Cicerone Certified Beer Server Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide

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Questions

1. **How often should a draft system be cleaned to prevent off flavors in beer?**
   - **A. Every week**
   - **B. Every 14 days**
   - **C. Once a month**
   - **D. Every 6 weeks**

2. **What should be avoided for the best draft beer service?**
   - **A. Short taps**
   - **B. Using ice to cool the beer**
   - **C. Compressed air as a gas source**
   - **D. Storing beer in a basement**

3. **Which flavor is typically associated with the fermentation of a Hefeweizen beer?**
   - **A. Banana**
   - **B. Vanilla**
   - **C. Pine**
   - **D. Caramel**

4. **What is the volume of a 1/6 barrel of beer?**
   - **A. 5.15 gallons**
   - **B. 10.5 gallons**
   - **C. 15 gallons**
   - **D. 3.5 gallons**

5. **Which of the following is a trait of a Belgian golden strong ale?**
   - **A. Assertive Hop Bitterness**
   - **B. Caramel Malt Flavor**
   - **C. High ABV (7.5-10.5%)**
   - **D. Low Carbonation**

6. Which element is typically responsible for the head retention in beer?

A. Hops

B. Carbon dioxide

C. Barley protein

D. Alcohol

7. What is the very first step in the cleaning process after picking up a glass off the bar?

A. Rinse with cold water

B. Wash with sudsless soap and brush

C. Empty glass into open drain

D. Rinse in cold water, heel in, heel out

8. Which type of yeast is most commonly used in the production of ales?

A. Saccharomyces cerevisiae

B. Saccharomyces pastorianus

C. Pichia anomala

D. Brettanomyces bruxellensis

9. Beer stored at room temperature for several months is likely to develop which flavor?

A. Floral

B. Paper

C. Alcohol

D. Sweetness

10. What is a common characteristic of a lager compared to an ale?

A. Higher fermentation temperature

B. Lower fermentation temperature

C. More fruity esters

D. Higher hop bitterness

Answers

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

Explanations

1. How often should a draft system be cleaned to prevent off flavors in beer?

A. Every week

B. Every 14 days

C. Once a month

D. Every 6 weeks

The recommended frequency for cleaning a draft system is every 14 days. This routine maintenance is vital for ensuring the quality and taste of the beer served. Over time, beer lines can accumulate yeast, bacteria, and other residues that can lead to off flavors and negatively impact the beer's overall quality. Cleaning every two weeks helps to minimize the risk of these contaminants building up, promoting a cleaner and fresher beer experience for consumers. Other suggested frequencies, while still maintaining cleanliness, may not be sufficient to address potential buildup adequately. Cleaning once a month or every 6 weeks, for example, could allow for greater accumulation of undesirable elements, which could eventually compromise the flavor and character of the beer served. Regular cleaning every two weeks strikes a balance between effective maintenance and operational efficiency for most establishments serving draft beer.

2. What should be avoided for the best draft beer service?

A. Short taps

B. Using ice to cool the beer

C. Compressed air as a gas source

D. Storing beer in a basement

Using compressed air as a gas source for dispensing draft beer is indeed something that should be avoided for optimal service. This is because compressed air can introduce oxygen into the beer system, which can lead to oxidation and spoilage of the beer. Oxygen exposure can negatively affect the beer's flavor and stability, resulting in off-flavors and a diminished overall quality. In draft beer service, it is essential to use a proper gas source, such as CO_2 (carbon dioxide), which maintains the beer's integrity and helps retain its carbonation without compromising flavor. CO_2 is inert and preserves the beer's characteristics while aiding in proper pouring and maintaining the appropriate serving pressure. Regarding the other options, while short taps, using ice to cool the beer, and storing beer in a basement may have their own considerations, they do not fundamentally compromise the beer's integrity in the same way that compressed air does.

3. Which flavor is typically associated with the fermentation of a Hefeweizen beer?

A. Banana

B. Vanilla

C. Pine

D. Caramel

The flavor typically associated with the fermentation of a Hefeweizen beer is banana. This characteristic banana flavor arises primarily from the specific yeast strains used in the fermentation process. Hefeweizens are brewed with top-fermenting yeast, which produces esters during fermentation, and one of the most prominent esters is isoamyl acetate, known for imparting banana-like aromas and flavors. This distinctive banana note is a hallmark of Hefeweizen and differentiates it from other beer styles. The yeast's fermentation temperature also plays a crucial role; typically, higher temperatures can enhance the production of these fruity esters. In contrast, other options like vanilla, pine, and caramel are generally more associated with different beer styles; for example, vanilla might be related to certain stouts or porters where adjuncts are used, while caramel notes are often found in malty styles like ambers or browns. Pine flavors can be indicative of certain hop varieties used in IPAs and pale ales. Therefore, the unique banana flavor in Hefeweizen comes specifically from the yeast and fermentation process used in producing this style.

4. What is the volume of a 1/6 barrel of beer?

A. 5.15 gallons

B. 10.5 gallons

C. 15 gallons

D. 3.5 gallons

The volume of a 1/6 barrel of beer is accurately represented by 5.15 gallons. In the beer industry, a standard barrel (commonly referred to as a full-size keg) is defined as 31 gallons. Therefore, when you divide the 31-gallon barrel by 6, you arrive at approximately 5.16 gallons, which is typically rounded to 5.15 gallons for practical usage. Understanding these standard keg sizes is crucial for anyone involved in beer service, as they impact serving sizes and inventory management. Other available sizes for barrels include the half-barrel and quarter-barrel, which are larger, meaning their volumes do not apply to the specific measurement of a 1/6 barrel.

5. Which of the following is a trait of a Belgian golden strong ale?

A. Assertive Hop Bitterness

B. Caramel Malt Flavor

C. High ABV (7.5-10.5%)

D. Low Carbonation

A Belgian golden strong ale is characterized by its high alcohol by volume (ABV), which typically ranges from 7.5% to 10.5%. This elevated alcohol content is balanced by a complex profile of fruity esters and spicy phenols, often with a light, effervescent mouthfeel. The high ABV contributes to the beer's overall strength and character, making it a notable trait of this style. While Belgian golden strong ales can exhibit a variety of flavors and aromas, such as fruitiness and subtle malt sweetness, the defining characteristic that stands out from the choices provided is indeed the higher alcohol content, distinguishing it as a style that is both potent and flavorful.

6. Which element is typically responsible for the head retention in beer?

A. Hops

B. Carbon dioxide

C. Barley protein

D. Alcohol

Head retention in beer primarily depends on the proteins from barley. During the brewing process, the proteins in malted barley interact with the hops and the carbonation in the beer to create a stable foam that contributes to the beer's head. Barley proteins, particularly those derived from the gluten, play a crucial role in forming the structure of the foam by stabilizing the bubbles, allowing them to persist longer and maintain the beer's overall appearance and mouthfeel. While hops do contribute to head stability through certain compounds, their direct role in head retention is secondary compared to that of barley proteins. Carbon dioxide is important for creating bubbles but does not provide the structural support necessary for head retention. Alcohol has minimal influence on foam stability, as it is primarily a result of the protein content and the interaction of various components in the beer. Thus, barley protein is the key element responsible for maintaining the head on a beer.

7. What is the very first step in the cleaning process after picking up a glass off the bar?

A. Rinse with cold water

B. Wash with sudsless soap and brush

C. Empty glass into open drain

D. Rinse in cold water, heel in, heel out

The initial step in the cleaning process after picking up a glass off the bar involves emptying any contents into an open drain. This action is crucial as it removes leftover beer or other liquids. Before cleaning, it's important to ensure that the glass is free from any residual beverage to prevent contamination and ensure thorough cleaning. This step helps in preparing the glass for further cleaning actions, such as rinsing and washing, which are necessary to maintain hygiene and uphold the quality of drinks served. Moving forward, rinsing the glass can follow, but the very first action must be to eliminate the contents to avoid cross-contamination and to ensure that the cleaning process is effective. Understanding this step can help enhance operational efficiency in bar service, ensuring that glasses are spotless and ready for use.

8. Which type of yeast is most commonly used in the production of ales?

A. Saccharomyces cerevisiae

B. Saccharomyces pastorianus

C. Pichia anomala

D. Brettanomyces bruxellensis

The correct type of yeast most commonly used in the production of ales is Saccharomyces cerevisiae. This yeast is known as a top-fermenting yeast, which means it ferments at warmer temperatures compared to bottom-fermenting yeasts. This characteristic allows it to produce the fruity and complex flavors that are often associated with many ale styles. Ales are generally fermented at temperatures ranging from about 60 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit (15 to 24 degrees Celsius), facilitating the unique flavor profiles that differentiate ales from lagers. While other yeasts can be used in various beer styles, Saccharomyces cerevisiae is the predominant yeast in traditional ale brewing due to its efficient fermentation process and ability to produce a wide range of flavors. Other yeast types mentioned have specific uses. For example, Saccharomyces pastorianus is primarily utilized for lager production and is a bottom-fermenting yeast. Pichia anomala is not commonly used in standard beer production and is more known for its role in certain fermented foods and other applications. Brettanomyces bruxellensis is often used in some specialty and wild ales, but it is not the primary yeast for standard ale production.

9. Beer stored at room temperature for several months is likely to develop which flavor?

A. Floral

B. Paper

C. Alcohol

D. Sweetness

Beer stored at room temperature for an extended period is likely to develop a flavor commonly referred to as "papery." This flavor is primarily the result of oxidation, which occurs when beer is exposed to oxygen over time, especially under suboptimal storage conditions such as higher temperatures. When beer oxidizes, various chemical reactions take place, changing the flavor profile. The development of a papery or cardboard-like flavor is particularly associated with the staleness that can emerge from such oxidation. This is not the character imparted by ingredients like hops or malt but rather a byproduct of the beer's interaction with oxygen. Other choices such as floral, alcohol, or sweetness generally do not arise from the deterioration associated with improper beer storage. Floral notes typically are a sign of fresh hops, while alcohol flavors are inherent to the beer's style and fermentation process. Sweetness can be influenced by residual sugars or malt characteristics rather than storage conditions. Therefore, the papery flavor stands out as a distinctive consequence of storing beer improperly.

10. What is a common characteristic of a lager compared to an ale?

A. Higher fermentation temperature

B. Lower fermentation temperature

C. More fruity esters

D. Higher hop bitterness

Lagers are characterized by a fermentation process that occurs at lower temperatures compared to ales. Typically, lagers ferment between 45°F and 55°F (approximately 7°C to 13°C), which is significantly cooler than the fermentation temperatures for ales, which usually range from 60°F to 75°F (about 16°C to 24°C). This lower fermentation temperature leads to a slower fermentation process and results in a cleaner, crisper beer profile with fewer fruity esters and phenols than ales. Ales, due to their warmer fermentation temperatures, tend to produce more pronounced fruity and spicy flavors. Understanding this difference is crucial for recognizing how fermentation temperature influences the flavor and aroma characteristics of beer styles, distinguishing lagers from ales.