

ALFIE POTTS'S OATMEAL STOUT

Darker Than It Has Any Right To Be.

5-Gallon All-Grain Homebrew Recipe

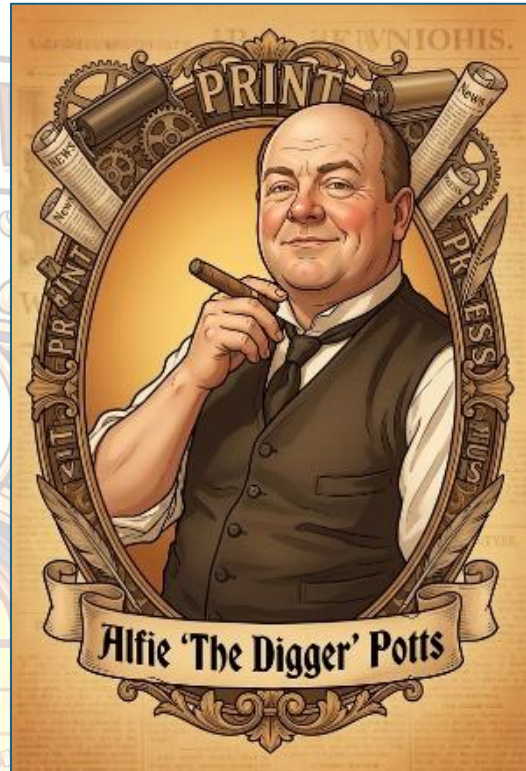
THE CHARACTER

Alfie Potts has never broken a story that the Hearthcombe Stag & Standard didn't print first. He will tell you this is irrelevant. The Stag & Standard, he will explain at considerable length, prints *facts*. The Thornwick Badger prints *truth*. These are not the same thing, and if you can't see the difference, you probably subscribe to the wrong paper.

Thirty-one years old, born three streets from the Duffy & Ward Social House, Alfie has never once seriously considered leaving the valley — though he will tell you he has been *offered* positions in London. He has not been offered positions in London.

He is the sole owner, editor, reporter, typesetter, and delivery boy of the Thornwick Badger, established 1894 by people who found the Stag & Standard insufferable, a tradition Alfie upholds with genuine devotion and absolutely no self-awareness. His masthead tagline — "*Tomorrow's News, Today*" — is the greatest piece of unintentional self-ownership in the history of Cotswolds publishing. Every soul in the valley knows the Badger is yesterday's news tomorrow. Alfie knows they say it. It bothers him considerably more than he lets on.

He is sweet on Sloane Duffy the way weather is sweet on the Cotswolds — constantly, hopelessly, and without any realistic expectation of improvement. His articles about her are noticeably more florid than his other work. The Commodore has noticed. Charlie Watts has definitely noticed. Sloane herself finds it either amusing or mildly irritating depending on the day and the quality of the prose.



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THE STYLE

Oatmeal Stout is a traditional English variant of sweet stout, distinguished by the addition of up to 20% flaked oats in the grain bill. The oats add complex proteins, lipids, and beta-glucans that profoundly alter the texture of the beer, creating a silky, creamy mouthfeel and a dense, persistent head. Unlike a dry Irish stout, which finishes with a sharp, roasted astringency, an Oatmeal Stout is rounded, nutty, and subtly sweet, with a flavor profile leaning toward milk chocolate and fresh-roasted coffee with cream.



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THE SPECS

- **Batch size:** 5 gallons (into fermenter)
- **Pre-boil volume:** 6.5 gallons
- **OG (Original Gravity):** 1.052 - 1.058
- **FG (Final Gravity):** 1.014 - 1.018
- **ABV:** 4.8 - 5.5%
- **IBU:** 28 - 32
- **SRM:** 35+ (Opaque black with dark brown foam)
- **Boil time:** 60 minutes
- **Mash time:** 60 minutes
- **Mash temperature:** 154°F (67.8°C)
- **Fermentation temperature:** 64 - 68°F (17.8 - 20°C)

THE WATER

Start with RO or distilled water. Treat ALL water with one Campden tablet per 20 gallons. Target a London-style water profile with moderate bicarbonate to support the dark malts and prevent them from becoming overly acidic, favoring chloride over sulfate for a soft, full mouthfeel.

- **Mineral Additions (for 8 gallons total water — mash plus sparge):**
 - Gypsum (calcium sulfate): 2 grams
 - Calcium chloride: 5 grams
 - Epsom salt (magnesium sulfate): 1 gram
 - Baking soda (sodium bicarbonate): 2 grams
 - Lactic acid (88%): as needed to achieve mash pH of 5.3 - 5.5 (Measure first; dark malts lower pH significantly).

THE GRAIN BILL

- **Maris Otter pale malt: 7.0 lbs (64%)**
 - The biscuity English backbone.
- **Flaked Oats: 1.5 lbs (14%)**
 - The soul of the beer. Provides the signature silky, creamy texture.
- **Chocolate Malt: 0.75 lb (7%)**
 - Adds rich cocoa and bittersweet chocolate notes without harsh astringency.
- **Roasted Barley: 0.5 lb (4.5%)**
 - Adds deep black color and a gentle coffee-like roast.
- **Crystal 80L: 0.75 lb (7%)**
 - Contributes dark caramel and toffee sweetness to round out the roasted malts.
- **Victory Malt: 0.375 lb (3.5%)**
 - Enhances the toasty, nutty character of the oats.
- **Total grain bill:** approximately 11.0 lbs

Mash Instructions:

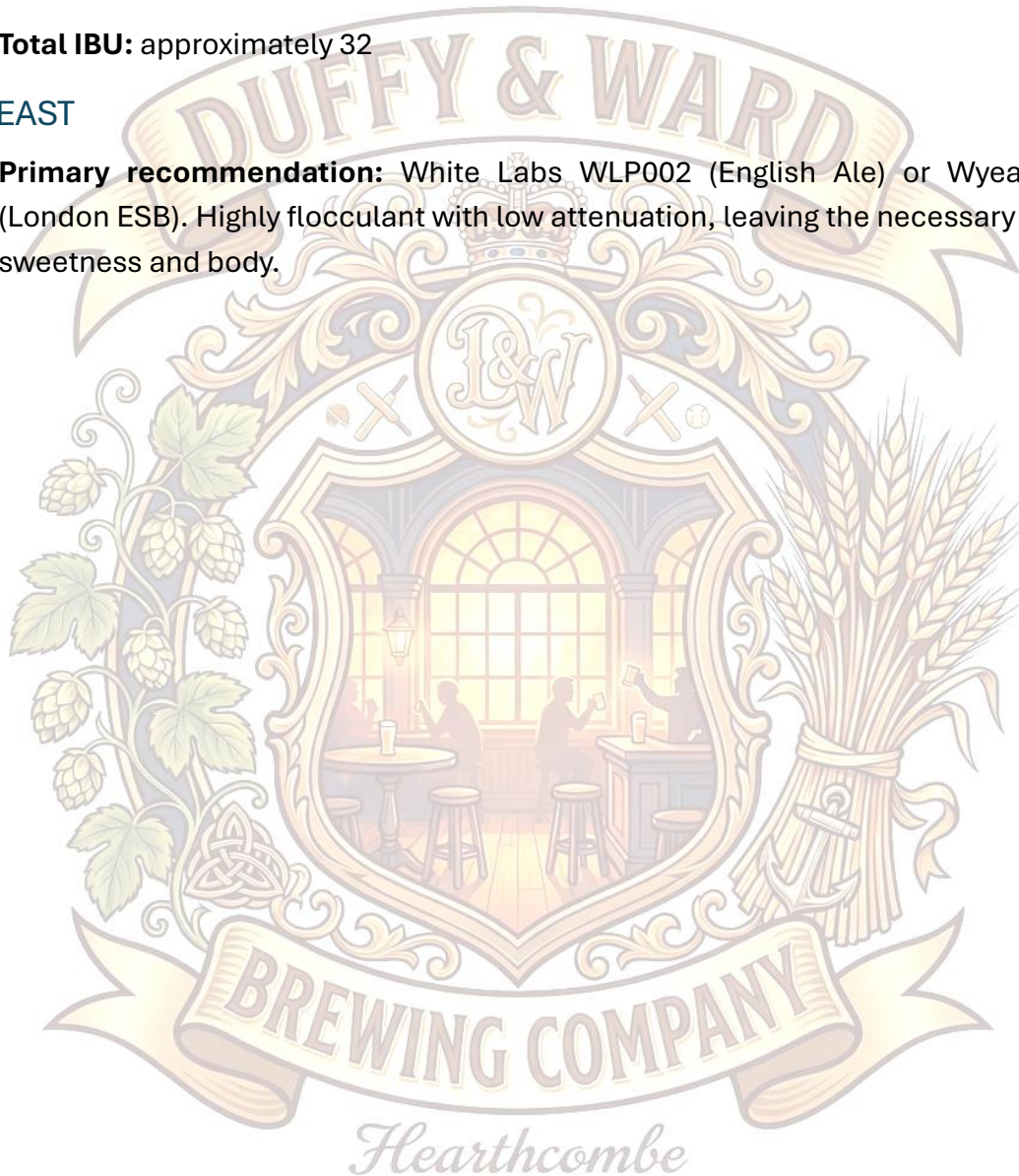
- **Strike water volume:** approximately 4.1 gallons (1.5 quarts per pound)
- **Strike water temperature:** approximately 165°F
- **Mash in** at 154°F (67.8°C) — hold for 60 minutes.
- **Mash out** at 168°F for 10 minutes.
- **Vorlauf** until wort runs clear.
- **Sparge** with 170°F treated water to collect approximately 6.5 gallons.

THE HOPS

- **East Kent Goldings:** 1.5 oz at 60 minutes (bittering) — clean, earthy English bitterness (approx. 28 IBU).
- **Fuggles:** 0.5 oz at 15 minutes (flavor) — woody, subtle (approx. 4 IBU).
- **Total IBU:** approximately 32

THE YEAST

- **Primary recommendation:** White Labs WLP002 (English Ale) or Wyeast 1968 (London ESB). Highly flocculant with low attenuation, leaving the necessary residual sweetness and body.



THE PROCESS — Brew Day

1. Collect and treat water, add minerals.
2. Heat strike water to 165°F.
3. Mash in at 154°F. Hold for 60 minutes.
4. Mash out at 168°F.
5. Vorlauf and sparge to collect 6.5 gallons.
6. Bring to a rolling boil. Add 1.5 oz EKG at 60 minutes.
7. Add 0.5 oz Fuggles at 15 minutes.
8. Add Whirlfloc tablet at 10 minutes.
9. Chill wort to 64°F, transfer to fermenter, aerate, and pitch yeast.

FERMENTATION & CONDITIONING

- **Primary fermentation:** 64-68°F for 10-14 days. Raise to 70°F for the final 3 days to ensure the WLP002 does not stall prematurely.
- **Cold crash** at 34-38°F for 3 days.
- **Kegging:** Carbonate at 10-12 PSI for a soft, traditional English carbonation level.
- **Bottling:** Prime with 3.5 oz corn sugar.

TASTING NOTES & FOOD PAIRINGS

- **Appearance:** Midnight black with a dense, creamy, mocha-colored head.
- **Flavor:** Freshly brewed coffee with heavy cream, milk chocolate, toasted oats, and a whisper of dark caramel. The finish is smooth, rich, and deeply comforting.
- **Food Pairings:** Sharp English cheddar, smoked sausages, bread pudding, and dark chocolate desserts.