

IRISH STOUT

History: The style evolved from attempts to capitalize on the success of London porters, but originally reflected a fuller, creamier, more "stout" body and strength. Guinness began brewing only porter in 1799, and a "stouter kind of porter" around 1810. Irish Stout diverged from London single stout (or simply porter) in the late 1800s, with an emphasis on darker malts. Guinness was among the first breweries to use black patent malt for porters and stouts in the 1820s.

Guinness began using roasted barley after WWII, while London brewers continued to use brown malt. Guinness started using flaked barley in the 1950s, also increasing attenuation greatly. Guinness Draught was launched as a brand in 1959. Draught cans and bottles were developed in the late 1980s and 1990s.

Characteristic Ingredients: Guinness is made using roasted barley, flaked barley, and pale malt, but other breweries don't necessarily use roasted barley; they can use chocolate or other dark and specialty malts.

Whatever combination of malts or grains is used, the resulting product should be black. Cork-type stouts are perhaps closer to historical London-type stouts in composition with a varied grist not dominated by roasted barley.

Appearance: Jet black to deep brown with garnet highlights in color. According to Guinness, "Guinness beer may appear black, but it is actually a very dark shade of ruby. Opaque. A thick, creamy, long-lasting, tan- to brown-colored head is characteristic when served on nitro, but don't expect the tight, creamy head on a bottled beer.

Aroma: Moderate coffee-like aroma typically dominates; may have a slight dark chocolate, cocoa and/ or roasted grain secondary notes. Esters medium-low to none. Hop aroma low to none, may be lightly earthy or floral, but is typically absent.

Taste: Moderate roasted, grain or malt flavor with a medium to high hop bitterness. The finish can be dry and coffee-like to moderately balanced with a touch of caramel or malty sweetness. Typically has coffee-like flavors, but also may have a bittersweet or unsweetened chocolate character in the palate, lasting into the finish. Balancing factors may include some creaminess, medium-low to no fruitiness, and medium to no hop flavor (often earthy). The level of bitterness is somewhat variable, as is the roasted character and the dryness of the finish; allow for interpretation by brewers.





Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium-full body, with a somewhat creamy character (particularly when served with a nitro pour). Low to moderate carbonation. For the high hop bitterness and significant proportion of dark grains present, this beer is remarkably smooth. May have a light astringency from the roasted grains, although harshness is undesirable.

Finish/ Overall Impression: A very dark, roasty, bitter, creamy ale.

Style Comparison: Lower strength than an Irish Extra Stout, but with similar flavors. Darker in color (black) than an English porter (brown).

Food Pairing Suggestions: Hearty, rich food; steak, meat pies; classic with oysters; stronger versions with chocolate.

Comments: When a brewery offered a stout and a porter, the stout was always the stronger beer (it was originally called a "Stout Porter"). Modern versions are brewed from a lower OG and no longer necessarily reflect a higher strength than porters. This is typically a draught product today; bottled versions are typically brewed from a higher OG and are usually called Extra Stouts. Regional differences exist in Ireland, similar to variability in English Bitters. Dublin-type stouts use roasted barley, are more bitter, and are drier. Cork -type stouts are sweeter, less bitter, and have flavors from chocolate and specialty malts. Commercial examples of this style are almost always associated with a nitro pour. Do not expect traditional botte-conditioned beers to have the full, creamy texture or very long-lasting head traditionally associated with the nitrogen dispense.

Tags: Standard strength, dark-color, top-fermented, British-isles, traditional-style, stout-family, bitter, roasty.

Irish Stout Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.036 - 1.044

FG: 1.007 - 1.011

IBU: 25 - 45

SRM: 25.0 - 40.0, black

ABV: 4.0 - 4.5

Commercial Examples: Beamish Irish Stout, Guinness Draught, Brooklyn Irish Stout, Harpoon Boston Irish Stout, Murphy's Irish Stout, O'Hara's Irish Stout, Porterhouse Wrasslers 4X

