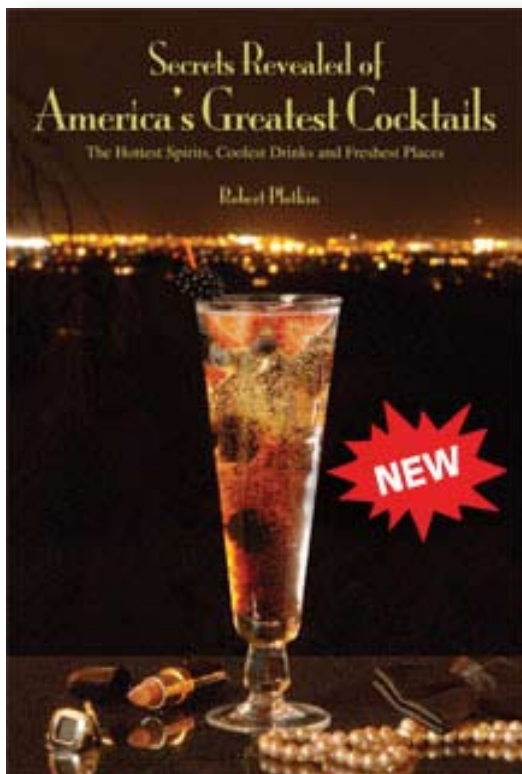
Beer glass, chilled
3/4 fill with Bass Ale
1 ounce Chambord
Fill with hard apple cider

Shandy Gaff

Beer glass, chilled
1/2 fill with requested draft beer
Fill with ginger ale

Robert Plotkin is a judge at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition and the author of numerous books. You can reach him at BarMedia— robert@barmedia.com.

This Month at BarMedia.com!



Improve your cocktail skills with the hottest new sensational-libations guaranteed to make you the toast of the town.

It's all inside!

Visit BarMedia.com to get this invaluable Hardcover cocktail guide now at a very special price for subscribers only!

Was: ~~\$19.95~~, Now: **\$9.95** + S & H
Enter code **SCRT022810** at checkout

Valid until 02/28/10

