

FIELD MARSHAL KRIEGER'S OKTOBERFEST MÄRZEN

March Brewed. Oktober Victory.

5-Gallon All-Grain Homebrew Recipe

THE CHARACTER

In the spring of 1912, when the first cylinders fell burning from the sky and the tripods rose from the craters like iron nightmares, the world panicked. Governments froze. Armies scattered. Civilians fled. Field Marshal Krieger did not flee. He organized. He strategized. He stood in front of frightened men and spoke with a calm so absolute that they believed him when he said they would win — even though every piece of evidence suggested otherwise. He studied the machines. He found their weaknesses. And when Oktober came and the final assault was mounted, it was Krieger who led the charge that brought the last tripod crashing to the earth. His Oktoberfest Märzen is brewed in March and lagered through the long summer — patient, disciplined, building in strength and character until autumn arrives and the waiting is over. A Field Marshal doesn't show up every day. He arrives when he's needed.



THE STYLE

Märzen — German for "March beer" — is a style born from the practical realities of pre-refrigeration brewing in Bavaria. Before the advent of modern temperature control, brewing during the hot summer months was both difficult and dangerous. Warm temperatures promoted bacterial spoilage and wild yeast contamination that could ruin an entire batch. In 1553, the Bavarian Brewing Ordinance officially prohibited brewing between April 23 (St. George's Day) and September 29 (Michaelmas).

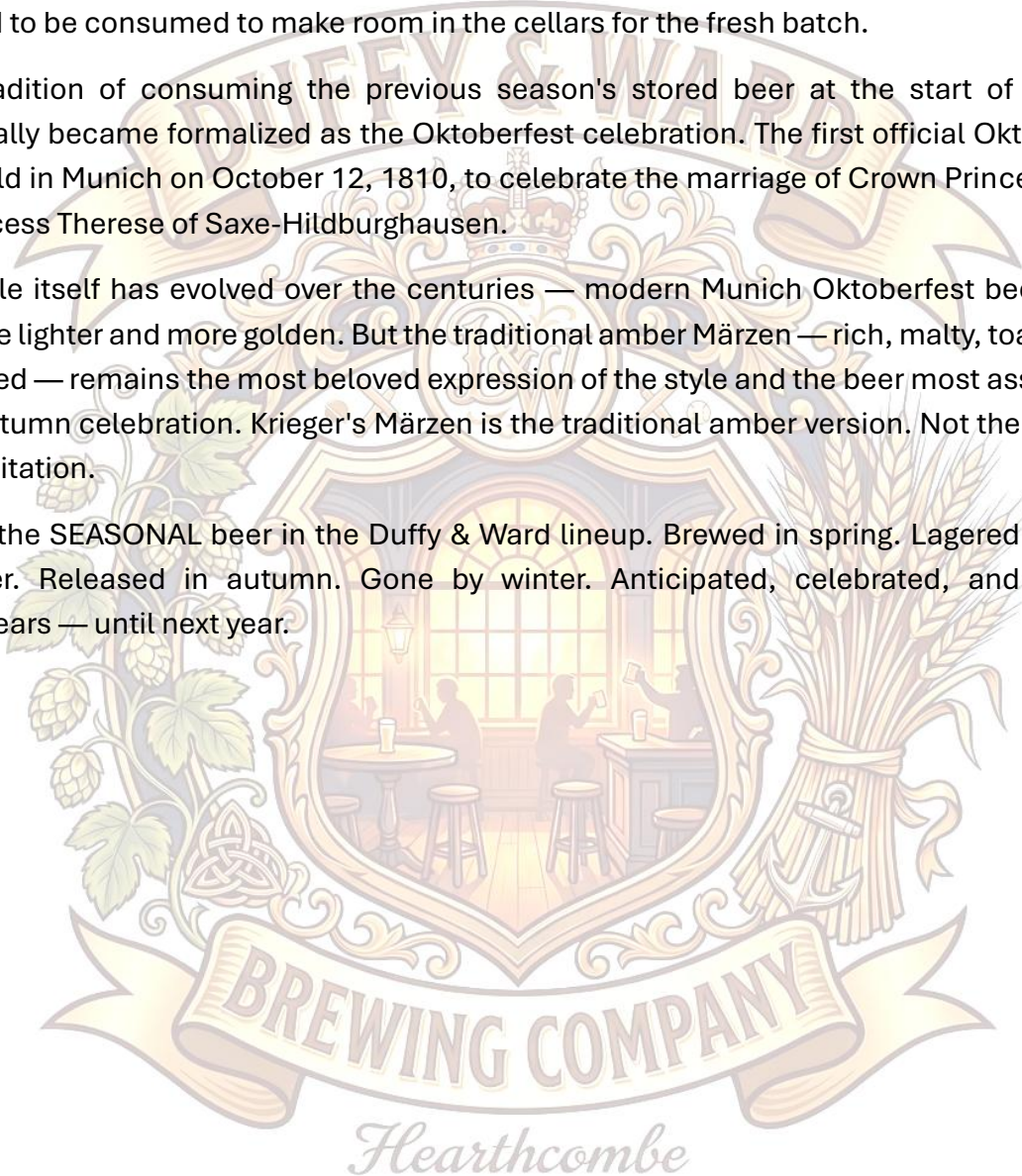
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To ensure a beer supply through the summer, Bavarian brewers would produce an extra-strong batch in March — the last month of the brewing season — using extra malt and hops to help preserve the beer through the warm months. These beers were stored (lagered) in cold alpine caves and deep cellars packed with ice, slowly conditioning through the spring and summer. By September, when the new brewing season began, the remaining March beer needed to be consumed to make room in the cellars for the fresh batch.

This tradition of consuming the previous season's stored beer at the start of autumn eventually became formalized as the Oktoberfest celebration. The first official Oktoberfest was held in Munich on October 12, 1810, to celebrate the marriage of Crown Prince Ludwig to Princess Therese of Saxe-Hildburghausen.

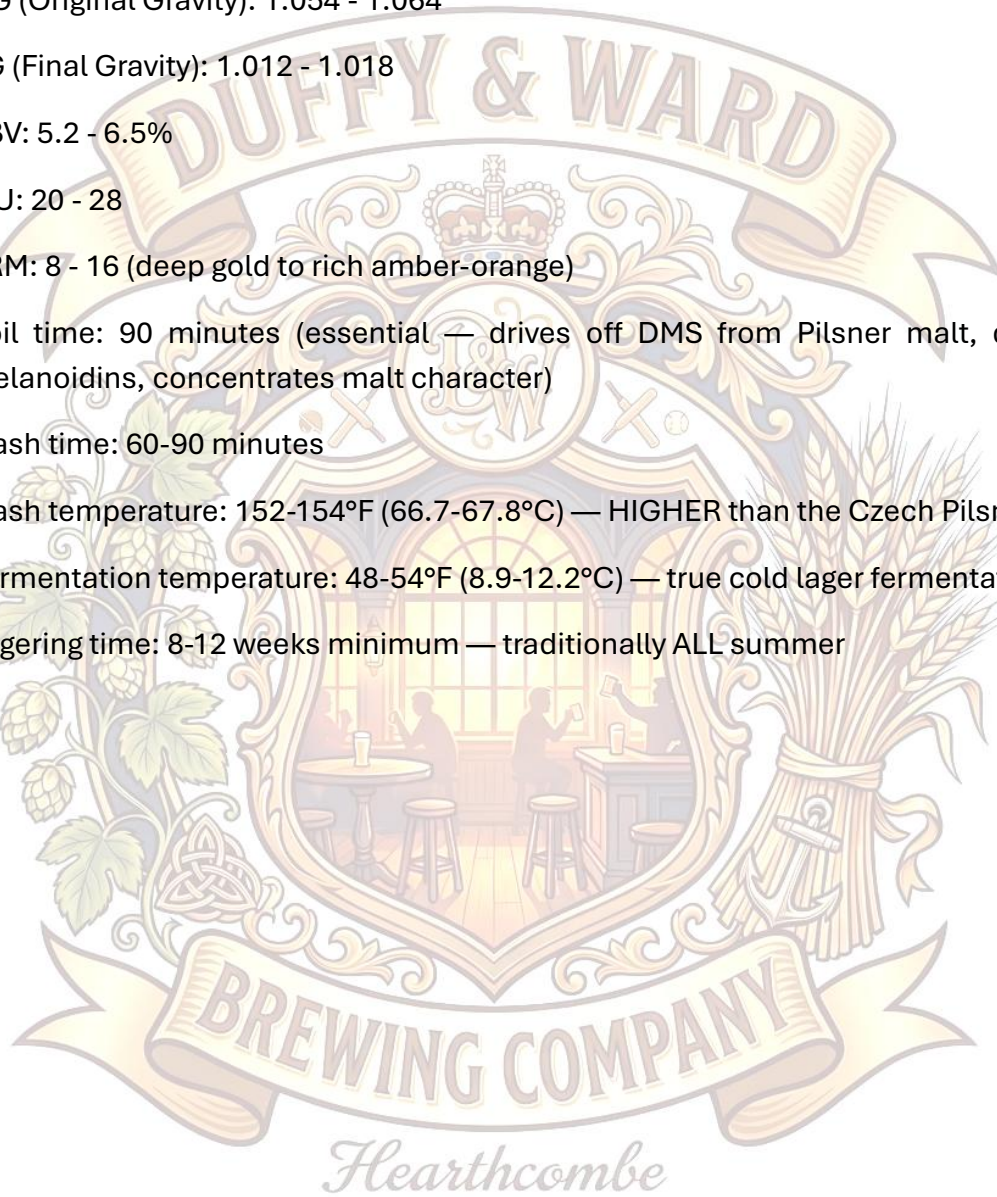
The style itself has evolved over the centuries — modern Munich Oktoberfest beers have become lighter and more golden. But the traditional amber Märzen — rich, malty, toasty, and balanced — remains the most beloved expression of the style and the beer most associated with autumn celebration. Krieger's Märzen is the traditional amber version. Not the modern pale imitation.

This is the SEASONAL beer in the Duffy & Ward lineup. Brewed in spring. Lagered through summer. Released in autumn. Gone by winter. Anticipated, celebrated, and then it disappears — until next year.



THE SPECS

- Batch size: 5 gallons (into fermenter)
- Pre-boil volume: 7.0 gallons (slightly higher — accounts for the 90-minute boil)
- OG (Original Gravity): 1.054 - 1.064
- FG (Final Gravity): 1.012 - 1.018
- ABV: 5.2 - 6.5%
- IBU: 20 - 28
- SRM: 8 - 16 (deep gold to rich amber-orange)
- Boil time: 90 minutes (essential — drives off DMS from Pilsner malt, develops melanoidins, concentrates malt character)
- Mash time: 60-90 minutes
- Mash temperature: 152-154°F (66.7-67.8°C) — HIGHER than the Czech Pilsner
- Fermentation temperature: 48-54°F (8.9-12.2°C) — true cold lager fermentation
- Lagering time: 8-12 weeks minimum — traditionally ALL summer



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THE WATER

Start with RO or distilled water — build from scratch

Treat ALL water with one Campden tablet per 20 gallons to remove chlorine and chloramine

Target a Munich water profile — moderate bicarbonate, balanced minerals, supports malty character without accentuating hop bitterness. Munich water is softer than Burton but more mineral-rich than Plzeň. It supports the rich, toasty, bread-crust malt character that defines Märzen without adding any harsh mineral edge.

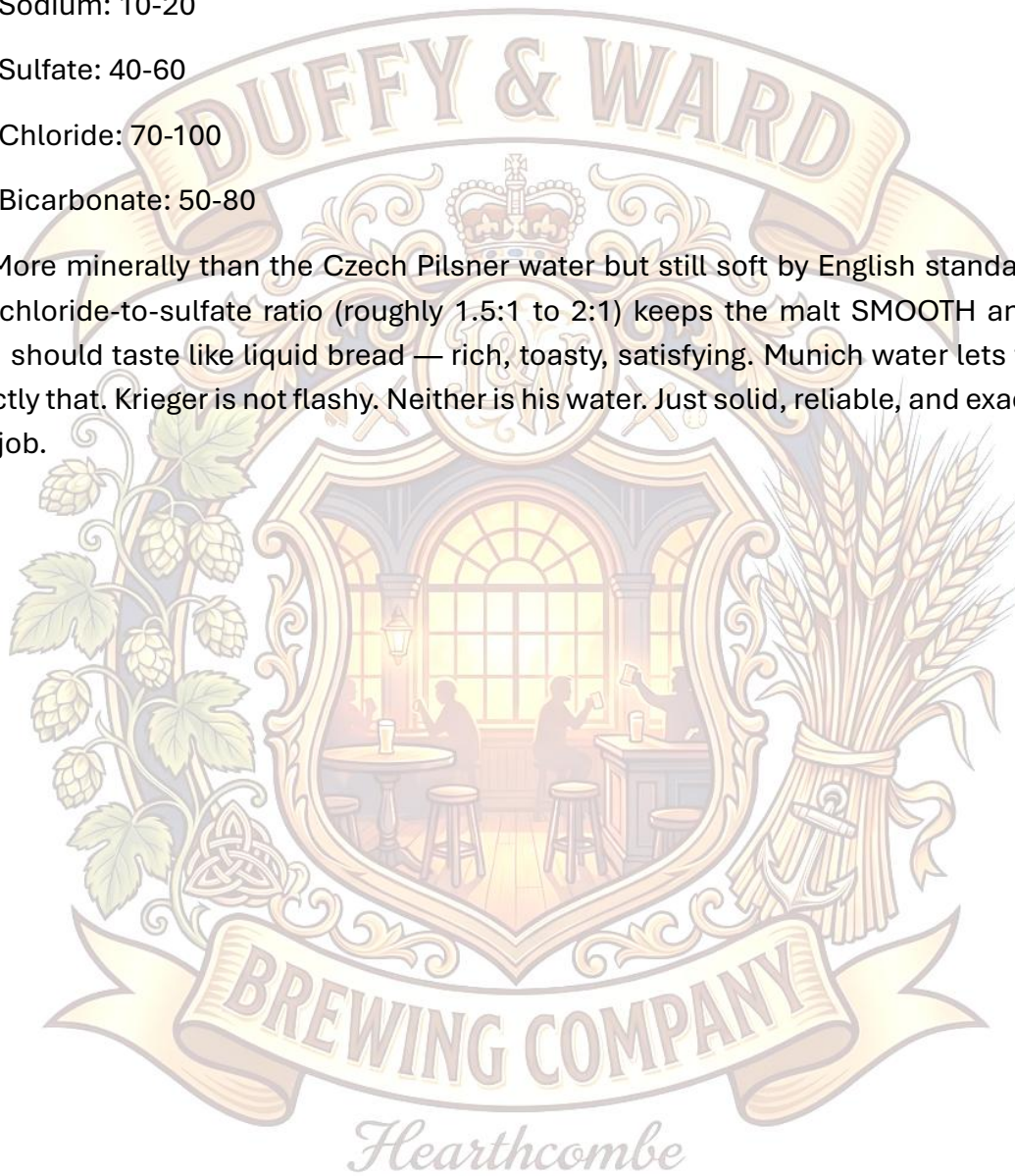
Mineral Additions (for 9 gallons total water — mash plus sparge):

- Gypsum (calcium sulfate): 2 grams
 - Low sulfate — Märzen is a MALT beer, not a hop beer
 - Just enough sulfate for a clean, crisp finish without hop accentuation
- Calcium chloride: 4 grams
 - Higher chloride-to-sulfate ratio emphasizes malt smoothness and fullness
 - Creates the rich, rounded malt character that defines the style
- Epsom salt (magnesium sulfate): 1 gram
 - Minor contribution — yeast health and a touch of mineral dryness in the finish
- Baking soda (sodium bicarbonate): 1 gram
 - Mild bicarbonate supports the specialty malts
 - Adds a subtle roundness to the malt profile
- Lactic acid (88%): as needed to achieve mash pH of 5.2 - 5.4
 - Start with 1-2 ml and measure
 - The Munich and Vienna malts have more buffering capacity than straight Pilsner malt
 - pH should be easier to hit than the Czech Pilsner

Target Water Profile (approximate ppm):

- Calcium: 60-90
- Magnesium: 5-15
- Sodium: 10-20
- Sulfate: 40-60
- Chloride: 70-100
- Bicarbonate: 50-80

Note: More minerally than the Czech Pilsner water but still soft by English standards. The higher chloride-to-sulfate ratio (roughly 1.5:1 to 2:1) keeps the malt SMOOTH and FULL. Märzen should taste like liquid bread — rich, toasty, satisfying. Munich water lets the malt do exactly that. Krieger is not flashy. Neither is his water. Just solid, reliable, and exactly right for the job.



THE GRAIN BILL

Märzen has the most MALT-FORWARD grain bill of any lager in the lineup. Where Czech Pilsner is about delicacy and Saaz hops, Märzen is about MALT — toasty, bready, caramel, biscuit. The hops are barely there. The malt is EVERYTHING.

The grain bill uses a combination of base malts that builds layers of malt complexity — not from specialty malts like crystal or roasted barley, but from the BASE MALTS themselves. This is the German approach — complexity from the kilning and processing of the grain, not from adding dark sugar or dark crystals.

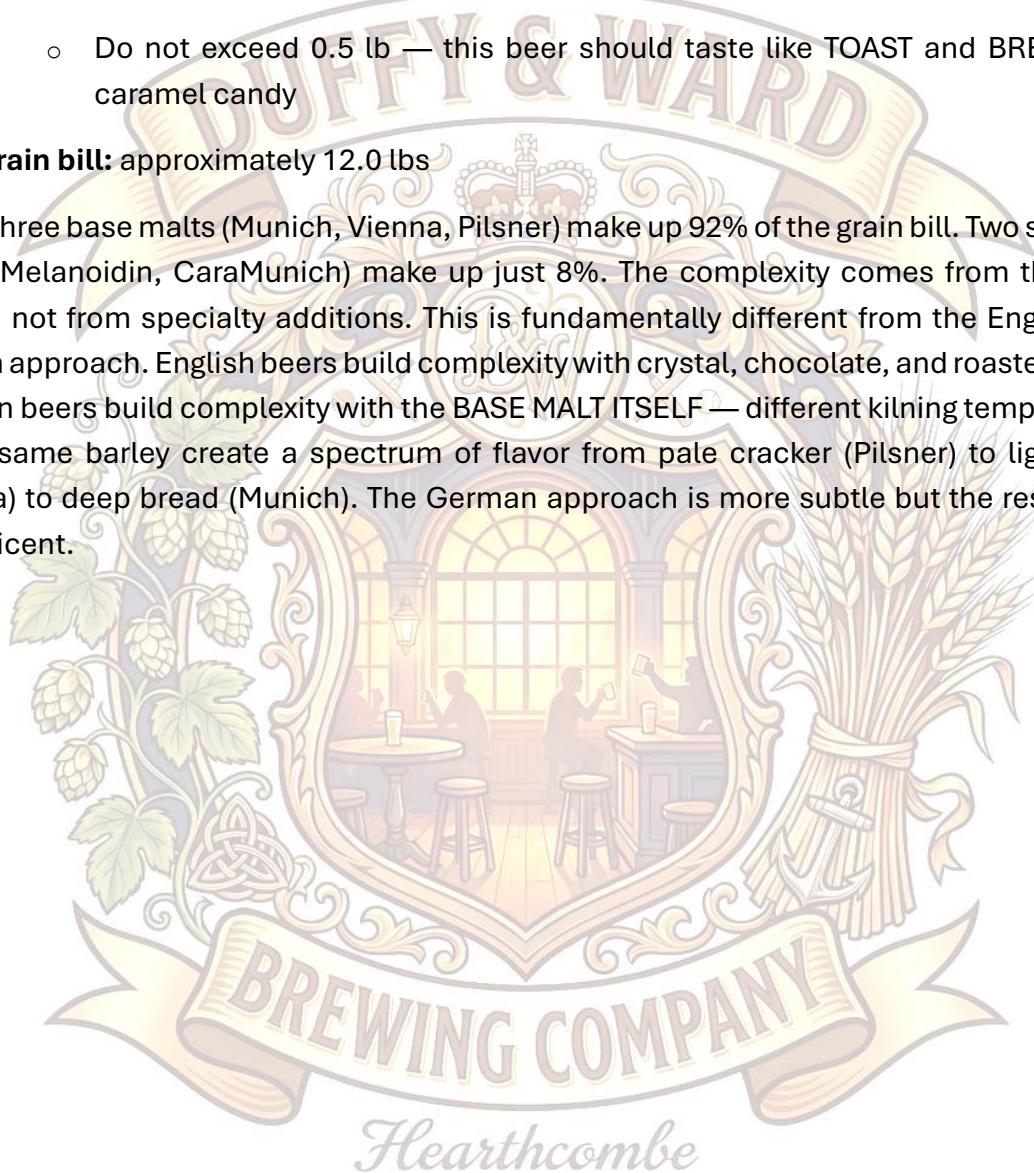
- Munich malt: 5.0 lbs (42%)
 - THE defining malt of Märzen
 - Rich, toasty, bready, with a deep golden color and a flavor like the inside of a fresh-baked bread loaf
 - Munich malt IS the Märzen character — without it, the beer is just an amber lager
 - Use German Munich malt — Weyermann Munich Type I (lighter) or Type II (darker)
 - Type I produces a lighter, more golden Märzen
 - Type II produces a deeper amber, more intensely toasty version
 - Type II is more traditional for the classic amber Märzen
 - This is the MOST Munich malt in any D&W recipe — it finally gets to be the star, not the supporting player

- Vienna malt: 3.0 lbs (25%)
 - The SECOND defining malt of Märzen
 - Lighter than Munich — adds a biscuity, cracker-like, lightly toasty character
 - Bridges the gap between the clean Pilsner base and the rich Munich
 - Vienna malt was originally the primary malt of the related Vienna Lager style — ancestors of Märzen
 - Together, Munich and Vienna create the distinctive "toast and biscuit" malt profile that IS Märzen
- German Pilsner malt: 3.0 lbs (25%)
 - Provides a clean, light base that keeps the beer from becoming too heavy or too intensely malty
 - The Pilsner malt adds a crisp, slightly sweet foundation underneath the toasty Munich and Vienna
 - Without the Pilsner malt, the beer would be too dark and too aggressively malty
 - Use the same Continental Pilsner malt as the Czech Pilsner recipe — Weyermann, Best Malz, or equivalent
- Melanoidin malt: 0.5 lb (4%)
 - A specialty German malt designed to add melanoidin character — the rich, complex, honey-like malt flavors traditionally created by decoction mashing
 - If you are performing a decoction mash, you can SKIP the melanoidin malt — the decoction process creates melanoidins naturally
 - If you are doing a single infusion mash, the melanoidin malt adds complexity that would otherwise be missing
 - Adds depth, richness, and a slight reddish-amber color
 - A little goes a long way — 0.5 lb maximum

- CaraMunich II (Crystal 45-50L): 0.5 lb (4%)
 - Adds light caramel sweetness, body, and a deeper amber color
 - Supports the Munich and Vienna malts with a touch of residual sweetness
 - Rounds out the malt profile and adds the classic Märzen amber hue
 - Do not exceed 0.5 lb — this beer should taste like TOAST and BREAD, not caramel candy

Total grain bill: approximately 12.0 lbs

Note: Three base malts (Munich, Vienna, Pilsner) make up 92% of the grain bill. Two specialty malts (Melanoidin, CaraMunich) make up just 8%. The complexity comes from the BASE MALTS, not from specialty additions. This is fundamentally different from the English and Belgian approach. English beers build complexity with crystal, chocolate, and roasted malts. German beers build complexity with the BASE MALT ITSELF — different kilning temperatures of the same barley create a spectrum of flavor from pale cracker (Pilsner) to light toast (Vienna) to deep bread (Munich). The German approach is more subtle but the results are magnificent.



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MASH INSTRUCTIONS

Like Czech Pilsner, Märzen can be brewed with a single infusion or a traditional decoction mash. The decoction is even MORE appropriate here than it is for Pilsner — Märzen was BORN from the decoction tradition, and the melanoidins created by boiling the mash are central to the authentic Märzen character.

OPTION A — SINGLE INFUSION (Simpler, Effective):

- Strike water volume: approximately 4.5 gallons (1.5 quarts per pound)
- Strike water temperature: approximately 164°F (to achieve 152-154°F mash temp)
- Mash in at 152-154°F (66.7-67.8°C) — hold for 60 minutes
 - HIGHER mash temperature than the Czech Pilsner
 - 152-154°F produces a LESS fermentable, MORE full-bodied wort
 - Märzen should finish with SIGNIFICANT residual sweetness and body
 - This is not a dry beer. This is not a crisp beer. This is a RICH, MALTY, FULL-BODIED beer.
 - If you mash at 148°F like the Belgian Quad, the beer will be too thin and dry for the style
 - 153°F is the sweet spot — rich body with enough fermentability to avoid cloying sweetness
- If using melanoidin malt, include it in the grain bill as normal
- If NOT using melanoidin malt, add an extra 15 minutes to the mash (75 minutes total) to develop additional malt complexity

OPTION B — SINGLE DECOCTION (More Traditional, More Authentic):

This is WHERE decoction matters most. Märzen was the beer OF the decoction tradition. If you're going to decoct any beer in the lineup, make it this one.

- Strike water volume: approximately 4.5 gallons
- Strike water temperature: approximately 145°F (to achieve 135°F initial mash temp)
- Mash in at 135°F (57°C) — hold for 10 minutes (protein/acid rest)
 - Brief rest — not critical with modern malts but traditional
- DECOCTION PULL: Remove approximately one-third of the THICKEST part of the mash
 - Pull approximately 5-6 quarts of thick mash into a separate pot
 - Heat this portion to 158°F (70°C) and hold for 15 minutes (saccharification of the pulled portion)
 - Then bring the pulled portion to a FULL ROLLING BOIL for 15-20 minutes
 - LONGER boil than the Pilsner decoction — we WANT more melanoidins, more malt intensity, more color development
 - The boiling mash will darken slightly and develop a rich, toasty, almost honey-like aroma
 - THIS is the magic of decoction — you are caramelizing the grain in the pot
 - Stir CONSTANTLY — scorching creates harsh, burnt flavors
- RETURN: Add the boiling decoction back to the main mash, stirring vigorously
 - The combined temperature should land at approximately 152-154°F
 - Adjust with boiling or cold water if needed
 - Hold at 153°F for 45 minutes (saccharification rest)

- Mash out at 168°F for 10 minutes
 - Add boiling water or apply heat

If you perform the decoction, you can ELIMINATE the melanoidin malt from the grain bill — the decoction provides the same character naturally. Replace the 0.5 lb melanoidin malt with an additional 0.5 lb of Munich malt.

For either method:

- Check mash pH — target 5.2 to 5.4
 - The Munich and Vienna malts provide more buffering capacity than straight Pilsner malt
 - pH should be easier to manage than the Czech Pilsner
 - Adjust with lactic acid if needed
- Vorlauf until wort runs clear
 - The wort will be a gorgeous deep golden amber — like liquid honey
 - This is the most BEAUTIFUL wort of any lager in the lineup
- Sparge with 170°F treated water to collect approximately 7.0 gallons pre-boil volume
 - Higher volume for the 90-minute boil
 - Sparge SLOWLY — stop if runoff gravity drops below 1.010
- Treat sparge water with Campden and mineral additions proportionally

THE HOPS

Märzen is the MOST malt-forward lager in the D&W lineup. The hops exist solely to prevent the beer from tasting like liquid caramel. They provide a clean, firm bitterness that creates a dry finish — just enough to make you want another sip. The hop CHARACTER should be invisible. The hop BITTERNESS should be a quiet structural element. Nothing more.

Krieger doesn't need a loud weapon. He needs a precise one.

- Hallertau Mittelfrüh: 1.5 oz at 90 minutes (bittering — added at START of the 90-minute boil)
 - THE traditional Bavarian noble hop — same variety used in the Hefeweizen
 - Low alpha acid (3-5%) — gentle, refined, noble bitterness
 - Approximately 18-24 IBU
 - Added at the very start of the 90-minute boil for smooth, fully integrated bitterness
 - The long boil ensures the bitterness is SMOOTH and POLISHED — no rough edges
- Hallertau Mittelfrüh: 0.5 oz at 15 minutes (flavor)
 - Adds a very subtle herbal, slightly spicy note
 - You should NOT be able to identify this as "hoppy" in the finished beer
 - It simply rounds out the flavor and keeps the malt from being one-dimensional
 - Approximately 2-3 additional IBU
- No flameout additions. No late aroma additions. No dry hops.
 - Märzen is about MALT. The hops provide balance. That is ALL they do.
 - If you can taste hops in a Märzen, the brewer used too much.

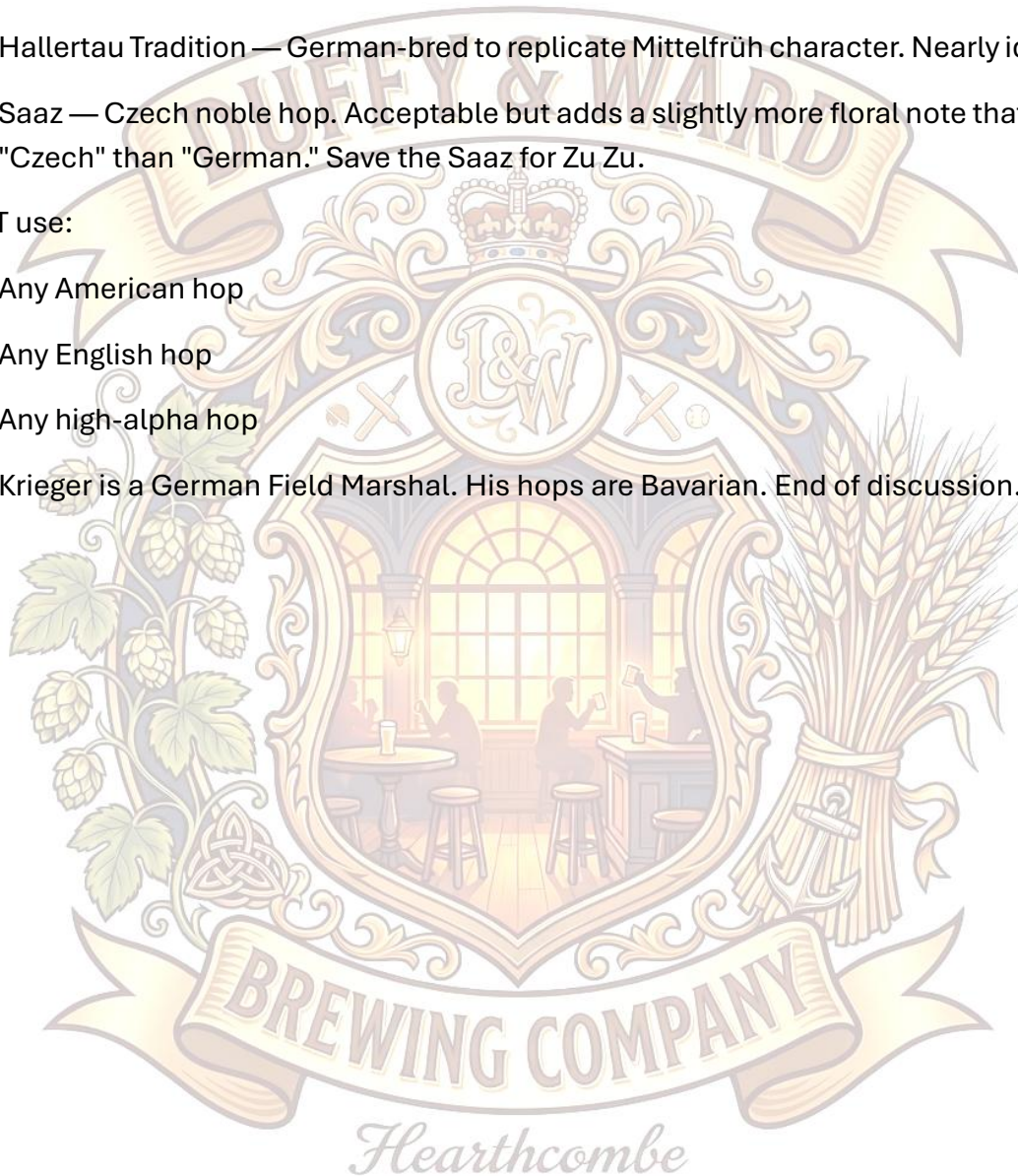
Total hops: 2.0 oz — ALL Hallertau Mittelfrüh **Total IBU:** approximately 20-27

Alternative Noble Hops (if Hallertau Mittelfrüh unavailable):

- Tettnang — Bavarian noble hop, very similar, slightly more herbal. Excellent substitute.
- Spalt — another German noble hop, mild and delicate. Traditional choice.
- Hallertau Tradition — German-bred to replicate Mittelfrüh character. Nearly identical.
- Saaz — Czech noble hop. Acceptable but adds a slightly more floral note that is more "Czech" than "German." Save the Saaz for Zu Zu.

Do NOT use:

- Any American hop
- Any English hop
- Any high-alpha hop
- Krieger is a German Field Marshal. His hops are Bavarian. End of discussion.



THE YEAST

True cold lager fermentation — same principles as Czech Pilsner. Märzen uses the same family of lager yeasts but the Munich strains tend to produce a slightly MORE malty, MORE rounded character than the Czech strains. This complements the rich, toasty grain bill.

Primary recommendation: Wyeast 2206 (Bavarian Lager) or White Labs WLP820 (Oktoberfest/Märzen Lager)

- THE classic Munich lager yeast
- Produces a rich, malty, full-bodied lager character — slightly less attenuative than Czech or neutral lager strains
- The lower attenuation is DESIRABLE for Märzen — it leaves residual malt sweetness and body that defines the style
- Clean fermentation with no fruity esters at proper cold temperatures
- Good flocculation — clears well during lagering
- This yeast produces the distinctive "Munich malt bomb" character that makes Oktoberfest beers so satisfying

Alternative: Wyeast 2308 (Munich Lager) or White Labs WLP838 (South German Lager)

- Another excellent Munich lager strain
- Slightly different character — some find it a touch crisper and cleaner
- Still produces the rich, malty Märzen character
- Good alternative if WLP820 is unavailable

Second alternative: Saflager W-34/70 (dry)

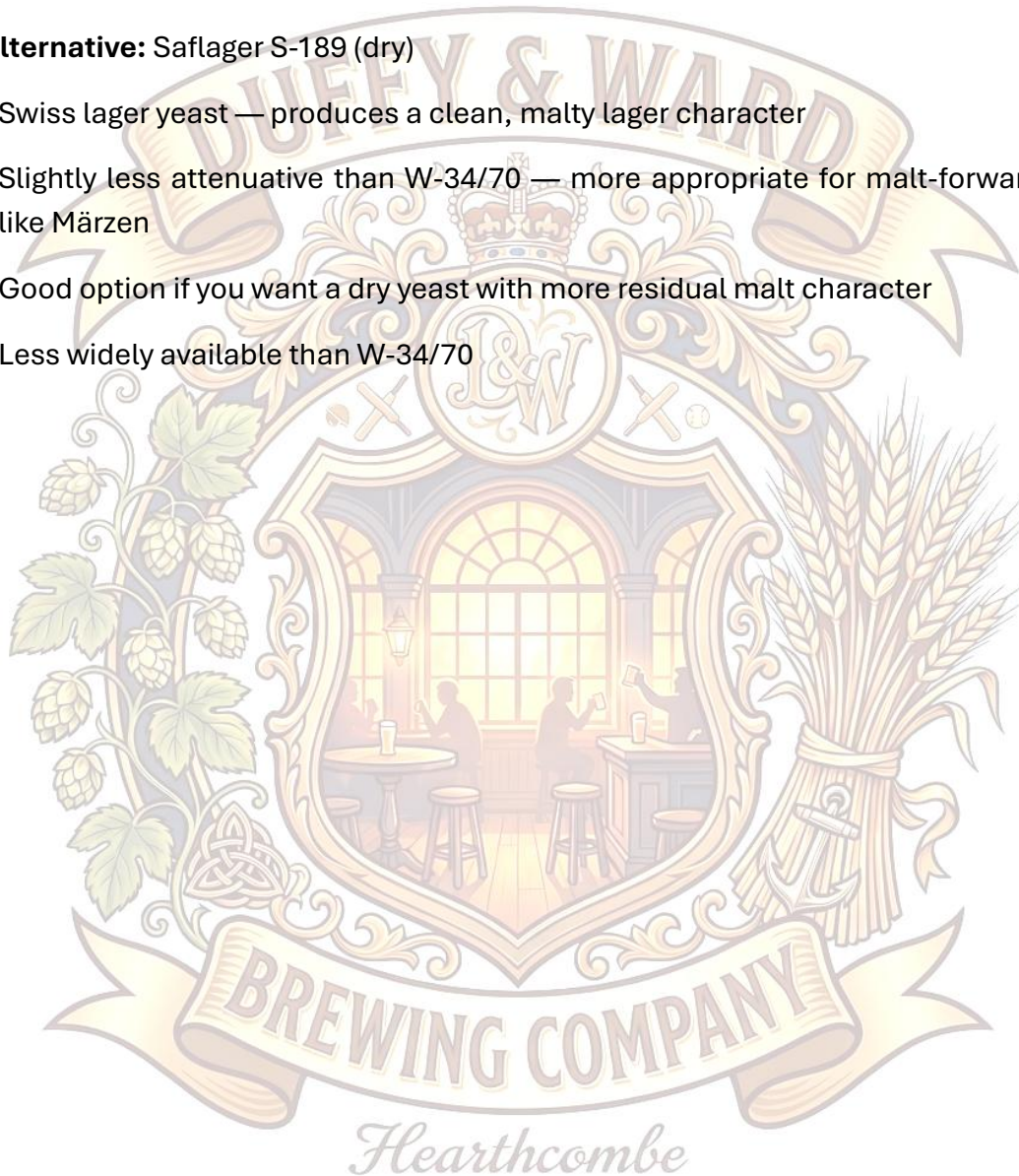
- The same versatile dry lager yeast recommended for Czech Pilsner and California Common
- Reliable, consistent, forgiving
- Attenuates slightly MORE than the Munich liquid strains — produces a DRIER Märzen

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- The beer will be slightly less malty and less full-bodied than with the authentic Munich strains
- Still makes a very good Märzen — just not the richest possible version
- Two packets recommended

Third alternative: Saflager S-189 (dry)

- Swiss lager yeast — produces a clean, malty lager character
- Slightly less attenuative than W-34/70 — more appropriate for malt-forward styles like Märzen
- Good option if you want a dry yeast with more residual malt character
- Less widely available than W-34/70



YEAST PREPARATION

Same principles as Czech Pilsner — cold lager fermentation requires a LARGE, HEALTHY yeast pitch.

If using liquid yeast (Wyeast 2206, 2308, WLP820, or WLP838):

- Make a 2.0 liter starter 24-48 hours before brew day
 - Same size as the Czech Pilsner starter — lager fermentation demands more cells
 - Target approximately 350-400 billion cells
 - Stir plate STRONGLY recommended
 - Without a stir plate, make a 3.0 liter starter
- Allow the starter to ferment at room temperature
- Chill the starter the night before brew day
- Decant the spent starter beer
- Pitch the thick yeast slurry at your target wort temperature (48-54°F)

If using dry yeast (W-34/70 or S-189):

- Pitch TWO full packets
- Rehydrate both packets in 8 oz of sterile water at 77°F for 15 minutes
- Pitch the full rehydrated slurry
- Some brewers pitch W-34/70 at room temperature and chill to fermentation temperature over 24 hours — this gives the yeast a vigorous start. Acceptable approach.

THE PROCESS — BREW DAY

Another long brew day — the 90-minute boil means 7-8 hours. Krieger plans carefully. So should you.

- Step 1: Collect and treat water — RO or distilled, add minerals including baking soda, add Campden tablet. You need approximately 9 gallons total.
- Step 2: Heat strike water to target temperature based on your chosen mash method.
- Step 3: Mash in — add grain slowly, stir thoroughly, target your chosen mash temperature (152-154°F for single infusion, 135°F for decoction start).
 - The mash will be a beautiful golden amber from the Munich and Vienna malts
 - Check mash pH — target 5.2 to 5.4
 - Adjust with lactic acid if needed
- Step 4: Follow your chosen mash schedule — single infusion for 60 minutes at 153°F, or complete the decoction schedule.
- Step 5: Mash out at 168°F for 10 minutes.
- Step 6: Vorlauf until wort runs clear.
 - The wort will be a stunning deep golden amber — gorgeous color
- Step 7: Sparge with 170°F treated water — collect approximately 7.0 gallons.
 - Sparge SLOWLY — stop if runoff gravity drops below 1.010
- Step 8: Bring to a rolling boil.
 - Watch for hot break — high-gravity lager wort can boil over aggressively
 - Keep a spray bottle of cold water handy
 - The boil MUST be vigorous and the lid MUST be OFF for the full 90 minutes
 - DMS from the Pilsner malt portion must be driven off completely
- Step 9: Add bittering hops — 1.5 oz Hallertau Mittelfrüh at 90 minutes (start of the boil).
- Step 10: Continue rolling boil — uncovered — for the full 90 minutes.

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- The extended boil concentrates the malt character beautifully
- The wort will darken slightly — developing deeper amber tones
- Melanoidin development continues during the boil — adding the toasty, bread-like complexity
- Step 11: Add flavor hops — 0.5 oz Hallertau Mittelfrüh at 15 minutes remaining.
- Step 12: Optional — add one Whirlfloc tablet at 10 minutes remaining.
 - Recommended — clarity matters for this style
- Step 13: Chill wort as quickly as possible to 48-54°F.
 - Same cold pitching requirement as Czech Pilsner
 - Supplement with ice bath if your chiller can't reach below 55°F with tap water alone
 - Fast chilling prevents DMS formation during cooldown
 - Do NOT pitch until the wort is at or BELOW your target fermentation temperature
- Step 14: Transfer to sanitized fermenter.
 - Aerate aggressively — shake vigorously for 4-5 minutes or use an oxygenation stone for 90-120 seconds
 - Lager yeast needs MORE oxygen — same principle as Czech Pilsner
- Step 15: Pitch yeast — the full 2.0 liter starter slurry or two packets rehydrated dry yeast.
- Step 16: Seal fermenter, attach airlock, place in temperature-controlled environment at 50°F.

FERMENTATION — TRUE COLD LAGER

Same cold fermentation protocol as Czech Pilsner. The principles are identical — cold, slow, patient, deliberate.

Primary Fermentation: 48-54°F for 14-21 days

- Target 50°F (10°C) as the sweet spot
 - At 48°F: cleaner, crisper. Slower fermentation.
 - At 50°F: balanced. The classic Munich lager fermentation temperature.
 - At 54°F: slightly more malt-forward. Faster fermentation.
 - Do NOT exceed 55°F
- Fermentation will be SLOW — same patience required as Czech Pilsner
 - Lag time: 24-72 hours before visible activity. Do not panic.
 - Active fermentation: slow, steady, small bubbles
 - Less dramatic than ale fermentation — cold and quiet
- Hold temperature STEADY throughout
 - Consistency is critical — avoid swings
 - Steady 52°F is better than bouncing between 48°F and 56°F
- Check gravity at day 14 and again at day 18-21
- Fermentation is complete when gravity is stable over THREE consecutive days
- Target FG: 1.012 - 1.018
 - HIGHER final gravity than Czech Pilsner — this is correct and intentional
 - The Munich lager yeast (WLP820, Wyeast 2206) naturally attenuates LESS than Czech or neutral lager yeast

- The residual sweetness is what makes Märzen taste like MÄRZEN — rich, full, malty
- If using W-34/70, expect a slightly lower FG (1.010-1.014) and a drier beer
- Both are acceptable — the Munich strain produces a more authentic, richer version



DIACETYL REST — ESSENTIAL

Same protocol as Czech Pilsner — non-negotiable for all cold-fermented lagers.

- After primary fermentation appears complete (gravity stable):
 - RAISE temperature to 60-65°F for 3-5 days
 - The yeast reabsorbs diacetyl at the warmer temperature
 - 3 days minimum. 5 days if any butterscotch detected.
- Test for diacetyl using the warm-sample method before proceeding
 - Pour a small sample into two glasses
 - Cover one and heat to approximately 140°F
 - Smell both — if butterscotch is detected in the warm sample, extend the rest
 - If clean, proceed to lagering



LAGERING — THE LONG SUMMER

This is where Märzen becomes Märzen — and where the name gets its meaning.

Traditionally, Märzen was brewed in MARCH and lagered in cold alpine caves ALL SUMMER — from April through September. Six months of cold storage. The beer that emerged in autumn was transformed — smooth, polished, refined, and magnificent. The Oktoberfest celebration was born from the tradition of tapping these March-brewed beers when the new brewing season began.

You probably won't lager for six months. But the principle is the same — cold, time, patience.

- After the diacetyl rest, DROP temperature to 34-38°F
 - Drop gradually — 2-3°F per day over 3-4 days
 - Gradual temperature reduction allows the yeast to settle naturally without shock
- HOLD at 34-38°F for 8-12 weeks
 - YES. 8-12 WEEKS of cold storage.
 - This is LONGER than the Czech Pilsner lagering period
 - Märzen is a BIGGER beer — more malt, more body, more complexity
 - It needs MORE time for all those malt flavors to meld and integrate
 - During lagering:
 - Yeast settles out — the beer clarifies to brilliant amber-gold
 - Toasty malt flavors integrate — the Munich, Vienna, and Pilsner malts become a seamless whole
 - Harsh edges soften — young Märzen can taste rough and grainy
 - Caramel notes deepen — the CaraMunich and melanoidin character mellows and smooths
 - The beer becomes POLISHED — like a piece of amber held to the light

- Sulfur compounds dissipate — young lager sulfur disappears completely
- 8 weeks: good. Drinkable. Solid.
- 10 weeks: better. Smoother. More integrated.
- 12 weeks: outstanding. Everything has come together. This is what Oktoberfest tastes like.
- Longer: Diminishing returns after 12 weeks — Märzen is best consumed fresh after lagering, not aged for years like Imperial Stout or Belgian Quad

Do NOT add finings during lagering. Cold temperature and time will clear the beer naturally. The deep amber-gold color is best appreciated in a brilliantly clear beer — and proper lagering achieves that clarity without assistance.

THE SEASONAL TIMELINE:

If you follow the traditional March-to-Oktober schedule:

- March: Brew day
- Late March: Fermentation complete, diacetyl rest
- April: Begin lagering at 34-38°F
- April through September: The long cold sleep
- Late September / early October: Tap the Märzen. Celebrate.

TOTAL TIME FROM BREW DAY TO GLASS: Minimum 10-14 weeks. Traditional 24-28 weeks (March to October).

March Brewed. Oktober Victory. That's not just a tagline. It's the actual timeline.

PACKAGING

Kegging (Preferred — strongly preferred for lager):

- Transfer to sanitized keg — COLD. Transfer at lagering temperature.
 - Keep everything cold throughout the transfer
 - Do not warm the beer — any warming introduces oxygen risk and can cause haze
- Purge headspace with CO₂ — multiple purges
 - Märzen is sensitive to oxidation — the clean malt profile shows staling quickly
 - Purge the keg at least three times before filling
- Carbonate at 12-14 PSI at 38°F for 5-7 days
- Target carbonation: 2.2 - 2.6 volumes CO₂
 - Moderate carbonation — not as high as Czech Pilsner or Hefeweizen
 - Märzen should feel smooth and full, with enough carbonation to keep it refreshing
 - Not fizzy. Not flat. Just right.
 - The carbonation should complement the malt, not compete with it

Bottling:

- Prepare priming solution: 3.5 oz corn sugar dissolved in 2 cups boiling water, cooled
 - Calculate based on lagering temperature using a priming calculator
 - Beer stored cold holds more dissolved CO₂ — you need less priming sugar
- CRITICAL: After 8-12 weeks of lagering, the yeast count will be VERY LOW
 - Same issue as Czech Pilsner — the beer probably will NOT carbonate without additional yeast
 - Add 1-2 grams of fresh dry lager yeast (W-34/70) to the bottling bucket
 - This fresh yeast carbonates the bottles

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- Without it, bottles may remain flat for months despite priming sugar
- Add priming solution to bottling bucket
- Transfer beer GENTLY and COLD — minimize ALL oxygen exposure
 - Oxidized Märzen develops cardboard, papery, stale flavors quickly
 - The clean malt profile offers no hiding place for oxidation damage
- Fill bottles, cap
 - Use oxygen-absorbing caps — recommended for all lagers
- Condition at room temperature (65-70°F) for 2-3 weeks
 - The fresh yeast needs warmth to consume the priming sugar
 - Test one bottle at 2 weeks
 - Once carbonated, REFRIGERATE immediately
 - Store cold and drink within 2-3 months for optimal freshness
 - Märzen is at its best FRESH after lagering — it does not improve with further aging



SERVING

Glass: German stein or mug — traditional stoneware or glass stein. A dimpled glass mug (Maßkrug) is also appropriate and traditional.

- The stein is part of the EXPERIENCE — this beer is meant to be CELEBRATED
- A half-liter or full-liter stein is festive, communal, and authentic
- A standard pint glass is acceptable but less atmospheric
- For the D&W Social House, the stein should be branded — it's a seasonal merchandise opportunity

Serving temperature: 42-48°F (6-9°C) — cold enough to be crisp and refreshing, warm enough to express the complex toasty malt character

- Colder than the English ales, warmer than the Czech Pilsner
- At 42°F: crisp, clean, refreshing — the carbonation sparkles and the malt is smooth
- At 48°F: richer, more toasty, more bread-like — the full malt complexity emerges
- 45°F is the sweet spot for a balanced experience

Pour: Tilt the stein to 45 degrees, pour steadily, straighten to finish with a one to two-inch head

- The beer should be deep gold to rich amber-orange, brilliant clarity, off-white to cream head with good retention
- Hold the glass up — the amber color should GLOW. Like autumn sunlight through leaves. Like the last warm day before winter.

TASTING NOTES — What To Expect

Appearance: Deep gold to rich amber-orange. Brilliant clarity — the beer should glow when held to light, with warm amber and copper tones. Off-white to cream head with good retention and some lacing. This is one of the most BEAUTIFUL beers in the lineup — the deep amber color is the visual signature of autumn.

Aroma: Rich toasty and bready malt — bread crust, light toast, subtle honey, warm caramel. This should smell like a bakery on a cool morning. Very low hop aroma if any — just a whisper of herbal noble hop. Clean lager character — no fruity esters, no sulfur (if properly lagered). The aroma is warm, inviting, and deeply satisfying. Like walking into a harvest festival.

Flavor: Rich, full malt character dominates — bread crust, toast, biscuit, light caramel, subtle honey sweetness. The Munich malt provides the toasty backbone. The Vienna malt adds biscuity complexity. The Pilsner malt adds a clean, slightly sweet base note. Hop bitterness is present but firmly in the background — just enough to prevent cloying sweetness, creating a clean, moderately dry finish. The lager fermentation produces an exceptionally clean, smooth flavor that allows the malt to shine without distraction. No roasted flavors. No dark fruit. No spice. Just malt. Pure, toasty, glorious MALT.

Mouthfeel: Medium to medium-full body — rich and smooth with a satisfying weight. This is the FULLEST-BODIED lager in the lineup. More body than Czech Pilsner, more body than the California Common. The higher mash temperature and the less-attenuative Munich yeast create a beer that feels substantial and satisfying without being heavy. Moderate carbonation — smooth and controlled, not fizzy.

Overall: Autumn in a glass. The beer of celebration, of harvest, of gathering. Rich enough to feel special, smooth enough to drink all night. Clean enough to appreciate, complex enough to reward attention. The kind of beer that makes you glad summer is over because THIS is what comes next. Warmth without heat. Richness without heaviness. Celebration without excess. Krieger led the charge with precision and discipline. His beer reflects both.

Hearthcombe

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COMMERCIAL BENCHMARK

Taste alongside Paulaner Oktoberfest-Märzen or Ayinger Oktober Fest-Märzen

- These are the gold standards of the traditional amber Märzen style
- Paulaner is malty, toasty, and rich — the benchmark for the style
- Ayinger is slightly more refined, with a delicate honey-like malt sweetness
- Your version should have similar color, similar toasty malt character, similar smooth clean finish
- Pay attention to the TOAST — Märzen should taste like fresh-baked bread, not caramel candy
- If your beer tastes like a caramel bomb, you used too much CaraMunich or too much crystal malt
- If your beer tastes like a pale lager with food coloring, you didn't use enough Munich and Vienna malt

Also taste alongside:

- Spaten Oktoberfest Ur-Märzen — the ORIGINAL Oktoberfest beer, first brewed in 1872
- Hacker-Pschorr Original Oktoberfest — another Munich classic
- Hofbräu Oktoberfestbier — note that modern Hofbräu Oktoberfest is the PALE version, not the traditional amber. Compare to understand the difference.

A Note On Modern vs Traditional Oktoberfest:

Since the 1990s, the major Munich breweries have shifted their Oktoberfest beers from the traditional amber Märzen to a lighter, golden "Festbier" style. The beers served at the actual Munich Oktoberfest today are mostly pale gold, not amber. This is a modern trend driven by consumer preference for lighter-colored beers.

Krieger's Märzen is the TRADITIONAL amber version. Not the modern pale imitation. The deep gold to amber color, the rich toasty malt character, the full body and satisfying weight — this is what Märzen MEANT before marketing departments decided to make it lighter.

The Baron von Kessler would have strong opinions about the modern pale Festbier. We will leave those opinions unprinted.



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FOOD PAIRINGS

- Bavarian soft pretzel with beer cheese — THE classic Oktoberfest pairing
- Bratwurst with sauerkraut
- Roast chicken — the traditional Oktoberfest food alongside pork
- Pork schnitzel
- Grilled sausages of all kinds
- German potato salad
- Roast pork knuckle (Schweinshaxe) — the ultimate Oktoberfest meal
- Obatzda — Bavarian cheese spread
- Autumn harvest foods — roasted squash, root vegetables, hearty soups
- Apple strudel — the autumnal sweetness mirrors the malt character



TROUBLESHOOTING

- **Too sweet / cloying:** Mash temperature too high (above 155°F). Or yeast under-attenuated — check FG. If above 1.020, rouse the yeast, raise temperature to 65°F, and wait. Over-use of CaraMunich — reduce to 0.25 lb next time. Märzen should finish with residual sweetness but it should NOT taste like caramel candy.
- **Too dry / thin:** Mash temperature too low. Next time mash at 154°F. Or you used W-34/70 which attenuates more — try WLP820 or Wyeast 2206 next time for a richer, more full-bodied Märzen. Increase Munich malt proportion or increase CaraMunich to 0.5 lb.
- **Not toasty / malty enough:** Not enough Munich malt. Munich should be at LEAST 40% of the grain bill — ideally use Munich Type II (darker Munich) for more intense character. Try a decoction mash for additional melanoidin development. Or add melanoidin malt if you did single infusion.
- **Too dark:** Reduce CaraMunich or eliminate melanoidin malt. Märzen should be deep gold to amber, NOT brown. If it looks like a brown ale, the specialty malts are too aggressive.
- **Cooked corn / cabbage (DMS):** Same as Czech Pilsner — insufficient boil. MUST boil 90 minutes with the lid OFF. Chill FAST after the boil. DMS and Pilsner malt are inseparable enemies.
- **Butterscotch (diacetyl):** Insufficient diacetyl rest. Raise to 60-65°F for 3-5 more days. Test using the warm-sample method. NEVER skip this step.
- **Green apple (acetaldehyde):** Beer packaged before fermentation was complete. Verify gravity is stable over THREE consecutive days. The diacetyl rest also helps.
- **Sulfur:** Normal in young lager. Dissipates during lagering. Extended cold conditioning (8-12 weeks) should resolve. If persistent after 12 weeks, the yeast was stressed.
- **Fruity esters:** Fermentation temperature exceeded 55°F. Märzen should be CLEAN — no detectable fruit character. Better temperature control next time.
- **Harsh / sharp bitterness:** Water has too much sulfate. Reduce gypsum. Or over-hopped — reduce the 90-minute addition to 1.25 oz. Märzen bitterness should be GENTLE and in the background.

- **Bland / one-dimensional:** The base malt composition is too simple. Ensure you're using Munich AND Vienna AND Pilsner — the THREE together create the layered malt complexity. If using only Pilsner and Munich, the Vienna gap creates a hole in the middle of the flavor. Also — try decoction mashing for more depth.
- **Hazy:** Extended lagering (10-12 weeks cold) should resolve. If still hazy, use Whirlfloc during the boil next time and vorlauf longer. Gelatin finings as a last resort.
- **Oxidized / cardboard:** Oxygen exposure during packaging. This is a CLEAN, DELICATE lager — oxidation is immediately apparent. Purge kegs aggressively. Use oxygen-absorbing caps. Transfer cold. Drink fresh after lagering.
- **Tastes like the modern pale Festbier:** Not enough Munich malt or too much Pilsner malt. The beer should be AMBER, not pale gold. Increase Munich to 50% of the grain bill and reduce Pilsner accordingly. Use Munich Type II for deeper color and more intense character.



NOTES

This is the last beer. The seasonal. The one that arrives when the leaves turn.

Märzen is the beer of transitions. Summer to autumn. Warmth to cold. Brewing season to harvest season. March to Oktober. Patience to celebration.

It is brewed when the world is waking up — in March, when the first signs of spring appear and the frost begins to retreat. It is stored through the long, warm months — patient, quiet, developing in the darkness of the cellar. And it emerges in October, when the air turns crisp and the harvest is in and the world is ready to celebrate.

That timeline — six months from grain to glass — is not a weakness. It is the STRENGTH. It is disciplined waiting. It is the knowledge that some things cannot be rushed. That quality requires time. That patience IS the ingredient.

Krieger understood this. He did not rush the assault. He waited for Oktober. He studied the enemy. He prepared. He planned. And when the moment came, he was ready.

His Märzen is brewed the same way. Prepared in March. Stored through summer. Ready in Oktober.

The D&W Social House releases Krieger's Märzen once a year. When it's gone, it's gone. The taps go dark. The seasonal tab in the binder goes empty. And customers wait eleven months for it to return.

That wait IS the product. The anticipation IS the flavor. The scarcity IS the value.

A Field Marshal doesn't show up every day. He arrives when he's needed.

Ask yourself: does this beer taste like autumn? Does it taste like harvest? Does it taste like the reward at the end of a long campaign of patience?

Rich. Toasty. Amber. Clean. Full. Smooth. Celebratory.

If yes — you've brewed Krieger's beer.

March Brewed. Oktober Victory. *Hearthcombe*