

BREWNZ BEER AWARDS 2010

Cider and Perry Styles

[The following Cider and Perry style guidelines have been adapted from BJCP 2008 guidelines. The Brewers Guild of New Zealand wishes to acknowledge and state its appreciation for the work of the BJCP in this field.]

127. **Standard Cider and Perry - Introduction**

The styles represented in this category are the principal established styles. The Common Cider and Common Perry styles are analogous to the cider and perry categories of earlier style standards. There are well-known styles not represented here—for example, Asturian (Spanish)—for which there are presently insufficient appreciation and a lack of commercial examples for reference.

In the case of a cider made to a style not explicitly represented here, it should be entered in the closest applicable category. The first decision is whether the cider was made with apples with significant tannin content that gives the cider noticeable astringency or bitterness. If not, it should be entered as a Common Cider. If so, the choice is between the English and French sub-categories; this decision should be based on whether the cider tends more toward sweet, rich, somewhat fruity (French) or drier and more austere (English). For perry of a non-represented style, the decision is, as above, based on tannin content. If in doubt, enter as Common Perry.

127A. **Common Cider**

A common cider is made from culinary/table apples, with wild or crab apples often used for acidity/tannin balance. Aroma/Flavour: Sweet or low-alcohol ciders may have apple aroma and flavour. Dry ciders will be more wine-like with some esters. Sugar and acidity should combine to give a refreshing character, neither cloying nor too austere. Medium to high acidity. Appearance: Clear to brilliant, pale to medium gold in colour. Mouth feel: Medium body. Some tannin should be present for slight to moderate astringency, but little bitterness. Overall Impression: Variable, but should be a medium, refreshing drink. Sweet ciders must not be cloying. Dry ciders must not be too austere. An ideal cider serves well as a “session” drink, and suitably accompanies a wide variety of food.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (dry, medium, sweet).

Varieties: Common (Winesap, Macintosh, Golden Delicious, Braeburn, Jonathan), multi-use (Northern Spy, Russets, Baldwin), crabapples, any suitable wildings.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.045 – 1.065
FG: 1.000 – 1.020
ABV: 2.5 – 9%

127B. **English Cider**

This includes the English “West Country” plus ciders inspired by that style. These ciders are made with bittersweet and bitter-sharp apple varieties cultivated specifically for cider making. Aroma/Flavour: No overt apple character, but various flavours and esters that suggest apples. May have “smoky (bacon)” character from a combination of apple varieties and MLF. Some “Farmyard nose” may be present but must not dominate; mousiness is a serious fault. The common slight farmyard nose of an English West Country cider is the result of lactic acid bacteria, not a Brettanomyces contamination. Appearance: Slightly cloudy to brilliant. Medium to

deep gold colour. Mouth feel: Full. Moderate to high tannin apparent as astringency and some bitterness. Carbonation still to moderate, never high or gushing. Overall Impression: Generally dry, full-bodied, austere.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still or petillant). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (dry to medium). Entrants MAY specify variety of apple for a single varietal cider; if specified, varietal character will be expected.

Varieties: Kingston Black, Stoke Red, Dabinett, Foxwhelp, Yarlington Mill, various Jerseys, etc.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.050 – 1.075
FG: 0.995 – 1.010
ABV: 2.5 – 9%

127C. French Cider

This includes Normandy styles plus ciders inspired by those styles, including ciders made by various techniques to achieve the French flavour profile. These ciders are made with bittersweet and bittersharp apple varieties cultivated specifically for cider making. Traditional French procedures use small amounts of salt and calcium compounds (calcium chloride, calcium carbonate) to aid the process of pectin coagulation. These compounds may be used, prefermentation, but in limited quantity. It is a fault if judges can detect a salty or chalky taste. Aroma/Flavour: Fruity character/aroma. This may come from slow or arrested fermentation (in the French technique of défécation) or approximated by back sweetening with juice. Tends to a rich fullness. Appearance: Clear to brilliant, medium to deep gold colour. Mouth feel: Medium to full, mouth filling. Moderate tannin apparent mainly as astringency. Carbonation moderate to champagne-like, but at higher levels it must not gush or foam. Overall Impression: Medium to sweet, full-bodied, rich.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (petillant or full). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (medium, sweet). Entrants MAY specify variety of apple for a single varietal cider; if specified, varietal character will be expected.

Varieties: Nehou, Muscadet de Dieppe, Reine des Pommes, Michelin, etc.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.050 – 1.065
FG: 1.010 – 1.020
ABV: 3 – 6%

127D. Common Perry

Common perry is made from culinary/table fruit. Aroma/Flavour: There is a pear character, but not obviously fruity. It tends toward that of a young white wine. No bitterness. Appearance: Slightly cloudy to clear. Generally quite pale. Mouth feel: Relatively full, low to moderate tannin apparent as astringency. Overall Impression: Mild. Medium to medium-sweet. Still to lightly sparkling. Only very slight acetification is acceptable. Mousiness, ropy/oily characters are serious faults.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (medium or sweet).

Varieties: Bartlett, Kiefer, Comice, etc.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.050 – 1.060
FG: 1.000 – 1.020
ABV: 2.5 – 9%

127E. Traditional Perry

Traditional perry is made from pears grown specifically for that purpose rather than for eating or cooking. Many “perry pears” are nearly inedible. Aroma/Flavour: There is a pear character, but not obviously fruity. It tends toward that of a young white wine. Some slight bitterness. Appearance: Slightly cloudy to clear. Generally quite pale. Mouth feel: Relatively full, moderate to high tannin apparent as astringency. Overall Impression: Tannic. Medium to medium-sweet. Still to lightly sparkling. Only very slight acetification is acceptable. Mousiness, ropy/oily characters are serious faults.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (medium or sweet). Variety of pear(s) used MUST be stated.

Varieties: Butt, Gin, Huffcap, Blakeney Red, etc.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.050 – 1.070
FG: 1.000 – 1.020
ABV: 5 – 9%

128 Specialty Cider and Perry – Introduction

Specialty cider/perry includes beverages made with added flavourings (spices and/or other fruits), those made with substantial amounts of sugar-sources to increase starting gravities, and the beverage made from a combination of apple and pear juice (sometimes called “pider”). The same general characteristics and fault descriptions apply to specialty ciders as to standard ciders (preceding category), with the exception of adjuncts allowed.

128A. New England Cider

This is a cider made with characteristic New England apples for relatively high acidity, with adjuncts to raise alcohol levels. Aroma/Flavour: A dry flavourful cider with robust apple character, strong alcohol, and derivative flavours from sugar adjuncts. Appearance: Clear to brilliant, pale to medium yellow. Mouth feel: Substantial, alcoholic. Moderate tannin. Overall impression: Substantial body and character. Comments: Adjuncts may include white and brown sugars, molasses, small amounts of honey, and raisins. Adjuncts are intended to raise OG well above that which would be achieved by apples alone. This style is sometimes barrel-aged, in which case there will be oak character as with a barrel-aged wine. If the barrel was formerly used to age spirits, some flavour notes from the spirit (e.g., whisky or rum) may also be present, but must be subtle.

Entrants MUST specify if the cider was barrel-fermented or aged. Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (dry, medium, or sweet).

Varieties: Northern Spy, Roxbury Russet, Golden Russet

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.060 – 1.100
FG: 0.995 – 1.010
ABV: 7 – 13%

128B. Fruit Cider

This is a cider with other fruit juices or fruit wines added - for example, berry. Aroma/Flavour: The cider character must be present and must fit with the other fruits. It is a fault if the adjuncts completely dominate; a judge might ask, “Would this be different if neutral spirits replaced the cider?” A fruit cider should not be like an alco-pop. Oxidation is a fault. Appearance: Clear to brilliant. Colour appropriate to added fruit, but should not show oxidation characteristics. (For example, berries should give red-to-purple colour, not orange.) Mouth feel: Substantial. May be significantly tannic depending on fruit added. Overall Impression: Like a dry wine with complex flavours. The apple character must marry with the added fruit so that neither dominates the other.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (dry or medium). Entrants MUST specify what fruit(s) and/or fruit juice(s) were added.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.045 – 1.070
FG: 0.995 – 1.010
ABV: 2.5 – 9%

128C. Applewine

The term for this category is traditional but possibly misleading: it is simply a cider with substantial added sugar to achieve higher alcohol than a common cider. Aroma/Flavour: Comparable to a Common Cider. Cider character must be distinctive. Very dry to slightly medium. Appearance: Clear to brilliant, pale to medium-gold. Cloudiness or hazes are inappropriate. Dark colours are not expected unless strongly tannic varieties of fruit were used. Mouth feel: Lighter than other ciders, because higher alcohol is derived from addition of sugar rather than juice. Carbonation may range from still to champagne-like. Overall Impression: Like a dry white wine, balanced, and with low astringency and bitterness.

Comments: Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (dry or medium).

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.070 – 1.100
FG: 0.995 – 1.010
ABV: 9 – 14%

128D. Other Specialty Cider/Perry

This is an open-ended category for cider or perry with other adjuncts such that it does not fit any of the categories above. This includes the use of spices and/or other sweeteners. A cider with added honey may be entered here if the cider character remains dominant. Otherwise it should be entered as mead in the cyser sub-category. Aroma/Flavour: The cider character must always be present, and must fit with adjuncts. Appearance: Clear to brilliant. Colour should be that of a common cider unless adjuncts are expected to contribute colour. Mouth feel: Average body, may show tannic (astringent) or heavy body as determined by adjuncts. Comments: Entrants MUST specify all major ingredients and adjuncts.

Entrants MUST specify carbonation level (still, petillant, or sparkling). Entrants MUST specify sweetness (dry or medium).

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.045 – 1.100
FG: 0.995 – 1.020
ABV: 2.5 – 9%

Cider and Perry General Notes

[The following Cider and Perry style guidelines have been adapted from BJCP 2008 guidelines. The Brewers Guild of New Zealand wishes to acknowledge and state its appreciation for the work of the BJCP in this field.]

Introduction to Cider Guidelines (Categories 127-128)

Cider is fermented apple juice. Perry is fermented pear juice. There are two categories for cider/perry:

1. Standard (Category 27); and
2. Specialty (Category 28).

The Standard category covers ciders and perries made primarily or entirely from the juice of apples or pears (cider may be made from apple juice and up to 25% pear juice, perry may be made from pear juice and up to 25% apple juice). The only adjunct permitted in the Standard category, and only in some subcategories, is a limited addition of sugar to achieve a suitable starting gravity. Note that honey is not a “sugar” for this purpose; a cider made with added honey must be entered either as a Specialty cider or as a Cyser under the appropriate mead sub-category. Other sugar sources that also add significant flavours (brown sugar, molasses) would also create a Specialty cider (such as New England style).

Aroma and Flavour:

- Ciders and perries do not necessarily present overtly fruity aromas or flavours—in the same sense that a wine does not taste overtly of grapes. Drier styles of cider in particular develop more complex but less fruity characters. In fact, a simple “apple soda” or “wine cooler” character is not desirable in a cider or perry.
- Some styles of cider exhibit distinctly NON-fruity tastes or aromas, such as the “smoky bacon” undertones of a dry English cider.
- The sweetness (residual sugar, or RS) of a cider or perry may vary from absolutely dry (no RS) to as much as a sweet dessert wine (10% or more RS). In sweeter ciders, other components of taste—particularly acidity—must balance the sweetness. The level of sweetness must be specified in order to arrange flights of tastings and entries within flights. Tasting always proceeds from drier to sweeter. There are three categories of sweetness:
 - Dry: below 0.9% residual sugar. This corresponds to a final specific gravity of under 1.002.
 - Medium: in the range between dry and sweet (0.9% to 4% residual sugar, final gravity 1.002 to 1.012). Sometimes characterised as either ‘off-dry’ or ‘semi-sweet.’
 - Sweet: above 4% residual sugar, roughly equivalent to a final gravity of over 1.012.
- If a cider is close to one of these boundaries, it should be identified by the sweetness category which best describes the overall impression it gives.
- Acidity is an essential element of cider and perry: it must be sufficient to give a clean, refreshing impression without being puckering. Acidity (from malic and in some cases lactic acids) must not be confused with acetification (from acetic acid—vinegar): the acrid aroma and tingling taste of acetification is a fault.
- Ciders and perries vary considerably in tannin. This affects both bitterness and astringency (see “Mouth feel” below). If made from culinary or table fruit, tannins are typically low; nevertheless some tannin is desirable to balance the character. The character contributed by tannin should be mainly astringency rather than bitterness. An overt or forward bitterness is a fault (and is often due to processing techniques rather than fruit).

Appearance:

- Clarity may vary from good to brilliant. The lack of sparkling clarity is not a fault, but visible particles are undesirable. In some styles a “rustic” lack of brilliance is common. Perries are notoriously difficult to clear; as a result a slight haze is not a fault. However, a “sheen” in either cider or perry generally indicates the early stage of lactic contamination and is a distinct fault.

- Carbonation may vary from entirely still to a champagne level. No or little carbonation is termed still. A moderate carbonation level is termed petillant. Highly carbonated is termed sparkling. At the higher levels of carbonation, the “mousse” (head) may be retained for a short time. However, gushing, foaming, and difficult-to-manage heads are faults.

Mouth feel:

- In general, cider and perry have a mouth feel and fullness akin to a substantial white wine. The body is less than that of beers. Full-sparkling ciders will be champagne-like.

Ingredients:

- The apple and pear varieties are intended to illustrate commonly used examples, not dictate requirements when making the style. In general, adjuncts are prohibited except where specifically allowed in particular styles, and then the entrant must state them. Common processing aids, and enzymes, are generally allowed as long as they are not detectable in the finished cider. Yeast used for cider/perry may be either “natural” (the yeast which occurs on the fruit itself and/or is retained in the milling and pressing equipment) or cultured yeast. Malo-lactic fermentation is allowed, either naturally occurring or with an added ML culture. Enzymes may be used for clarification of the juice prior to fermentation. Malic acid may be added to a low-acid juice to bring acidity up to a level considered safe for avoiding bacterial contamination and off-flavours (typically pH 3.8 or below). Entrant **MUST** state if malic acid was added. Sulphites may be added as needed for microbiological control. If used, the maximum accepted safe level for sulphites (200 mg/l) should be strictly observed; moreover, any excess sulphite that is detectable in the finished cider (a “burning match” character) is a serious fault.
- Sorbate may be added at bottling to stabilize the cider. However, any residual aroma/flavour from misuse or excessive use of sorbate (e.g., a “geranium” note) is a distinct fault.
- Carbonation may be either natural (by maintaining CO₂ pressure through processing or by bottle conditioning) or added (by CO₂ injection).