

BLACK IPA

The Black IPA style, sometimes known as Cascadian Dark Ale (CDA), is a variation of the American IPA style. It was first commercially produced by Greg Noonan as Blackwatch IPA around 1990 and was popularized in the Pacific Northwest and Southern California. However, dark, strong, and hoppy beers aren't a new thing as the brewing of ales with characteristics similar to those of the modern Black IPA style go back over a hundred years. Black IPAs are more than just hoppy beers that are dark in color. The darker malts lend chocolate and roasted flavors that often work in contrast with the floral, citric and piney flavors of the hops.

BJCP Style Guidelines

OG: 1050 - 1085 FG: 1010 - 1018
ABV: 5.5 - 9.0
IBU: 50 - 90 SRM: 25 - 40

APPEARANCE: THE COLOR RANGES FROM DARK BROWN TO BLACK. IT SHOULD BE CLEAR, ALTHOUGH UNFILTERED DRY-HOPPED VERSIONS MAY BE A BIT HAZY; IF OPAQUE. IT SHOULD NOT BE MURKY. IT WILL HAVE A GOOD HEAD STAND WITH A LIGHT TAN TO TAN COLOR THAT PERSISTS.

AROMA: A MODERATE TO HIGH HOP AROMA, OFTEN WITH A STONE FRUIT, TROPICAL, CITRUSY, RESINOUS, PINEY, BERRY, OR MELON CHARACTER. IF DRY HOPPED, CAN HAVE AN ADDITIONAL FLORAL, HERBAL, OR GRASSY AROMA, ALTHOUGH THIS IS NOT REQUIRED. VERY LOW TO MODERATE DARK MALT AROMA, WHICH CAN OPTIONALLY INCLUDE LIGHT CHOCOLATE, COFFEE, OR TOAST NOTES. SOME CLEAN OR LIGHTLY CARAMELTY MALTY SWEETNESS MAY BE FOUND IN THE BACKGROUND. FRUITINESS, EITHER FROM ESTERS OR FROM HOPS, MAY ALSO BE DETECTED IN SOME VERSIONS, ALTHOUGH A NEUTRAL FERMENTATION CHARACTER IS ALSO ACCEPTABLE.

FLAVOR: MEDIUM-LOW TO HIGH HOP FLAVOR WITH TROPICAL, STONE FRUIT, MELON, CITRUSY, BERRY, PINEY OR RESINOUS ASPECTS. MEDIUM-HIGH TO VERY HIGH HOP BITTERNESS, ALTHOUGH DARK MALTS MAY CONTRIBUTE TO THE PERCEIVED BITTERNESS. THE BASE MALT FLAVOR IS GENERALLY CLEAN AND OF LOW TO MEDIUM INTENSITY, AND CAN OPTIONALLY HAVE LOW CARAMEL OR TOFFEE FLAVORS. DARK MALT FLAVORS ARE LOW TO MEDIUM-LOW; RESTRAINED CHOCOLATE OR COFFEE FLAVORS MAY BE PRESENT, BUT THE ROASTED NOTES SHOULD NOT BE INTENSE, ASHY, OR BURNT, AND SHOULD NOT CLASH WITH THE HOPS. LOW TO MODERATE FRUITINESS (FROM YEAST OR HOPS) IS ACCEPTABLE BUT NOT REQUIRED. DRY TO SLIGHTLY OFF-DRY FINISH. THE FINISH MAY INCLUDE A LIGHT ROAST CHARACTER THAT CONTRIBUTES TO PERCEIVED DRYNESS, ALTHOUGH THIS IS NOT REQUIRED. THE BITTERNESS MAY LINGER INTO THE AFTERTASTE BUT SHOULD NOT BE HARSH. SOME CLEAN ALCOHOL FLAVOR CAN BE NOTED IN STRONGER VERSIONS.

MOUTHFEEL: SMOOTH, MEDIUM-LIGHT TO MEDIUM-BODIED MOUTHFEEL WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT HOP- OR (ESPECIALLY) ROASTED MALT-DERIVED ASTRINGENCY. DRY-HOPPED VERSIONS MAY BE A BIT RESINY. MEDIUM CARBONATION. A BIT OF CREAMINESS MAY BE PRESENT, BUT IS NOT REQUIRED. SOME SMOOTH ALCOHOL WARMING CAN AND SHOULD BE SENSED IN STRONGER (BUT NOT ALL) VERSIONS.

CHARACTERISTIC INGREDIENTS: DEBITTERED ROAST MALTS FOR COLOR AND SOME FLAVOR WITHOUT HARSHNESS AND BURNT QUALITIES; AMERICAN OR NEW WORLD HOP VARIETIES THAT DON'T CLASH WITH ROASTED MALTS. HOP CHARACTERISTICS CITED ARE TYPICAL OF THESE TYPE OF HOPS; OTHERS CHARACTERISTICS ARE POSSIBLE, PARTICULARLY IF DERIVED FROM NEWER VARIETALS.

