Cicerone Certified Beer Server Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Questions

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1. What is one method to ensure proper rotation of beer products?

A. Keep all beers together

B. Sell beer in order of dating

C. Only sell seasonal beers

D. Limit the number of products

2. What type of yeast is primarily used in lager production?

A. Top-fermenting yeast

B. Bottom-fermenting yeast

C. Wild yeast

D. Hybrid yeast

3. What is the purpose of using a hydrometer in brewing?

A. To measure temperature

B. To check the alcohol content

C. To determine the pH

D. To evaluate fermentation activity

4. Which factor most significantly affects the carbonation levels of a beer?

A. Hops used in brewing

B. Temperature during fermentation

C. Methods of packaging

D. Yeast strain selection

5. What must be eliminated to prevent skunking in beer?

A. Exposure to air

B. Exposure to sunlight and fluorescent light

C. High temperatures

D. Using old hops

6. What is a trait of a Belgian Golden Strong Ale?

A. Low alcohol content

B. High (7.5-10.5%) ABV

C. Dark malt flavors

D. Strong hop aroma

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7. What blood alcohol content level defines driver intoxication in the United States, Canada, and the UK?

A. 0.05%

B. 0.08%

C. 0.10%

D. 0.12%

8. To best assess the flavors of a beer served at 38 F, what should you do?

A. Chill it to 34 F

B. Drink it from the bottle

C. Let it warm up

D. Pour it in a frosted mug

9. Which of the following is a trait of an Imperial Stout?

A. Subtle malt flavor

B. Assertive Roast Flavor

C. Heavy carbonation

D. Low hop bitterness

10. Which of the following would you be most likely to encounter in a Kolsch?

A. Amber to brown color

B. Caramel malt flavor

C. Elevated ABV (5.8-6.9%)

D. Moderate bitterness

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Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. C
9. B
10. D

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Explanations

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1. What is one method to ensure proper rotation of beer products?

A. Keep all beers together

B. Sell beer in order of dating

C. Only sell seasonal beers

D. Limit the number of products

Selling beer in order of dating is a crucial method for ensuring proper rotation of beer products. This practice allows establishments to manage their inventory effectively, minimizing the potential for beer to become stale or past its optimal drinking date. By prioritizing the sale of older stock first, businesses can maintain freshness and quality in the products they offer to customers. Keeping all beers together, while it may facilitate organization, does not inherently promote the rotation of stock based on age. Seasonal beers might have fixed availability periods which do not contribute to the ongoing rotation of inventory. Limiting the number of products might streamline choices but does not address the critical aspect of ensuring that the oldest products are sold first to keep the inventory fresh and appealing to consumers.

2. What type of yeast is primarily used in lager production?

A. Top-fermenting yeast

B. Bottom-fermenting yeast

C. Wild yeast

D. Hybrid yeast

Bottom-fermenting yeast is primarily used in lager production. This type of yeast ferments at cooler temperatures, typically between 45°F and 55°F (7°C to 13°C), which is conducive to the development of clean and crisp flavor profiles characteristic of lagers. The most common bottom-fermenting yeast used for brewing lagers is Saccharomyces pastorianus, which sinks to the bottom of the fermentation vessel during fermentation. This fermentation process allows for a longer maturation period at low temperatures, enabling the beer to undergo lagering. As a result, lagers tend to have a smooth texture and are typically less fruity compared to ales, which utilize top-fermenting yeast, like Saccharomyces cerevisiae, that works at warmer temperatures and produces more fruity and estery flavors. Understanding the fermentation characteristics of bottom-fermenting yeast is essential for brewers aiming to produce a clean and refined lager, making this knowledge foundational for anyone pursuing certification in beer service.

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3. What is the purpose of using a hydrometer in brewing?

A. To measure temperature

B. To check the alcohol content

C. To determine the pH

D. To evaluate fermentation activity

Using a hydrometer in brewing primarily serves the purpose of checking the alcohol content of the final product. A hydrometer measures the specific gravity of a liquid, which is the ratio of the density of the liquid to the density of water. Brewers take an initial specific gravity reading before fermentation begins and then take a final reading once fermentation is complete. By comparing these two measurements, brewers can calculate the alcohol by volume (ABV). The difference in specific gravity indicates how much sugar has been converted into alcohol during fermentation. This is essential for brewers to understand the strength of their beer and to maintain consistency in their recipes. Other aspects of brewing, such as measuring temperature or determining pH, require different tools and methods. While fermentation activity can involve observing the action of yeast, it is not directly measured by a hydrometer, making it a less suitable answer to the question. Thus, the primary purpose of a hydrometer is indeed to check the alcohol content, which aligns with option B.

4. Which factor most significantly affects the carbonation levels of a beer?

A. Hops used in brewing

B. Temperature during fermentation

C. Methods of packaging

D. Yeast strain selection

The factor that most significantly affects the carbonation levels of a beer is related to the methods of packaging. During the packaging process, brewers have the opportunity to control the carbonation levels through techniques such as carbonation with carbon dioxide, natural conditioning (which involves allowing yeast to produce carbon dioxide in a sealed container), or force carbonation (injecting CO_2 directly). Each of these methods can lead to different levels of carbonation in the final product. While the other factors mentioned do play roles in the overall brewing process, they do not have as direct an impact on carbonation as packaging does. For instance, hops primarily contribute to aroma and bitterness, temperature during fermentation affects yeast activity and beer flavor, and yeast strain selection influences the beer's flavor profile and fermentation characteristics. However, it is in the packaging stage where carbonation levels are ultimately determined, making it the most significant factor in this context.

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5. What must be eliminated to prevent skunking in beer?

A. Exposure to air

B. Exposure to sunlight and fluorescent light

C. High temperatures

D. Using old hops

To prevent skunking in beer, it is crucial to eliminate exposure to sunlight and fluorescent light. When beer is exposed to these light sources, a chemical reaction occurs, particularly involving the iso-alpha acids from hops, which can lead to the formation of 3-methylbut-2-ene-1-thiol, a compound that imparts a skunky aroma and flavor. This reaction can happen quite rapidly, especially in lighter-colored bottles that allow more light penetration. While exposure to air, high temperatures, and the use of old hops can all negatively affect the quality of beer, they do not specifically lead to skunking in the same way that light exposure does. Air can promote oxidation, leading to stale flavors, and high temperatures can accelerate spoilage and other undesirable changes. Old hops may contribute to off-flavors due to loss of freshness or changes in the hop oils, but they do not directly cause skunking. Therefore, the most effective measure to prevent skunking is to ensure that the beer is protected from light.

6. What is a trait of a Belgian Golden Strong Ale?

A. Low alcohol content

B. High (7.5-10.5%) ABV

C. Dark malt flavors

D. Strong hop aroma

Belgian Golden Strong Ales are characterized by their relatively high alcohol content, typically ranging from 7.5% to 10.5% ABV. This trait is a significant aspect of the style, offering a balance between rich flavors and a warming effect from the alcohol. These beers often exhibit fruity, spicy yeast characteristics due to the specific yeast strains used in fermentation, which complement the higher alcohol. Other traits of this style may include a golden color and a complex flavor profile, but the elevated alcohol level is one of the defining characteristics that sets it apart from lighter styles. It is important to note that options like low alcohol content, dark malt flavors, and strong hop aroma do not align with the typical profile of a Belgian Golden Strong Ale, which emphasizes a lighter, more effervescent body rather than darker or heavily hopped characteristics.

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7. What blood alcohol content level defines driver intoxication in the United States, Canada, and the UK?

A. 0.05%

B. 0.08%

C. 0.10%

D. 0.12%

In the United States and Canada, a blood alcohol content (BAC) level of 0.08% is the legal threshold for defining driver intoxication. This standard means that if an individual's BAC is at or above this level, they are considered legally impaired and may face penalties such as fines, license suspension, or even incarceration for driving under the influence. In the UK, the legal limit is slightly different, but 0.08% is commonly recognized in many jurisdictions within the UK as well. This level is based on extensive research linking higher BAC levels to a greater risk of accidents, diminished motor skills, and impaired judgment, making it a widely accepted criteria across these regions. The other measurements provided, such as 0.05%, 0.10%, and 0.12%, correspond to thresholds found in some regions or may be seen as lower or higher limits in varying contexts, but they are not the primary legal thresholds for intoxication in the United States, Canada, or the UK. Thus, 0.08% stands as the definitive standard for intoxication for drivers in these major English-speaking areas.

8. To best assess the flavors of a beer served at 38 F, what should you do?

A. Chill it to 34 F

B. Drink it from the bottle

C. Let it warm up

D. Pour it in a frosted mug

To assess the flavors of a beer served at 38 F, allowing it to warm up is the most effective approach. Beer flavors can become muted when served too cold, as cooler temperatures can suppressmany of the nuanced aromas and taste characteristics that define different beer styles. As a beer warms slightly, its aromatic compounds become more volatile, allowing the full spectrum of flavors to emerge. This is particularly important for certain styles, such as ales and complex lagers, which may exhibit rich fruity or spicy notes that are less detectable at lower temperatures. On the other hand, chilling the beer further to 34 F would likely obscure the flavors even more, while drinking from the bottle prevents proper exposure to the aromas since the neck of the bottle limits the release of aromatic compounds. Pouring the beer into a frosted mug also detracts from flavor assessment, as cold surfaces can induce additional chilling of the beer, thus muting its aromas and flavors. Allowing the beer to warm up is a simple and effective step to ensure that you can fully appreciate its intended taste profile.

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9. Which of the following is a trait of an Imperial Stout?

A. Subtle malt flavor

B. Assertive Roast Flavor

C. Heavy carbonation

D. Low hop bitterness

An Imperial Stout is characterized by its assertive roast flavor, which is a defining trait of the style. This strong roastiness comes from the use of dark malts, which contributes to flavors that can include coffee, chocolate, and caramel. This bold roasted character stands out prominently in Imperial Stouts, making it one of the style's signature aspects. Other elements like higher alcohol content and a full-bodied mouthfeel also contribute to the overall richness, but roastiness remains a central focus, setting Imperial Stouts apart from many other beer styles.

10. Which of the following would you be most likely to encounter in a Kolsch?

A. Amber to brown color

B. Caramel malt flavor

C. Elevated ABV (5.8-6.9%)

D. Moderate bitterness

In a Kölsch, you would indeed most likely encounter moderate bitterness. Kölsch is a style of beer that typically has a clean, crisp taste with moderate hop character, usually resulting in a gentle bitterness that balances the malt profile. This style is known for its light body and refreshing qualities, making it an ideal choice for those looking for something easy to drink. The bitterness is usually on the lower end compared to more hop-forward styles, aligning perfectly with the overall character of Kölsch. In contrast, the other options do not accurately describe Kölsch characteristics. The style is generally light in color, often pale yellow to gold, rather than amber to brown. It also features a clean malt profile with subtle flavors rather than a pronounced caramel malt flavor. Additionally, Kölsch typically has a moderate alcohol by volume (ABV), generally ranging from 4.4% to around 5.2%, which means it would not typically fall into the elevated ABV category mentioned.

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