

Ginger beer: a guide to a feasible production

Once upon a time, ginger beer used to be one of the most popular alcoholic drinks in England. However, with time, its popularity declined. Ginger beer is now making a comeback, hitting pubs, bars and restaurants with full force and its popularity has been continuously rising.

Due to the growing demand, more and more breweries are starting to produce ginger beer, but its production is not as simple as many might think. People often disregard the difficulties involved in producing big quantities of beer and that the transition from kitchen to plant production might not always go smoothly.

But what exactly are the difficulties and challenges faced during upscaling and how can these challenges be overcome?

First and foremost, the recipe has to be adapted to a large production. The selection of yeast strain is critical to the success of the product as it influences the taste of the final product, but also dictates the speed of fermentation, thus influencing production cost.

Another cost related issue comes from the length of necessary boiling time. As this operation is the most costly step of ginger beer brewing, by cutting down on boiling time the production cost can be reduced.

Clogging is yet another problem often faced in ginger beer production due to the fact that oftentimes the fermentation is partly carried out on the ginger and lemon particles. When transporting the wort from one tank to another, as often necessary in brewing, these particles can clog the pipes and make production difficult or even impossible and lead to a difficult, labour-intensive cleaning.

Boiling time can be cut and clogging can be avoided by adapting the processing method and instead of boiling the wort in the kettle, a sugar syrup is boiled and poured over the ginger and lemon solids directly in the fermenting tank where the extraction happens.

Finally, the complete inactivation of yeast is quite challenging due to the high amount of residual sugars contained by the ginger beer. The pasteurization of regular beer is not necessary, since, by the end of fermentation most of the sugars are consumed and the yeast separates naturally. However, in the case of ginger beer, pasteurization is the only feasible inactivation method that can assure a safe and stable final product.

Once the beer is pasteurized and bottled, the only thing left to do is to enjoy it!

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