

# TALL SPIRITS & short nips

A free magazine for distillers, winemakers and brewers

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**HAURAKI BCL**  
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Newsletter from the inventors of New Zealand's original home distilling system.

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## Editorial

Winter is almost over and all experienced brewers are enjoying the stouts and heavy ales made during Summer, the winemakers tasting their ports and distillers enjoying their cream liqueurs.

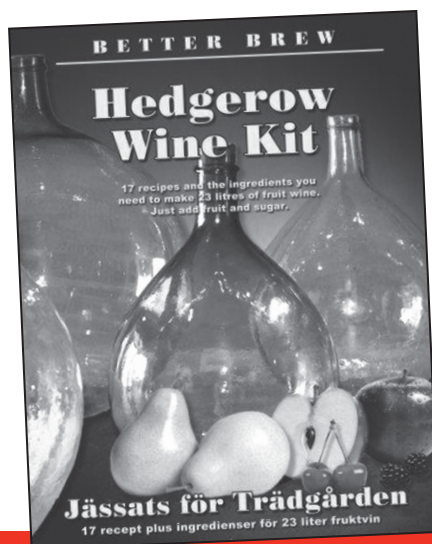
Our product ranges just keep growing with over 1000 items now available. Flavours and enhancers are made right here in New Zealand while we use our partners in UK, Belgium, Australia and USA to provide the latest equipment and brew mixes.

Thanks to all those who have entered this year's Stillmaster Competition, our judges face a busy October. Results will be published in the December issue of Tall Spirits

## HBC Open Day

Hauraki Brewing open day was a great success especially the classes for putting a brew down. We sponsor open days at many stores each year, run by our master brewer and Technical Rep Phil Todd.

... and the open day's show stopper, Big Al's party pack aka sprayer unit. Add five litres of matured beer, pump it up and away you go. Fine for the day and the beer was good too.



## Hedgerow Wild Fruit Mix

*For three winemakers looking for something new – go old*

This English-produced Hedgerow Kit contains recipes for wines fruit found in a Kent orchard or garden. The kit includes yeast, nutrient, fruit acid, enzymes, finings and stabiliser. The recipes cover six berries, plus elder, rosehips and dandelion.

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Japan Now the home of  
World's Best Malt

# Pouring the Perfect Beer

by Peter de Graaf

**LIKE ALL TRADITIONAL CZECH PUBS**, at Na Dvorka the beer comes to you.

There's no queuing at the bar and any time your glass drops below quarter full, the waiter slams a fresh beer on your table and marks your tab. You only need to signal the waiter when you want him to stop bringing beer.

Head barman Antonii Husak told me, over the clinking of glassware and shouts of "Ty vole!" (you ox!), that the key to a perfect pint is serving it at the right temperature, 4–6°C, and coaxing it from the keg in stages to guarantee a lasting head.

"The head must be thick like cream and should hold for several minutes. You have to tap three times, wait each time until the foam falls, and then top it up again until the glass is filled to the mark and a foam cap rises above the rim. The head acts as insulation, stops gas escaping and preserves the taste longer," Husak said.

And if the glass has the slightest trace of grease or the pipes aren't clean, the head collapses instantly and won't leave rings around the glass as it's drained.

And what of the beer itself? To find out what makes Budvar special, I caught a trolley-bus across town to meet brewmaster Josef Tolar.

What distinguishes Budvar from other beers, Tolar said, is water from a 300m-

deep on-site well, Moravian malt and

Saaz hops grown in a handful of Czech villages. And although most breweries use hop granules or a Vegemite-like extract to add bitterness to their beer, Budvar uses dried hop cones straight from the vine.

But perhaps the most crucial difference is the lagering or storage period. Nowadays most large-scale breweries age their beer for a month in a conical tank, whereas Budvar keeps its beer in the old-style horizontal tanks for three times as long.

"We say 35 days is sufficient for a draft beer, but for lager you need 90 to 95 days. It is not economic, but it is the traditional way and gives the best results," Tolar said.



## Tap Ends Produce The Perfect Head

Used throughout the craft and real ale industry sparklers produce a creamy, stable head on all beer. The Sparkler fits onto the outlet of any pressure system be it pump, keg, cask or mini keg system.

The creamy head produced really enhances the malty, hop aroma of good beer.

Our test brewers have all tried it and mark the result 10/10. The beer has much more life, looked better in the glass and had a great aroma!

Stocks have just arrived. Expect to pay \$7.95 (Code H157)

## Sparkler



# As an Alternative here's Potato Wine and Beetroot Beer Recipes dating back to the 1700's



## Beetroot Beer

A simple old country recipe, which produces a somewhat sweet drink with a dark, rich, full-bodied taste without any hint of beetroot. The beetroot is not peeled as much of the goodness lies in the skin.

- 1 lb beetroot
- 1 pint stout
- 8oz unrefined dark muscovado sugar

Scrub the beetroots, cut into slices and put into a bowl. Sprinkle over the sugar, cover and set aside for 24 hours. When ready strain off the liquid and add it to the stout. Put into bottles and seal with pop-off plastic caps. Leave for 7–14 days before drinking.

## Potato Wine

Potato wine, like parsnip, is one of the most traditional home-produced country wines and can possess quite a kick.

- 2 lb potatoes, scrubbed well
- 2 lb raisins, washed in hot water and chopped
- 4 lb brown sugar
- 1 pint fresh wheat, husks removed
- 6 pints water
- Wine yeast
- Campden tablet

Sprinkle the yeast granules into a cup of boiled tepid water, cover with clingfilm and leave to stand for about an hour.

Grate the potatoes into a fermentation bin then stir in the raisins, sugar and wheat. Bring the water to the boil, pour over the ingredients and stir well until all the sugar is dissolved. Cover and leave to cool. When cool, add the activated yeast, cover loosely and keep in a cool place for 3 weeks, stirring at regular intervals. Strain the liquid into a demi-john topping up to 1 gallon with cold, boiled water if required. Fit an airlock and leave to ferment. When fermentation has ceased, siphon the wine into a clean demi-john and add 1 crushed Campden tablet. Bung tight and store for at least six months. Finally siphon into sterilised bottles, seal tightly and then, before drinking, take care to judge the potency of the brew!



# What's New . . .

**W**ith our partners in Australia, UK, Europe and USA, New Zealand brewers have access to a great range of new high quality brewing products. Here are some of the latest additions to our range.

## ***New Glass Whiskey Jugs***

These have just arrived in 1 litre and 500ml sizes. They're complete with caps and pour nozzle. Ideal for spirits and liqueurs but also for sauces, oils and vinegars. Around \$4.00 or \$3.50 for the 500ml



## ***Fermenters***

Australian made, large lid and all come with a free grommet, airlock and tap. 60 litre, 50 litre and 30 litre. The 50 litre costs \$60



## ***Corney Kegs and Kegging Systems***

Choose from either a new Italian keg or reconditioned. These have new fittings, polished body and have been pressure tested. About half the price of a new one at \$140

If you're upgrading or reconditioning your system we have new inlet / outlet valves and either German or Chinese pressure regulator sets – all fitted out to use at \$170 or \$85



And there's brand new New Zealand LAB certified 2kg cylinders. Your local retailer has these for around \$220.

Among the many refillers, Gas Packaging of Wanganui offer a refill and delivery service – Phone 06 345 0982 or in Auckland – Keg Resources, 4 Currys Lane, Glenfield open daily from 10 till 2 Saturdays. Phone 443 7416.

Fill while you wait.



## White Whiskey is Something Special

Jim Beam's promoting their Ghost Whiskey. This light, straw-coloured spirit is soft and has vanilla whiskey tones. It can be used in similar mixes as vodka but with more flavour. It's pricey at \$44.94.



Our new Premium White Whiskey flavour matches the colour and flavour of Ghost – the mix makes 5 litres at a retail of \$11.00.



## 30 Litre Stainless Steel Mashing Pot

Complete with lid at \$175.

### Heat Pads

New Zealand made in HD polycarbonate with a five year warranty for \$35.



### Ginger Beer Booster

If you want a boost in flavour for your Ginger Beer we're producing a special ginger extract.

The 125ml treats one 20 litre batch – the cost is around \$5.



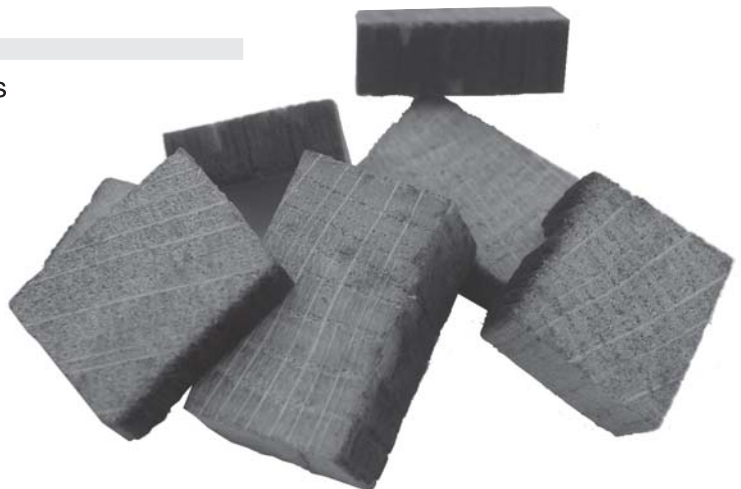
## Bourbon Barrel Cubes

From freshly emptied bourbon barrels from a famous maker (who we can't name). The staves are especially cut to retain one charred face.

Cubes react slower than chips in the aging process but produce a more mellow flavour because of the charred face.

This acts as an activated carbon and reduces the sharpness found in new spirit.

Available later in October.



### Stone Jars

Clive (07 878 8574) has a dozen 1 gallon stone jars for sale. Give him a call.



# Letters to the Editor



When making gin using the 50gm gin mix, the end result is an amber colour even after filtering. Is this normal?

Dave

Yes, it's quite normal Dave.

To achieve a perfectly clear gin, soak the berry mix in 1 litre of spirit for 48 hours, give it a whizz in a blender, add 4 more litres of spirit.

After two weeks add five litres of water and redistill.

The result will be clear and very ginny. You may then cut it further with fresh spirit to the level of gin flavour that suits you.

Cheers, Peter

Hi it is belated but just to follow up regarding my previous letter and your response about the Professional Whiskey Kit you guys sell.

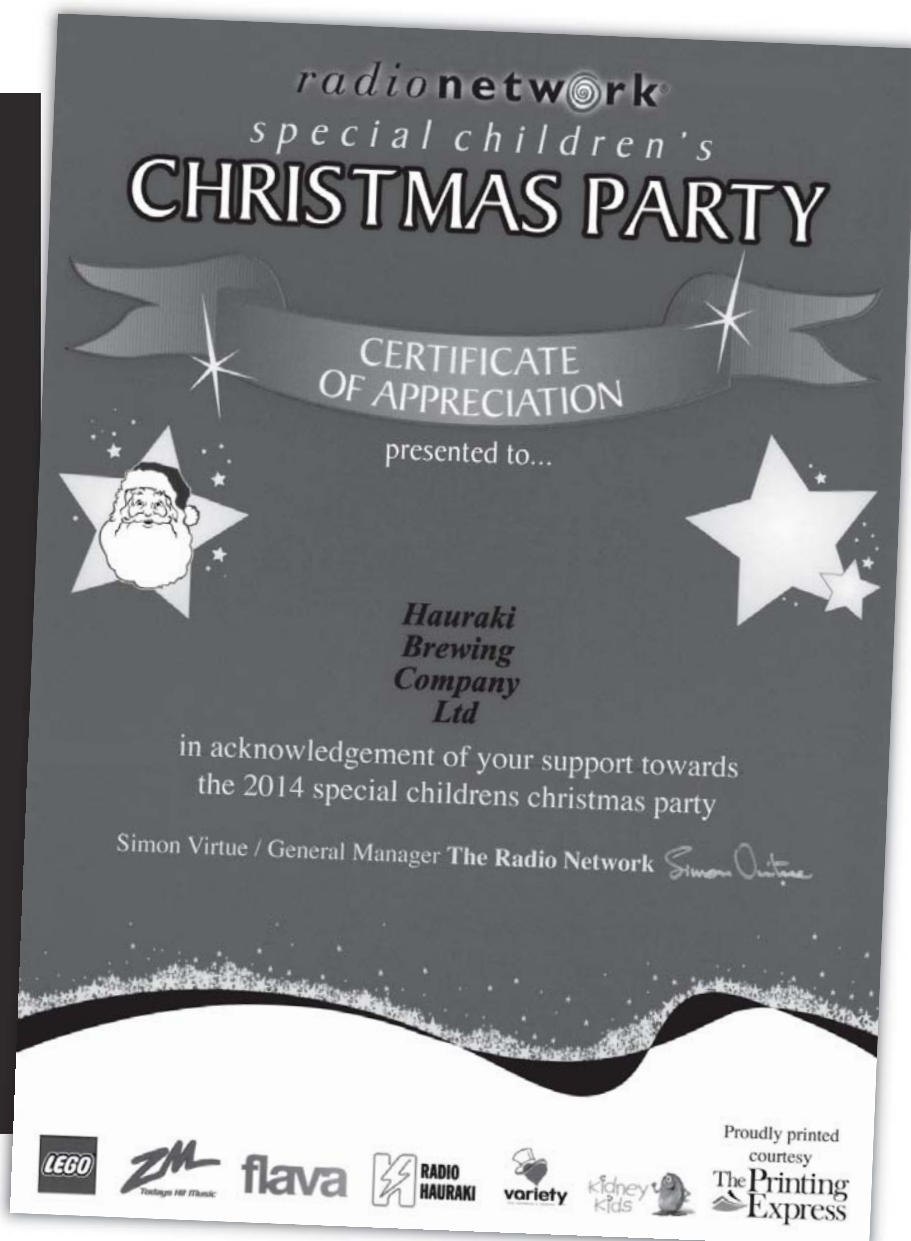
It has been ages since I used anything like that kit myself but it does provide a good learning curve for people interested in getting into AG brewing/distilling. It can be used to make very nice AG single malts too; simply don't use any sugar and combine the 2kg peated malt from the kit with another 3kg of base malt (golden promise is a great one to use) for a 25L mash. This does need to be double distilled, though, and I suggest using a parrot's beak on your still for the spirit run especially for those who are not used to making cuts and blending cuts for ageing.

Cheers Guys keep up the good work.

## Westpac posts record half-year

\$432 million isn't bad!!

Dave asks . . .  
are we in the wrong business?





## CIDER

Cider has become very fashionable and sales are up 80% this year, especially the fruity variations. Being apple based it blends very well with other fruit flavours. Recent commercial offerings include blackberry and plum, strawberry and lime, passion fruit and feijoa. Your own cider can be lifted being our Fruit Vodka flavour bases – there's fifteen in the range. Or try our English Magnum ciders, the latest are Elder flower and strawberry. Remember they are pure concentrate and gluten free.

## GINGER BEER

If you've tried our new Ginger Beer Extract to boost the ginger flavour of your brew why not try this.

30ml rum	30ml vodka
Dash of bitters	Squeeze of lime
½ lime	Ice

Fill with ginger beer

## JAGER



With a shortage looming, Prestige our JKT supplier has sent down bulk extract to bottle here.

The usual 20ml Prestige bottle will be replaced by a 50ml bottle.

It still makes 750ml and carries the Prestige JKT label but the product is bottled here.

... and if you're wanting to match the new Jagermeister Spice, try our Heritage Tropical Spice Rum with the Prestige JAKT base.

## FOR THE PURIST . . .

We've put together a herb pack containing juniper, coriander, lemon peel, cardamom. Soak this in spirit, grind, dilute with water then distil with good base spirit for a clean, classic gin. For the adventurous, some angelica, aniseed, rosemary and sage can be added.



## KEEPING A HEAD

Having used the best ingredients, adjuncts and techniques, disappointing head formation is the bane of many brewers. So look at the pour you do, full flow not a dribbles down the side of the glass.

And that glass, out with the dishwasher. Use a rinse-free glass cleaner and rinse. Chill that glass first.

Remember a beer takes time to develop and to becomes charged with CO<sup>2</sup> gas. Build the head when you pour. And it should stay with you to the end of your glass, or if kegging use a Sparkler Head.



## NUMBERS GAME

Alcohol sales through supermarkets keeps on growing.

Beer \$519 million

Wine \$801 million

Cider \$42 million

## AND WITH ADVERTISING

Lindauer leads the wine category, Jim Beam spirits, followed by Seagram. With beer, Tui is out in front followed by Export Gold. In fact DB brand's advertising appears to be double that of Lion.

## GIN

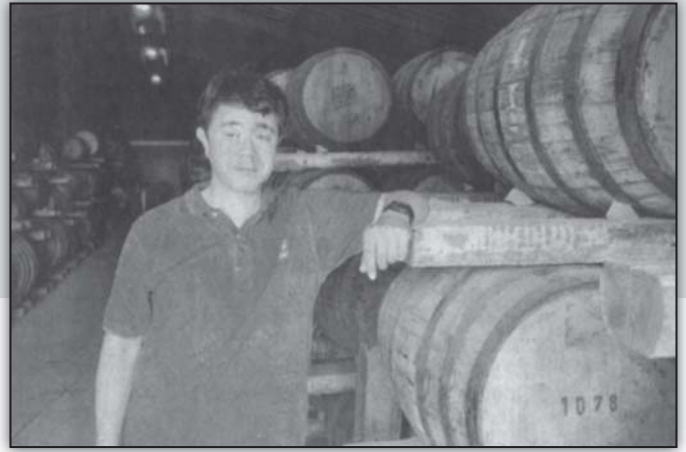
Of the fifteen premium gins sold commercially only one is less than \$50 / litre, the dearest (No.3) being \$115 although it's 46%.

During a visit to the Plymouth Gin Distillery (41.2%, \$103.99 / litre) Distillery, there was plenty of time to enjoy their latest batch. Quite heavy and sweet.



# Japan Now the Home of World's Best Malt

*Chance led a sake brewer's son on an award-winning path, by Rick Wallace – Tokyo Correspondent*



ICHIRO Akuto's unlikely path to success began when the firm that took over his father's struggling sake brewery left behind a bunch of barrels filled with whisky they'd been making as a sideline.

The 47-year-old saw the chance to launch an operation from this humble beginning, quit his job with beverage giant Suntory, and struck out on his own.

Eight years later, he has reached the upper levels of the Japanese whisky world and his Ichiro's Malt range of whiskies has won a variety of categories at the World Whiskies Awards, beginning in 2006.

His success is mirrored by the two giants of the industry, Suntory and Nikka, which have also won international plaudits and seen their sales grow amid a recent whisky boom in Japan.

Pundits say Akuto's whiskies are among Japan's finest, even though his oldest single-malt drop from his Chichibu distillery is just three years old, a youngster in whisky terms. He is among a number of Japanese producers making their mark on the industry in Japan and abroad and snaring top global awards for their whiskies.

Many people are surprised to learn that Japan has become a serious whisky producer.

National figures show that consumption grew from 76 million litres between 2007 and 2010 and that growth is continuing steadily.

Japan is a long way from Scotland, and the rugged individualism of the Scots has few parallels in Japanese society.

But in a country of 120 million people there are always some black sheep whose determination has to be seen to be believed.

The father of the Japanese whisky industry, Masataka Taketsuru travelled to Scotland in 1919 and learned the craft at the feet of the Scottish masters, even marrying a Scottish woman despite opposition of their families.

Akuto, who has spent a lot of time in Scotland and embraces the Scottish whisky traditions, says the attention to detail and precision that the Japanese are known for is a great advantage in whisky making.

He readily acknowledges he is a whisky otaku.

The word is akin to "trainspotter" or "obsessive" and describes a person with a single-minded obsession about something mainstream society may find trivial.

While taking the Weekend Australian through his distillery at Chichibu, 100km northwest of Tokyo, he explains how he tries to manipulate every phase of the process - malting, brewing fermentation, distillation and ageing - to produce whisky that is not only excellent but also has a Japanese character.

"For the next 10 years I want to keep up stable production of whisky using Japanese ingredients as much as possible," Akuto says.

"My ultimate goal is to drink 30-year-old whisky from this distillery."

Akuto began growing his own barley to avoid relying on imports and, like many Japanese distilleries, uses some Japanese oak (mizunara) in the maturation phase.

He is now selling about 40,000 bottles a year with prices starting from ¥10,000 (\$120).

Most of his production is snapped up in the domestic market or by savvy global connoisseurs, although he sells in some liquor stores in England, France, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Taiwan and Singapore.

Whisky pundit Chris Bunting, who wrote the guidebook *Drinking Japan* and runs a whisky blog called Nonjatta, said there were a small number of independent distilleries producing quality whisky but Akuto's Chichibu distillery was leading the pack.

"He's really sophisticated guy who knows all about the whisky market," he says.

"He has set Chichibu up from scratch and he's been very, very successful."

But the whisky blogger says Nikka's Yoichi and Miyagikyo whiskies and Suntory's Yamazaki and Hakushu whiskies are also world-class.

Scotland has a far greater range of top-quality whiskies, he says, but the best Japanese whiskies are globally competitive.

At the past two World Whiskies Awards, a Yamazaki whisky has won the marquee category - best single malt.

"I think the reason they are so good is they have a healthy respect for the Scottish tradition," Bunting says.

The future for Akuto and the industry in Japan seems bright. The Japanese salaryman's love of cheap blended whisky in the form of highballs has saved the whisky-making arms of the big firms and put local consumers on the pathway to discovering blended malts, pure malts and single malts.