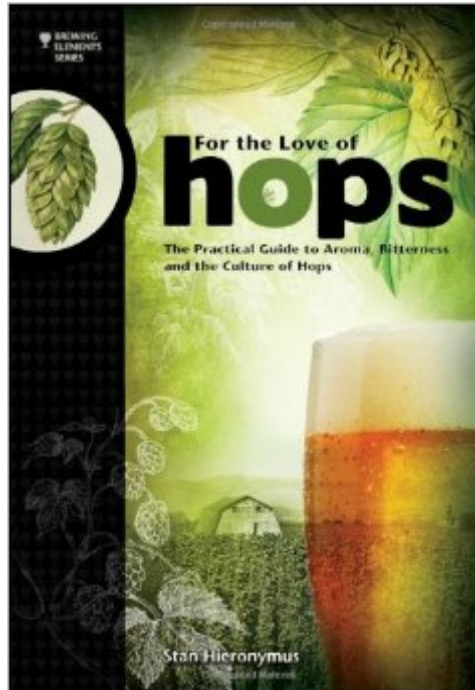


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For The Love Of Hops: The Practical Guide To Aroma, Bitterness And The Culture Of Hops (Brewing Elements)



Synopsis

Stan Hieronymus expertly explains the nature of hops, their origins, hop quality and utilization--and even devotes an entire chapter to dry hopping. For the Love of Hops also includes a reference catalog of more than 100 varieties and their characteristics.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Like many of the other reviewers/ brewers, I bought this because I really enjoyed the YEAST book by Brewing Elements Series. I agree with one of the other reviewers that also gave it three stars, so I probably don't need to re-hash that review since it was well written. A few reasons why I couldn't pour over in the review: My main complaint is that I also found the material to be lacking in practical brewing information (compared to the yeast book which has all kinds of hands-on yeast lab set-up and technique, yeast handling and storage on a nano and macro level, temperature and oxygenation test results and graphs, etc...). The HOPS book is very well researched, but except for the clone recipes near the end of the book and the hop reference guide in the middle section, I just didn't find it useful in my day to day brewing. The first half of the book is basically the history of hops, who grew them, and the genetic lineage of the different strains of hop plants (Cascade, Chinook, etc). Personally, I thought that while the writing is conversational, it jumps around a lot. It's hard to specify without referencing multiple paragraphs and pages, but after a while I felt like all I was reading was "Japan...1952...Germany....USDA.....1910.....Illinois..... Oregon State...

...1988.....1985.....Chinook.....1966....Sierra Nevada.2004.....1955.....1970). You should already know that everyone tastes and smells and likes different beers/ hops for whatever reasons (environmental, genetic, conditioning, seasonal). I feel like this book really just re-emphasises that nobody can really put their finger on (or at least come to a consensus on) what exactly certain hops smell like, how exactly to get any particular flavor into your beer, or why exactly it happens. I feel like I kept reading (which I already know), that you just have to experiment with bases, hops, yeasts, timing of hop additions, and amounts to find the flavors you like. I'm paraphrasing of course, and I'm well aware that this is what makes brewing such an wonderful and exciting art form. I just expected a little more practical information from this book that I could immediately apply. It's my fault that the history of the hops was less interesting to me. Still, I'm glad I read it.

As a homebrewer, I have discovered my true love in the dedicated creation of a beer recipe. I am content spending hours researching a style, then researching the ingredients relevant to that style, and lastly the brewing techniques necessarily to pay homage to that style. Ray Daniels writes an excellent book in which a very systematic and scientific approach is taken to determine the ingredients of a recipe. However, he tends to hurry over the hops section, merely suggesting a "family" of hops to choose from and a final bitterness to aim for. And so I turned to this book with the intention of filling in the blanks. The truth is, anyone can brew a bitter beer. Toss in a ridiculous amount of relatively expensive brewing hops, and pretty much anyone can appease a non-educated, untrained individual who fancies himself a "hop head." Find someone however who understands the intricate nuances in a beer such as Heady Topper, or Pliny the Younger, and suddenly a "butt load of hops" doesn't work anymore. The biggest challenge really lies beyond the ":30" timer. A lot of what the brewer does in relation to hops rests not only in the last 30 minutes of the boil, but in the precious days and potentially months between the time the heat is shut off, and the cap is popped off. I turned to "For the Love of Hops", hoping for critical information on the nitty gritty details of flavoring with hops - should one use more for less time, or less for more time? How much dry-hopping is necessary? What are rules of thumb for duration and quantity? And how about some better information on the hop varieties besides "citrusy and piney"? Unfortunately, FTLOH did little to aid me in this quest. Some of the poorly-received 3-star reviews on Amazon actually hit the nail on the head quite well. Sad to see "fanboyism" take place with a brewing book. Hieronymus's writing is quite difficult to follow, and knowledge useful for a brewer is sporadic at best. Most disappointing in my opinion was the chapter on dry-hopping. Arguable one of the most significant steps to adding hop character to a beer, we're given 19 pages of text containing a myriad of stories from various

brewers on the topic, none of which relate even the slightest to the modern homebrewer. There is extremely little guidance on the practice, and even fewer suggestions on how one should perform the method, especially on a smaller, at-home scale. The most useful piece of knowledge I absorbed from the entire chapter was on page 216: "New Belgium found that ceiling [for volume of added dry hops] at 35 kilograms in 100 hectoliters (comparable to about nine-tenths of a pound per barrel." There you have it. I may have just saved you \$15 bucks...Even his chapter on hop varieties, titled "The Hop Store" provides little more knowledge of use than is available on nearly any brewing-focused website or application. Each hop variety is given a one-sentence historical reference - honestly useless to the homebrewer - and SOMETIMES a few words describing it's flavor and/or aroma. Sometimes we get little more than "Relatively neutral, but English, character." It then gives a range of acid ranges, which can be found on the label of any packaged hop product at a brewing supply store. On two pages of the book I found a gorgeous "spider chart" that shows a variety of hop as well as a dodecagon with flavor perceptions ranging from "sweet fruits" to "citrus." It turns out that these charts are the entire content of a publication called "The Hop Aroma Compendium" - a 2-volume series which I suspect presents far more value than "For the Love of Hops" and can be yours today for the at-a-bargain price of \$237 dollars US... (You won't find it on - I already looked...)In closing, "For the Love of Hops" is written by a hop-lover who wanted to share his stories and experiences in the world of brewing, and that's great if you're looking for a trip through history and would like to hear some stories from big-name breweries such as Sierra Nevada, Russian River, and Samuel Adams. If however you're looking to improve your own brewing abilities by learning more about the potential and power of the almighty *Humulus Lupulus*, I'm afraid you'll have to continue your search elsewhere.

The book is well written and well researched. There is some interesting material on historical hops growing and research. But as a home brewer looking to improve my beer making I didn't get that much out of the book. A lot of the material I've read elsewhere. Maybe that's the problem, I've read a lot, so there wasn't that much new material here that is useful to a brewer - though there is some. Not a bad book, just not what I was looking for.

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