Beer History

Welcome and congratulations, you have found a gem among Beers in the Horn of Africa: Garden Bräu. Our master brewers pride themselves in brewing great fresh beers for you under the German "Reinheitsgebot" (Purity Law dating to C16th.)

As the legend goes, sometime between 10,000 and 15,000 years ago, a Mesopotamian farmer discovered that the water in which some grain had been soaking, had developed a funny taste ......... He woke the next day having made two important discoveries:

Beer and Hangovers

Historians speculate that prehistoric nomads may have made beer from grain and water even before they learnt how to make bread. However, Beer has been a part of life for thousands of years, all over the world:

For the Samarians beer was a "divine drink".

The Babylonians produced around 20 varieties of the liquid gold. Beer replaced money and workers where paid part of their wages with it. You could also pay taxes with it! The Babylonians took beer brewing so seriously, that the punishment for brewing bad beer was drowning! (And that was not in beer.)

Texts from Egypt dating to 1600 BC indicate to 100 medical prescriptions using beer. The word 'brewer' had an assigned hieroglyph letter. Pharaohs also had a royal chief beer inspector to protect its quality. Do be careful when you offer an Egyptian lady a sip of your beer - according to ancient traditions you would then be married to her!

Beer was made from different grains, in different countries: anything from Cassava in Africa, Rice in Japan, Rye in Russia to Barley in Egypt. It was made mostly by women, as it was considered food!

500 - 1000 AD the nature of beer brewing changed to more centralized productions where the use of hops to brew beer became popular. Especially monasteries and convents dedicated their time to perfecting the brew.

By 1200 AD the Germans, Austrian and British all had established the beer making tradition. Although they had slight differences: the Germans preferred cold lagers (bottom fermented), stored in cold caves in the Alps whereas the British liked mild temperate ales (top-fermented) stored in their cellars.

Queen Elizabeth I of England even drank strong ale for breakfast - that she drank tea is just a rumor.

A lot of superstition surrounded beer brewing in the middle ages. If the brewing did not go right, they blamed "beer witches" or "brew witches". The last beer which was burnt in 1591.

The year 1519 has special importance in the history of Beer brewing: The "Reinheitsgebot" - also known as Purity Law was introduced. In this law, Bavarian brewing guilds pushed for only allowing water, barley and hops to be used for beer. Once Pasteur discovered yeast, it was later included in this law. The Purity Law is the oldest, still valid food law in the world. German brewers still abide by their centuries old tradition. Needless to say that, our beer here at Garden Bräu falls under this law.

Monasteries became important beer brewers in the Middle Ages. They adored beer, as they wanted a nutritious and well-tasting foodstuff. Beer did not break their fasts. The beer became so good they stated to brew commercially and even opened Monastery Pubs! Monks were allowed up to 5L per day.

Many intellectual pondered over the mysteries of life at famous Harvard College - they had their own brewery! Finnish Poet Kalewal devoted 400 verses to beer.
The Bavarians came up with a great tradition in 1810 that still delights people from all over the world every year in autumn: The Munich Oktoberfest. This fantastic fair becomes an official annual celebration for beer.

Beer caused riots in 1888. At the Salvatore Battle citizens rebelled violently in Munich after Salvatore announced a price increase.

Commercial refrigeration started in 1860 and automatic bottling and pasteurization in 1876, thus railroading the distribution of Beer.

Prohibition forbade the drinking of any alcohol from the 1920's to 1933. Now you deserve to have some of the liquid gold. Enjoy, and as the Germans say: "Prosit"!