



ITALIAN GRAPE ALE

GORDON'S LATEST BEER FETISH INFATUATION

HISTORY OF THE STYLE

- ▶ Pretty recent innovation of Italian craft brewers who wanted to showcase Italian winemaking heritage. The first producer was Birrificio Barley in 2006. It was a Stout brewed with Cannonau di Sardegna sapa. Sapa is grape syrup obtained from the must (it is also called cooked must or grape honey).

Process

- ▶ There are a variety of approaches you could take:
- ▶ Create your own syrup and add to boiling wort in the last 20 minutes.
- ▶ Add boiled, chilled wort to grape must (crushed grapes) and ferment on the skins.
- ▶ Press the crushed must and add to boiling wort in the last 20 minutes.
- ▶ Sanitize pressed must with 50 ppm potassium metabisulfite and add to fermenter with chilled wort and ferment. This is the approach I chose.


The Must



The Press



Grape Ale Is Fruit Beer

- ▶ It's a good idea to do some research on grape varieties so you have an understanding of flavor profiles of varieties available to purchase. What that means is you may need to drink some wine.
- ▶  Cheers!!

Commercial Examples

- ▶ Montegioco Tibir, Montegioco Open Mind, Birranova Moscata, LoverBeer BeerBera, Loverbeer D'uvaBeer, Birra del Borgo Equilibrista, Barley BB10, Barley BBevò, Cudera, Pasturana Filare!, Gedeone PerBacco! Toccalmatto Jadis, Rocca dei Conti Tarì Giacchè.
- ▶ I couldn't find any of these locally so a real sample will require a trip to Italy.

Choosing A Base Beer Style

- ▶ Once you've figured out what grape variety you're using, you'll need to come up with a beer style that will complement the grape aroma and flavor.
- ▶ Yeast varieties that don't compete with the grapes' character are a good choice. A Bavarian Weisse yeast is probably a poor choice because of the banana esters they produce.
- ▶ Use slightly fruity hops like Strisselspält or Nelson Sauvin to accent grape character.

Characteristic Ingredients

- ▶ Most of the commercial examples have a similar base as several Belgian styles like Blond Ale or a Saison but the original Italian Grape Ale was a stout. Both the base and grape character need to be apparent and harmonious.
- ▶ Typical grape content is around 15-20% but can be more than 40%.

The Numbers & More Info

- ▶ IBU -10-30
- ▶ SRM 5-30
- ▶ OG 1.043-01.090
- ▶ FG 1.007- 1.015
- ▶ ABV 4.8% -10%
- ▶ <https://www.bjcp.org/beer-styles/x3-italian-grape-ale/>
- ▶ <https://theitaliancraftbeer.wordpress.com/2021/04/13/why-italian-grape-ale-beer-style-must-preserve-the-appellation-italian/>
- ▶ <https://www.goodbeerhunting.com/blog/2021/2/16/grape-news-how-a-new-generation-of-italian-brewers-created-italian-grape-ale>