



Funky Picnic's Ultimate IPA Guide



The illustrious India Pale Ale, IPA for short, dominates the craft beer menu landscape of today. But what you may not realize is the many forms the IPA takes.

<p>English IPA</p>	<p>The original IPA was developed in the United Kingdom and was originally shipped overseas for the upper class British colonists living in India (hence the name). It was one of the few beer styles that could survive the long voyage overseas due to the preservative quality of the large amount of hops used in the beer. While it was a popular beer for the colonists to pair with the fiery Indian cuisine, it never really amounted to much volume (only 10,000 barrels per year at its height in the 1790s). It wasn't until 1820 when breweries started marketing it as beer prepared for the Indian market that it began to really take off. Compared to most other IPAs, the English IPA is going to be less bitter and have more of an earthy and floral hop characteristic due to the similar nature of the English hops used.</p>
<p>American IPA <i>(aka West Coast IPA)</i></p>	<p>More often than not, when you are in the United States and you see "IPA" on the menu, this is the IPA you will be served. This traditional American IPA really takes its roots from the craft beer movement in the 1970s, and uses aggressive American hops in beers like Sierra Nevada Pale Ale and eventually Sierra Nevada Celebration Ale. The designation of "West Coast" IPA is due to the location of most of the American hop fields around Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Northern California. Most American IPAs will have notes of citrus peel, pine, and grapefruit and will be fairly bitter. Look for hops like Amarillo, Cascade, Simcoe, and Centennial in these beers.</p>
<p>New England IPA <i>(aka Hazy IPA or East Coast IPA)</i></p>	<p>The New England IPA (NEIPA) is the antithesis of the West Coast IPA, not just in geography, but in flavor too. While this style still uses loads of hops, it focuses more on the fruit and juicy character of the hops and is significantly less bitter. Most hops are used later in the brewing process to evoke more flavors in the aroma and the finish of the beer, instead of using hops in the early stages which elevate the bitterness. Another point of differentiation is that these beers are extremely hazy in appearance from all of the hops used and sometimes the use of other adjuncts like oats and wheat. Most NEIPAs will present flavors of tropical fruit, citrus, and stone fruit. Look for hops like Citra, Mosaic, Galaxy, and Vic Secret in these beers.</p>
<p>Double IPA <i>(aka Imperial IPA)</i></p>	<p>The Double" or "Imperial" IPA mostly refers to the increased ABV and usually increased bitterness. Due to the higher alcohol strength, this style may seem less bitter due to the alcohol sweetness balancing out the hop bitterness. This style can be applied to any other kind of style of IPA, including Double Hazy IPA or an Imperial Red IPA. "</p>
<p>Triple IPA</p>	<p>Though rarely used, Triple IPA is just a continuation of the Double IPA, with an even higher ABV and bitterness.</p>
<p>Session IPA</p>	<p>The term "Session" (meaning you can have several in session without getting too tipsy) is the opposite of "Double" or "Imperial." It applies to IPA's that have a lower ABV. This can be tricky because lowering the alcohol level from a standard strength IPA can leave it harsh and astringent since it no longer has the malt and alcohol sweetness to balance it out. And these are not just Pale Ales. They have an even lower ABV level and less of a malt presence. Only the true brewmasters have this style figured out.</p>



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Milkshake IPA	Milkshake IPA's are a spin-off of the NEIPA. In addition to its cloudy appearance and high usage of tropical fruity hops, the Milkshake IPA also includes large amounts of lactose (milk sugar) to give the beer a thicker mouthfeel and sweeter presence, not unlike an actual milkshake. The style also likes to incorporate large amounts of fruit as well.
Black IPA <i>(aka Cascadian Dark Ale)</i>	This variation on the IPA includes the use of dark malts that use the bitterness of the roast to accentuate the bitterness of the hops. The name Cascadian Dark Ale is used instead of IPA due to the confusion of a Black "Pale" Ale, and refers to the region of Cascadia that includes the Pacific Northwest and parts of British Columbia.
White IPA	The White in White IPA refers to another style, the Belgian Wit, which utilizes orange peel and coriander. This IPA uses both of those spices and sometimes wheat to give it a cloudy appearance. This style pre-dates the NEIPA and may be the original Hazy IPA.
Brown IPA	The Brown IPA utilizes the hopping schedule of an American IPA, but uses a similar malt bill to the American Brown Ale. These malts provide more deep chocolate notes to the beer, but not quite the roast and bitterness of the Black IPA.
Red IPA	Just like the Brown IPA, the Red IPA utilizes a different variety of malts to give the beer a different color and flavor profile than the traditional American IPA. The amber and red colored malts typically add flavors of toffee and caramel, which tend to balance out some of the bitterness from the hops.
Rye IPA	The Rye IPA is also very similar to the other malt variations of the overall style. The spiciness of the Rye malt adds an extra bite that accentuates the overall bitterness of the beer.
Fruited IPA	As the name implies, Fruited IPAs are IPAs with a fruit presence in addition to the hops. Most fruits are used to complement similar notes from the hops, and generally include a variety of oranges, pineapple, grapefruit, mango, tangerine, and other citrus and tropical fruits.
Sour IPA	Due to the preservative quality of hops, they naturally prevent beer from getting sour, so the Sour IPA is a pretty tricky beast to tame. It is primarily achieved two ways: 1. Brew a low or no bitter beer, sour it with bacteria, and then dry hop it immensely afterwards, or 2. Blend an already sour beer with an already intensely bitter beer until you get the balance you want.
Brut IPA	The Brut IPA was an incredibly short fad just a few years ago. "Brut," a phrase taken from the wine world, means extremely dry (as in the opposite of sweet). To achieve this, you had to convert all of the complex starches in your mash to more simple sugars. You can do this by either mashing at a much lower temperature or just adding an enzyme to convert those for you. However you do it, the mostly simple sugars that are left are quickly gobbled up by the yeast, not leaving much sugar behind, and thus resulting in a drier beer. This style is also highly carbonated resembling sparkling wine in appearance.



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Belgian IPA	With a few exceptions, most Belgian beers are not known for their hops or bitterness, so this style is likely more an American interpretation, rather than a Belgian one. Using Belgian yeast strains not only creates an interesting interplay between the phenolic yeast notes and the hop flavor, but also dries out the beer, allowing the bitterness to further shine through.
Brett IPA	The “Brett” in Brett IPA, is short for <i>Brettanomyces</i> , which is typically an unwanted wild yeast strain that creates flavors, such as leather, “horse blanket,” and barnyard notes. In this case, it is very intentional. The unique flavors also create a fruitiness in the beer that harmonize with the fruity hops.
IPL <i>(aka Cold IPA)</i>	A variation on IPA where the base beer is actually a lager instead of an ale. Lagers are bottom-fermented at lower temperatures, hence the nickname “Cold” IPA, even though it still refers to it being an ale when it is not. Most of these end up being fairly close to dry hopped Pilsners and light lagers.

By the end of this list, you may feel like Bubba in *Forrest Gump* listing off all the kinds of shrimp you can cook. But since the advent of the IPA in the late 18th century (and more so since the 1970s) the variety of IPAs that you can find is staggering. At Funky Picnic, we are always trying out new styles, but we will always have at least one or two IPAs on tap, and you may just find one of these unique variations as well!

