



ABV: 9.1% | IBU: 70 | SRM: Not Disclosed

Recommending a Russian Imperial Stout

BY MICHAEL KUDERKA

Craft brewers have resurrected a beer style which first became popular with the Russian Imperial Court in the 1700s. By adding bourbon barrel aging and oak aging, the Russian Imperial Stout has become a whole new level of complexity and consumers love it.

Originally crafted for exporting from England to the Baltic states, and of course Russia, this beer style was specifically designed to endure the long journey from Great Britain. By pushing up the hop and malt content, early brewers were able to produce a durable dark beer that was flavorful, comparatively high in alcohol content, and highly prized throughout Russia.

What to expect from the style

Russian Imperial Stouts can range from deep brown with amber highlights to dark black in color. The style is known for its malt complexity and its medium to aggressive bitterness. Russian Imperial Stouts are often described as roasty, malty, toasty, bittersweet, fruity, and as having a dry bitterness. The flavor profile can contain the flavors of coffee, bakers' chocolate, cocoa, dark fruits, and a well hidden, but warming, alcohol content.

Russian Imperial Stouts can pair well with spicy foods, meats (such as beef and roasted turkey) as well as seafood, and even desserts. The fairly high alcohol content of this style (ranging between 8 and 12%) makes Russian Imperial Stouts a perfect beer style for sipping, although the smooth complexity will make it difficult to maintain restraint.

29 Great (Brewed & Commercially Available)

Russian Imperial Stouts:

- Perseverance Ale - Alaskan Brewing - Juneau, AK
- The Czar Russian Imperial Stout - Avery Brewing - Boulder, CO
- Big Bad Baptist Imperial Stout - Epic Brewing - Salt Lake City, UT
- Big Daddy Vlad - Terrapin Beer - Athens, GA
- Big Eddy Russian Imperial Stout - Leinenkugel - Chippewa Falls, WI
- Russian Imperial Stout - Cisco Brewers, Inc. - Nantucket, MA
- Tuxedo Imperial Stout - Climax Brewing - Roselle Park, NJ
- Deschutes The Abyss - Deschutes Brewery - Bend, OR
- World Wide Stout - Dogfish Head Craft Brewery - Milton, DE

- Insidious Imperial Stout - Fegley's Brew Works - Bethlehem, PA
- Parabola - Firestone Walker Brewing - Paso Robles, CA
- Imperial Stout - Founders Brewing - Grand Rapids, MI
- Yeti Imperial Stout - Great Divide Brewing - Denver, CO
- Blackout Stout - Great Lakes Brewing - Cleveland, OH
- Peg Leg Imperial Stout - Clipper City Brewing - Baltimore, MD
- The Dogfather - Laughing Dog Brewing - Ponderay, ID
- Berserker Imperial Stout - Midnight Sun Brewing - Anchorage, AK
- Night Tripper - New Holland Brewing - Holland, MI
- Old Rasputin Russian - North Coast Brewing - Fort Bragg, CA
- Odin's Trippel - HaandBryggeriet - Norway
- Older Viscosity Ale - Port Brewing / The Lost Abbey - San Marcos, CA
- Ten Fidy Imperial Stout - Oskar Blues Grill & Brew - Lyons, CO
- Samuel Adams Imperial Stout - Boston Beer - Boston, MA
- Bourbon Barrel-Aged Imperial Stout - Schlafly Beer - St. Louis, MO
- Stone Imperial Russian Stout - Stone Brewing - Escondido, CA
- Siberian Night - Thirsty Dog Brewing - Independence, OH
- Dark Lord - Three Floyds Brewing - Munster, IN
- Victory Storm King - Victory Brewing - Downingtown, PA
- Heresy Imperial Stout - Weyerbacher Brewing - Easton, PA

Featured Brand: Victory Brewing Storm King Stout

A dark, dense, full-bodied, Imperial Stout, with flavors of dark chocolate, roasty malts and a massive Pacific Northwest hop aroma.

Are You Thinking Out-of-the-Box?

How innovative is your store at selling beer? If you have promotions that go beyond refilling the cold box, we would like to hear from you and share your "out-of-the-box" thinking with our fellow Beer Trends readers.

E-mail me at mkuderka@mcbasset.com with your successful ideas for selling beer, along with your contact information. If we write about your program in our column we will send you a free copy of *The 3rd Edition of The Essential Reference of Domestic Brewers and Their Bottled Brands*.