

Westvleteren 12°

TITLE:	Westvleteren 12 Clone – Variation 014		
CATEGORY:	18E		
SPECS:	OG:	1.090	
	FG:	1.012	
	SRM:	30 +	
	IBU:	35 (Tinseth ¹)	
	VOL:	5.25 gal (7.00 gallons water mash-in, 2.0 gallons water mash-out)	

FERMENTABLES:

Weight (lbs)	Description	(Common net) Gravity/lb
8.00	Belgian Pale	1.029
7.00	Belgian Pils	1.028
3.00	D-180 Candi Syrup, Inc.	1.032

HOPS:

Description	Form	weight (oz)	a/a %	Duration (min)
Northern Brewer	Flower	1.00	9.0	60
Styrian Goldings	Pellet	1.00	4.6	21
Hallertau Mittelfruh	Pellet	1.00	4.4	7

YEAST:

WY3787 – 2000ml stir-plate starter.

OTHER:

1 cap Servomyces

MASH:

Mash	Temp	Duration
Protein rest	122F	25 minutes
Rapid-Boil Decoction	158F	90 minutes
Mash-out (2.0 gallons)	165F	10 minutes

NARRATIVE:

The OG presumes an 80% BHE. 60 minute boil. Chill to 65F. Oxygenate for 60 seconds (O_2 can be an advanced technique to increase ester production). Pitch yeast. Let rise to 82F up to and just beyond high krausen (3 days). Let temp fall gradually and maintain at 67F over the next 5 days. Rack to secondary when gravity reaches 1.012 and "lager" at 51F for 10 weeks. Using heavy Belgian bottles or Champagne bottles, prime with a 500ml stir-plate re-pitch WLP530 and SIMPLICITY at a rate of 30 - 31g/gallon. Cellar for 6 months.

¹ The Tinseth algorithm has given us more accurate results for pellets.

NOTES:

A note on decoction:

We have noticed a subtle flavor profile similar to toasted leather/brown sugar in genuine Westvleteren 12°. We theorized this was coming from a slight maltose caramelization in the boil or during decoction. Having eliminated the boil as the source we experimented with decoction. In earlier attempts we decocted in multiple steps and a single step without achieving this back-palate flavor. We finally tried a rapid, high temp decoction that browned some of the grain (without burning). This method did in fact add to this part of the complex Westvleteren 12° flavor profile.

A note on sugars:

This Westvleteren 12° recipe was responsible in part for the genesis of Candi Syrup, Inc. A small group of uncompromising brewers very serious about brewing a near perfect Westy quad became disillusioned by the lack of a truly exceptional sugar adjunct. The import syrups available here in the US were demonstrably not able to produce the color or complex flavors for this exceptional ale. In response we produced a syrup that was exceedingly rich in the dark fruit, plum, and chocolate flavors needed to achieve the quality of a new class of Westvleteren 12° clone. Our D-180 and D-90 used together with Abbey Westmalle yeast produced an ale well worth the meticulous effort required to brew it. BJCP 1st place awards and Best of Show wins using our syrups for this recipe validate these efforts.

A note on fermentation:

Pitching volume and controlled fermentation temperature is essential to the complex flavor outcome of this ale. This is an all grain complex recipe. Decoction, pitch rate, temperatures, fermentation durations, and clarifying stage within a fresh grain bill and high quality premium sugars are all essential to brewing the finest ale in the world. When the recipe calls for a primary fermentation temp up to 82F then down to 67F for 7 days then a secondary at 50-51F for 10 weeks it is essential. The fermentation roadmap is only a guideline but it is essential to producing rich pear and dark plum esters.

A note on "lagering"

Although the 10 week temperature crash isn't true "lagering" it does assists in the creation a meld of flavors. The affect is such that it transforms this ale into a plum-pear-bready-malty-toasted miracle of complex flavors. The 8-10 week clarifying stage done by the brothers at St. Sixtus is important to both flavor and clarity.

A note on priming

We re-pitch with top harvested krausen collected from another primary fermentation. We use 1/2 cup of krausen (or alternatively a 500ml stir-plate starter) along with 30-31g/gallon of SIMPLICITY Candi Syrup.

A note on bottle conditioning

Six months is a minimum duration for flavor development. One year or longer is best for peak flavor. Store at cellar temps 55F.