

The Hop Glossary

*There's a column in all of our price lists under the heading: "Brief Description." It's the section where we get to tell you a little bit about every beer we offer, in order to better inform your buying decisions. Here's the problem: the "brief" part of the column header is all too true. We have exactly **30 characters** to express our love for every beer we sell, and that simply isn't enough to paint the full picture. That's not even a quarter tweet!*

To get as much information into this little string of letters that we can, we sometimes rely on beer world jargon, which can be a bit confusing. Just the other day, I wrote this description: "w/Cascade & Exp. 05256 hops." Yikes. "Experimental #05256" sounds like it belongs in a laboratory, not a pint glass. But these little shortcuts can be useful. Key words like hop variety names offer an easy way to pack a lot of info into just a few letters (05256, for example, is said to taste a bit like pine and black currants with a touch of citrus—good luck fitting that into 30 characters!). The downside is that these names can be a bit cryptic if you don't have experience tasting beers made with these hops. To help demystify things a bit, I've put together a collection of descriptions for some of the hop varieties you're likely to encounter in hop-forward beers from around the world. This list covers just a handful of the 100+ hop varieties out there, but it's a good start:

American Hop Varieties

- *Amarillo*: Orange citrus-fruits abound. Tangeriney goodness.
- *Cascade*: The driving force behind the original hoppy American beer styles. A floral and grapefruity delight.
- *Centennial*: Shares many characteristics with Cascade, but is slightly more floral.
- *Chinook*: The most intensely pine-like hop out there. Maybe a bit of black pepper in there as well.
- *Citra*: Peachy, passion fruit-like and tropical, with some noticeably orange-like flavors to boot.
- *CTZ* (aka Columbus, Tomahawk, or Zeus. "CTZ" is used to cover these three interchangeable hop varieties): Pungent, dank stuff. Wet dirt, green herbs, and marijuana.
- *El Dorado*: A new hop variety said to taste like peach, apricots, pear, and melon candies.
- *"Experimental #xxxxx"*: Hops occasionally find their way into commercial beers before they are given a name and wide distribution. These are commonly labeled with a number preceded by the word "Experimental." There aren't necessarily any unifying characteristics across these hops, but many of the most buzzed-about are exceptionally fruity, dense, and aromatic.
- *Mosaic*: Incredibly juicy and tropical in flavor. Passion fruit, guava, peaches, berries.
- *Simcoe*: Woodsy, musky, grapefruity.
- *Summit*: A distinctively savory hop variety. Spicy and sorta citrusy, with sweet onion and garlicky aromatics.

Australian & New Zealander Hops

- *Galaxy*: A hugely flavorful citrus and passion fruit bomb from Australia.
- *Motueka*: A newly popular hop with flavors akin to lemon, lime, and tropical fruit.
- *Nelson Sauvin*: So named for its similarity in flavor to New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc. Passion fruit, lychee, melon.

British Hops

- *Challenger*: Marmalade-like in its citrusy flavor.
- *Fuggle*: Woodsy and earthy, with a slightly herbal character.
- *East Kent Golding*: Spicy and floral, with a soft sweetness.

Continental European Hops

- *Saaz*: Earthy, peppery, and grassy. Especially common in pilsners. One of the “noble hops” along with Hallertau Mittelfrüh, Tettnang, and Spalt.
- *Hallertau Mittelfrüh*: Soft, spicy, and floral. Often in the background of your favorite German lagers.
- *Hüll Melon*: A new hop bred in Hüll, Germany from American Cascade hops. Very fruity, with aromatics likened to strawberry and melon. A sign of things to come in European hops?

Japanese Hops

- *Sorachi Ace*: An unusual hop with a flavor often compared to lemons, lemongrass, and dill.