



The Current

EAT & DRINK
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Mead: More Than Craft Beer for "Game of Thrones" Fans

The world's oldest fermented beverage is back, and some creative brewers are making the modern version downright chalice-worthy

By: CARRIE ANTON



Honey plus water plus time equals mead. *Photo: Robert Zeichner*

If everything old is new again, then it should come as no surprise that mead—quite possibly the oldest of all fermented beverages—is making a renaissance. Its earliest mentions date back to Plato, Virgil, *Beowulf*, and tales of Vikings and Norse gods. Yet despite it possibly being Thor’s pint of choice, honey wine hadn’t quite created the same buzz common with beers and traditional grape-made wines. That is, not until recently.

By count of the [American Mead Makers Association](#) (AMMA), there are slightly more than 200 U.S. commercial meaderies, a huge difference from the less than ten in the mid 1990s. Similar to today’s commercial craft brewers, many commercial mead makers started with beer homebrewing—the gateway craft, if you will. While a batch of beer can be quite involved with extractions and heating, mead is appealing because of its simplicity—mix honey with water and let ferment.

While mead likely has the craft beer boom to thank for its growing popularity, the taste—unlike the process—is anything but simple. “The current trend with meads involves a lot of experimentation,” says Chris Webber, president of AMMA, who mentions ginger and chilies as two ingredients that come first to mind. “The sky’s the limit with flavor profiles, and it seems as though there is nothing a mead maker won’t try today.”

Whether you’re new to honey wine or looking for a unique liquor that appeals to a craft beer lover’s palate, these meads take top marks in taste.

Pomegranate Pymment



Photo: bosmeadery.com

Bos Meadery

Madison, Wisconsin

“Tart, sparkling, and dry” are three words not often associated with meads, yet that’s exactly what to expect from the **Bos Meadery** Pomegranate Pymment (13 percent ABV). This light, sparkling drink blends all locally sourced Wisconsin wildflower honey, with Riesling grape juice, and pomegranate juice for a beverage just right for giving mead a first sip.

Kurt's Apple Pie



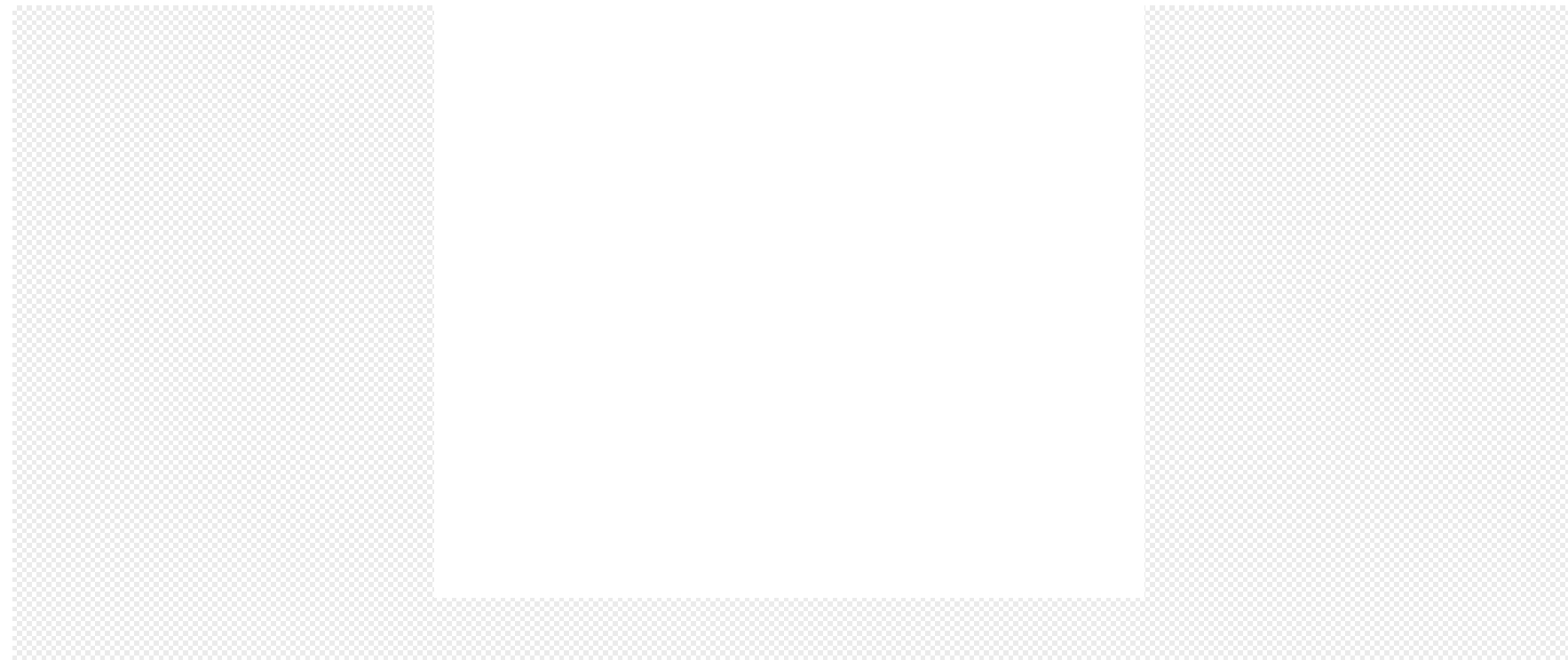
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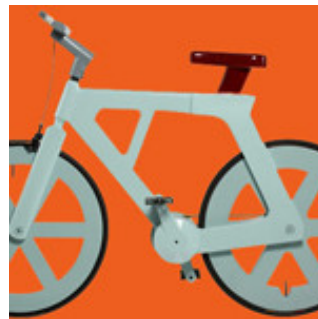
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