

WEEKENDER

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Added on July 25, 2016

By Derek Warren - For Weekender

**Tap This: Brew your own beer
for a unique gift to give this
holiday season**

subject=Weekender%20%3A%20Tap%20This%3A%20Brew%20your%20own%20beer%20for%20a%20this-brew-your-own-beer-for-a-unique-gift-to-give-this-holiday-season)



(http://theweekender.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/web1_darkbeers.jpg)

Start brewing beer this summer to wind up with higher ABV beers in winter.

“Christmas in July” typically brings about groans at the thought of people eagerly anticipating the impending holiday. This is even more true when the Christmas in July celebrations begin as a way to celebrate the half way mark to the holiday and also as a mental escape from the hot summer months. However, there are much better ways to view this time of year and that is by a brewing schedule.

Once summer ends and we approach winter, the Christmas holiday seems to dominate the

landscape. Many of us become overwhelmed at the thought of the money that will be spent on gifts.

This year, why not try a new take and get an early jump on the holiday. I am not suggesting that you begin stringing lights or hanging stockings. Instead get a jump on your brewing, after all homebrew makes for a wonderful gift and is a great talking point around holiday celebrations.

The winter season is a time when high alcohol beers that have a strong warming effect are perfect. It takes time to brew these beers because they do not have the fast turnaround that popular styles such as IPAs or porters have. These beers need time, and a lot of it, typically a few months to fully mature.

Barrel aged beers, barley wines, imperial stouts are great to brew right now. Friends will be truly impressed when you give them a beer that clocks in at 10 percent ABV or more and it doesn't burn like jet fuel!

So where is the best place to start? Assuming that you already possess a kit to brew beer, if not visit your local homebrew shop or NorthernBrewer.com and they will have everything that you need to get set up, the next step is picking a recipe kit.

The decisions are endless and will depend on your brewing skills; higher ABV beer requires a bit more finesse than others. There are options that can include aging with whiskey soaked oak chips or with any variety of flavors such as chocolate, vanilla or even peppers.

For this example, let's keep it simple and delicious. One of the most sought after beers is Westvleteren 12, a Belgian Quad brewed by monks at a monastery in Belgium. The beer rarely makes appearances for sale in the United States, but when it does it sells out quickly.

Thankfully, companies like Northern Brewer exist and give us options when it comes to beer in the form of a clone homebrew kit. Northern Brewer's kit, called Northy 12, is modeled after the popular Westvleteren 12, lovingly called Westy 12.

Northy 12 is very easy to brew and does not require a lot of extra steps that some other big beers do as they mature. Simply brew the beer as normal and transfer to a secondary fermenter after a few weeks and wait. If you brew it now, right before Thanksgiving, package the beer and you have the perfect holiday gift!

The beer takes about four months to be ready, but will mature with age. The flavors are rich, complex, and full of Belgian beer goodness.

Derek Warren is a beer fanatic, avid homebrewer and beer historian. Derek can be heard weekly on the Beer Geeks Radio Hour at noon on Sundays on WILK 103.1 FM with past episodes available on iTunes.

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<p>Make A Hand Held Field Goal 2:00 pm (http://www.theweekender.com/section/weekend) (http://www.theweekender.com/section/weekend)</p>	
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Wednesday	Jul 27
Thursday	Jul 28
Friday	Jul 29
Saturday	Jul 30
Sunday	Jul 31

Monday

Aug 1

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The Weekender magazine cover features a dark sports car at sunset. Text on the cover includes: "VOL. 23 ISSUE 27 JULY 20-26, 2018 THEWEEKENDER.COM", "NEPA'S No. 1 ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT FREE WEEKLY OVER 25,000 READERS WEEKLY", "Engines revving for area car shows", "Fans mourn George Wesley, NEPA music icon", and "Wild Side Tattoo 318 WYOMING AVENUE TOWNSHIP PA 18881 570-609-5588 10% OFF".

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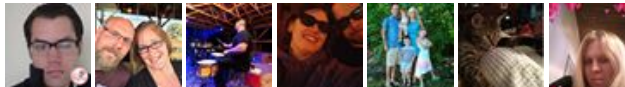
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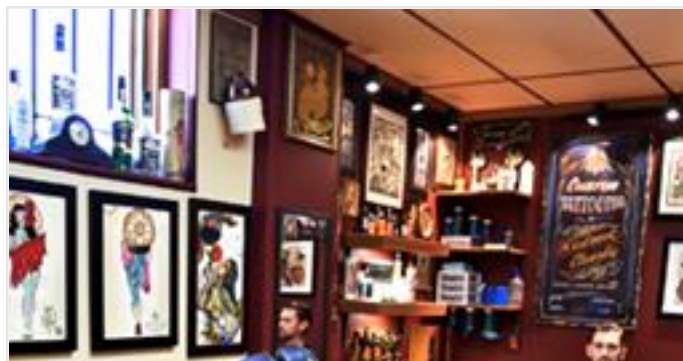
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22 hrs

[5-7-0 Tattooing Co.](#) is holding its soft opening today with a grand opening in September. Stop by to check out their new location



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