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Across the globe, the growth of artisanal brewing methods – watched over by experts who demand a flavourful, well-served pint – means beer is being taken seriously, and starting to rival wine as a rewarding complement to good food. 全球各地的啤酒專家，各出奇謀，釀製各具特色而味道出眾的手工啤酒，使手工啤酒有力與葡萄酒一爭長短，成為各種佳餚的最佳配搭。 **By Robin Lynam**

The brews brothers

啤酒新氣象

Beer and wine have been enjoyed since Neolithic times, but while equally venerable, they have seldom been accorded equal status. Over time, a culture of connoisseurship grew up around wine, but beer has functioned primarily as a thirst quencher with a kick, though there has traditionally been a greater seriousness about brewing in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany and the British Isles.

Among those countries, only Germany is historically an important producer of high-quality wine, but artisanal production of beer in diverse styles has been able to thrive in all of them in modern times, despite a general drift towards increasingly anonymous and mass-produced suds made by large multinational brewing groups.

In the United States, until quite recently the giants of the industry had the market almost to themselves. Much has changed. Although big players such as Anheuser-Busch InBev (the world's largest brewer) and Molson Coors remain dominant, since the 1980s the craft-beer sector has grown exponentially, generating a proliferation of American microbreweries, craft breweries and brewpubs where beer is brewed on the premises. Their success has inspired an international trend towards smaller-scale production of beers aimed at discerning and individualistically minded drinkers.

Seriousness about beer service has increased in parallel with the popularity of craft beer, which a significant number of people are now choosing as a partner for food. Restaurants are coming under pressure to offer expanded beer lists and to upgrade to appropriate glassware. And “beer sommeliers” are advising diners on what to choose.

While not all of them are qualified for that role, formal accreditation as a beer expert can be achieved through the Master Cicerone Certification Program, which is now widely recognised as the beer world's equivalent to

關於飲用啤酒和葡萄酒的記載最早見於新石器時代，只是二者雖然有同樣悠久的歷史，卻沒有同等的地位。當品嚐葡萄酒已形成一股鑑賞文化，啤酒卻仍然只是人們拿來解渴的刺激飲品。不過也有地方例外，比利時、捷克、德國和不列顛諸島一直以來對啤酒釀製的態度都相當認真。

上述地方（包括傳統上也是優質葡萄酒重要產地的德國）所產出的手工啤酒各具特色，向來深受現代的啤酒愛好者歡迎。不過，這些地方的市場卻慢慢有被大型跨國釀酒廠大量出品的毫無個性的啤酒佔之勢。

美國的情況卻有點不同，大型釀酒廠一直壟斷市場，直到近年才出現轉變。雖然業界龍頭如世界最大釀酒廠Anheuser-Busch InBev和Molson Coors仍然主導市場，但自1980年代開始，美國手工啤酒業迅速發展，小型釀酒廠、手工啤酒廠和自行在現場釀製啤酒的啤酒吧如雨後春筍般湧現。這些啤酒廠的成功，在全球掀起小型啤酒廠的風潮，迎合那些講究品味和個人風格的飲家。

隨著手工啤酒越來越受歡迎，許多顧客會把啤酒當作佐餐之選，有關啤酒的服務也越見重要。換言之，餐廳的啤酒選擇會隨之增加，對啤酒杯的要求亦相應地提升，為客人進餐點酒提供意見的「啤酒侍酒師」也應運而生。

現時部分啤酒侍酒師並未達到應有的水平，但坊間已發展了一套認證系統，有意成為認可啤酒專家的人可參加啤酒鑑賞大師證書課程Master Cicerone Certification Program的考試。該課程以guide（指導）的古字cicerone命名，在啤酒業界的地位相當於葡萄酒業內由侍酒師大師協會頒發的葡萄酒侍酒師資格。

the wine-service qualifications issued by the Court of Master Sommeliers. The name Cicerone derives from an archaic word for “guide”, and Ray Daniels, founder and director of the Cicerone Certification Program, gives a very straightforward reason for his decision to establish it.

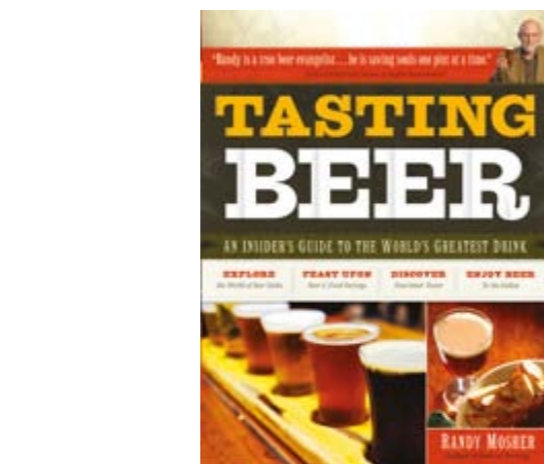
“Bad beer!” he declares. “As a long-time beer lover and an increasingly educated beer-industry member, I recognised that beer was often being mishandled and ruined by people in the business. Also, I regularly encountered servers and bartenders who didn’t know anything about the beers they were serving, or, at times, anything about beer at all. I felt there was a huge need to raise the level of knowledge about beer and its service for everyone who worked with beer, from the brewery to the server. I devised the Cicerone Certification Program with an eye toward encouraging and rewarding people for improving their professional knowledge.”

The idea took a while to catch on. Daniels launched his programme in January 2008, and made slow but steady progress towards general acceptance over its first two years. Then applications to take the course and exams started to flood in. More than 85,000 certificates have now been issued at four levels of competence. Certified Beer Server is a “first-level certification for those who work with beer”; Certified Cicerone is a “certification for professionals dedicated to beer”; Advanced Cicerone a “designation of distinctive expertise and tasting skill”; and Master Cicerone is described as the “ultimate test of beer expertise”.

The programme is designed for professionals, but the first tier in particular also appeals to enthusiasts keen to improve their understanding of a complex subject. Those at the second tier or above, Daniels says, generally have a professional reason for taking the demanding exams. He is not a believer in rubber-stamping. “The whole point of having a certification is for it to have meaning,” he says, “so we have been careful to maintain our standards for the exams over the years.”

Only 13 people have attained Master Cicerone certification so far (10 from the US, one from Canada and two from the United Kingdom), but closer to home, 41 people on the Chinese mainland and 57 in Hong Kong are listed as having qualified as either a Certified Beer Server or a Certified Cicerone. “I’d say we are pretty internationally diverse,” says Daniels. “We have just launched our first full translation of the programme, into Spanish, and we have some other offerings in the works, including plans to do something in Asia.”

One of the textbooks to which aspiring Cicerones are directed is Tasting Beer by Chicago-based brewer and educator Randy Mosher. He believes that beer is at least as versatile a partner for food as wine, and singles out pairing with cheese as an area in which it is superior. It’s a point on which Daniels concurs. “Because of its astounding variety,” Mosher insists, “there is a beer for almost any conceivable food choice.”



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由於啤酒種類繁多，任何可以想像得到的食物都可以找到與之匹配的啤酒

– Randy Mosher

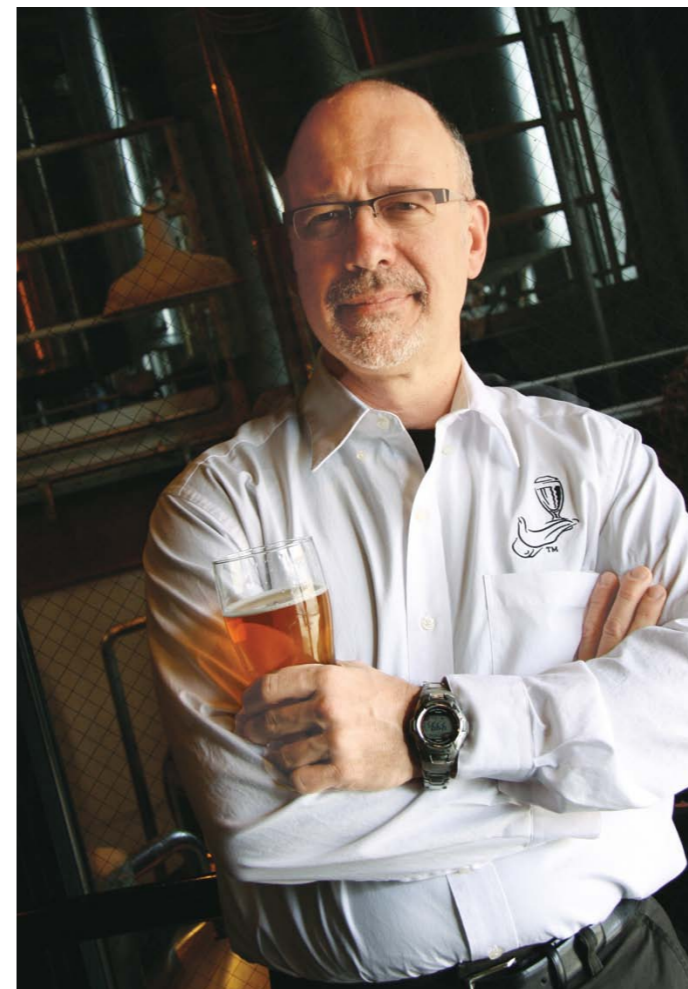
創辦人兼總裁Ray Daniels對於創辦課程的原因直言不諱：「作為多年的啤酒愛好者和資深的業內人員，我發現難以入口的啤酒，常常是行內人錯誤處理啤酒所造成。我也常遇到對所供應的啤酒甚至任何啤酒都一無所知的侍者和調酒師，因此覺得有需要提升業界從業員（包括釀酒師以至侍者等）的啤酒知識和倒酒技巧。設立啤酒鑑賞大師證書課程，就是要鼓勵並獎勵肯花工夫增進啤酒專業知識的人。」

課程剛剛開始的時候有點慢熱。Daniels於2008年1月推出這個課程，頭兩年進展相當緩慢，然後才為大家所接受，報讀課程和應試的人數一下子急升。課程共分為四個級別，現已合共頒發逾85,000張證書。啤酒侍酒師證書是「啤酒從業員的入門認證」；啤酒鑑賞師證書頒給「對啤酒抱有熱忱的專業從業員」；高級啤酒鑑賞師則是「對啤酒有獨到專業知識和品鑑能力的肯定」；至於啤酒鑑賞大師則代表「擁有終極的啤酒專業知識」。

這個課程雖然為業界從業員而設，但初階課程也深受想要增進知識、了解這個複雜課題的啤酒愛好者歡迎。不過第二階段或以上課程的學員，都是因應職業需要而參加這些要求極嚴格的考試。Daniels解釋，他個人並不喜歡橡皮圖章式的考核機構，「證書必須有其實際意義，因此我們多年來都謹慎地維持考試的水平。」

課程推出至今只有13人獲得啤酒鑑賞大師的資格，其中十人來自美國，一人來自加拿大，兩人來自英國。至於在中國內地和香港，則分別有41人和57人考獲啤酒侍酒師或啤酒鑑賞師的資格。Daniels表示：「學員來自世界各地，我們剛剛亦將課程全部內容翻譯成西班牙文。另外也收到其他地方的邀請，包括到亞洲區發展。」

證書課程的教科書之一《Tasting Beer》（品味啤酒）由芝加哥釀酒專家兼教育家Randy Mosher撰寫，作者相信，啤酒與食物的多元配搭，至少可以媲美葡萄酒，更直指啤酒配芝士簡直無與倫比；這一點Daniels也表示贊成。Mosher還強調：「由於啤酒種類繁多，任何可以想像得到的食物都可以找到與之匹配的啤酒。」



RANDY MOSHER PORTRAIT BY JONATHAN LEVIN; RAY DANIELS PORTRAIT BY MATT TAPLINGER

「我們以印度淡啤酒（IPA）配藍芝士，讓啤酒的苦味及汽水消除脂肪的油膩感，而啤酒花的草青特質跟青霉菌則配合得天衣無縫。含果仁味、產自巴斯克地區的綿羊芝士如P’tit Basque或Ossau-Iraty，配合略帶焙烤風味的棕色艾爾啤酒，不只能令果仁的味道更為突出，如果烘烤味道夠濃的話，甚至會讓人誤以為在吃烘過的芝士三文治。如果想進一步提升這方面的味覺享受，可以波特啤酒配瑞士格呂耶爾硬芝士，或司陶特黑啤配頂級帕瑪森芝士同級但更香甜溫和的意大利Piave芝士，甚至嚐嚐帝國司陶特啤酒，配搭焦香濃郁、質感像肉、發酵三年的荷蘭高達芝士。至於德國巴伐利亞的小麥啤酒配新鮮軟滑的意大利布拉塔水牛芝士，則完全是另一種風味，會讓人產生吃水蜜桃忌廉雪糕的錯覺。」

居於三藩市的Rich Higgins是13位認可的啤酒鑑賞大師之一，又是釀酒師兼認可侍酒師，他認為用啤酒配合食材的濃淡味道最重要。Higgins解釋：「如果吃清淡的雜菜沙律或手握壽司，卻飲用酒精濃度高、味甜渾厚的大麥啤酒，啤酒的味道會蓋過菜餚的鮮味。同樣，肥膩味濃的香燒五花腩或臭豆腐也會蓋過清新怡人的皮爾森啤酒，也就無法嚐到啤酒的麵包香和草本味道。」

「最理想是將相輔相成的味道放在一起。如果啤酒和菜餚同時都有某種味道，就能突顯該味道，效果會相得益彰。舉例說，含烘烤香和果仁味的琥珀色艾爾啤酒和棕色艾爾啤酒，適宜配合散發焦香的烤肉及炒香菇和時蔬，如港式燒鵝瀨粉與英式琥珀色艾爾啤酒的配搭就堪稱完美。同樣道理，色澤光亮、味帶檸檬和胡椒香的比利時塞松啤酒，最宜配合帶柑橘和胡椒香味的菜餚如酥炸海鮮、椒鹽鮮魷及炸雞伴七味粉和柚子汁等。」

要做到上述的完美配搭，酒吧和餐廳需要配備不同種類的啤酒存貨，因此要設計出一張平衡各種需要的啤酒清單，就相當考工夫。啤酒專家Mosher說：「負責設計啤酒清單的人，有責任確保不論怎樣的搭配，客人都可以嚐到最優質的啤酒。」

Opposite: Tasting Beer by Randy Mosher
This page, clockwise from left: Ray Daniels; the Young Master brewery in Hong Kong; Randy Mosher

對頁：Randy Mosher的啤酒天書《Tasting Beer》（品味啤酒）
本頁左圖起順時針：Ray Daniels；香港少爺啤酒廠；Randy Mosher





create more of a good thing. For example, the toasty, nutty flavours of amber and brown ales are delicious with the Maillard-browning flavours of roasted meats and pan-fried mushrooms and vegetables. Hong Kong-style roast goose noodle soup is perfect with an English-style amber ale. For the same complementary reasons, the bright, lemony, peppery flavours of Belgian-style saisons are delicious with citrusy, peppery dishes like fritto misto, chicken karaage with togarashi and a yuzu dipping sauce, and salt-and-pepper squid.”

For those sorts of pairings to be possible, bars and restaurants obviously need to stock a greater range of beers, and are addressing the challenges of arriving at a well-balanced list. “The person behind the beer list does have an obligation to be a thoughtful gatekeeper of quality for his or her customers, whatever the mix,” says Mosher. “That’s what keeps people coming back.

“The beer scene, at least in the US, is so complicated that one almost has to rely on the help of others, and the publicans are there on the frontlines. Obviously, some variety – of gravity, alcoholic strength, colour, hoppiness, mouth feel, stylistic origin – are things to consider, but there are some very successful beer bars that will have no part in that kind of even-handedness. Personally, I love the variety, and am sure that is a primary reason we created craft beer after a century in the wilderness.”

Higgins also stresses the importance of keeping up with trends in craft beer, among which he singles out bitter, aromatic, hop-forward IPAs, Belgian style sour beers (including some aged for years in oak casks), beers with fruit added for complexity, including grapefruit and mango, and traditional-style pilsners brewed with German and Czech hops that add herbal, peppery, grassy bitterness.

Craft beers from all over the world can now be found thousands of miles from where they were brewed, but Higgins (who visited Hong Kong in 2016 to participate in a promotional event at Landmark, called Appreciate the Craft) also points out that quality craft beers are brewed locally in many locations, and says he was impressed by those from Hong Kong breweries Black Kite, Gweilo, Hong Kong Beer Co, Tipping Point and Young Master.

“At its best, beer is a simple pleasure for the consumer, and the job of beer service should be to keep it that way,” says Daniels. “But putting a beautiful, properly poured and good-tasting beer in front of the consumer means that a lot of things have to be done correctly. As a result, the people who work with beer need to know a lot in order to get it right. When everything goes well, the consumer never realises how hard everyone is working to deliver that simple pleasure.”

RICH HIGGINS PORTRAIT BY MARK OLMIER LE BLANC

Opposite, clockwise from top left: A selection of Hong Kong’s Young Master craft brews on tap; beer complements cheese beautifully; students mastering the art of beer pouring as part of the Cicerone Certification Program
This page: Master Cicerone Rich Higgins

對頁左上圖起順時針：不同味道的香港少爺啤酒；啤酒與芝士的漂亮配搭；啤酒鑑賞證書課程學生學習倒酒技巧
本頁：啤酒鑑賞大師 Rich Higgins



“Incorporating complementary flavours can be delicious. You can amplify certain flavours if they’re present in both the dish and the beer, and create more of a good thing
最好是將相輔相成的味道放在一起。如果啤酒和菜餚同時都有某種味道，就能突顯該味道，效果會相得益彰”

– Rich Higgins

「市面上的啤酒種類多而複雜，至少在美國就複雜得要專家把關，而酒館老闆就站在最前線。品評啤酒通常要考慮濃度、酒精強度、色澤、啤酒花苦味、口感、原本風格等元素，但也有成功的啤酒酒吧對啤酒的多樣化不感興趣。我個人喜歡這些變化，也肯定這是手工啤酒經過一個世紀的沉寂後再次興起的主因。」

Higgins強調要緊貼手工啤酒的趨勢，他特別指出要留意以下幾款啤酒：味苦帶香及以啤酒花主導的IPA啤酒，比利時的酸啤酒（包括在木桶陳年的）、添加水果如葡萄柚、芒果等令味道更豐富的啤酒，以及採用德國和捷克啤酒花釀造及帶有草本、胡椒和草澀味的傳統皮爾森啤酒。

他亦指出，雖然現時手工啤酒已行銷全球各地，但其實許多地方都有自己出產的優質本地手工啤酒。Higgins曾於2016年到香港參加置地廣場舉辦的推廣活動 Appreciate The Craft，並對香港的黑鷹、鬼佬啤酒、香港啤酒、Tipping Point及少爺等釀製的手工啤酒留下深刻印象。

Daniels表示：「啤酒對顧客來說是輕鬆享受，啤酒的侍酒服務也應該保持簡單輕鬆。不過，如何才能在顧客面前優美地、恰當地把美味的啤酒倒進酒杯中，背後確實包涵許多學問，啤酒從業員需要掌握更多知識方能把工作做好。如果一切都能進行得恰如其分，顧客根本不會察覺，這種簡簡單單的享受背後，原來是許多人共同努力的結果。」



“We use blue cheese and IPA as a demonstration of how the bitterness and carbonation can deal with the fatty richness, while the herbal nature of hops seems to link to the blue mould. With nutty cheeses, such as Basque sheep cheese like P’tit Basque or Ossau-Iraty, a slightly toasty brown ale reinforces the nuttiness nicely, and if there is enough toastiness can recreate the impression of a grilled cheese sandwich without resorting to actual toasted bread. And you can scale this up, through porter and Gruyère to stout and Piave, which is similar to Parmigiano but sweeter and less pungent, and finally to an imperial stout paired with a three-year Gouda with all its caramel-ly, meaty richness. At the other extreme, a fresh burrata paired with Bavarian hefeweizen conjures up a flavour image of peaches-and-cream ice cream.”

An important consideration, in the opinion of San Francisco-based Rich Higgins (one of the 13 Master Cicerones, a brewer and also a certified sommelier) is matching the intensity of food to beer. “If you pair

a delicate dish like a green salad or tai nigiri with a rich, sweet, boozy beer like a barley wine, the barley wine will run over the dish and you will only be able to taste the beer,” he says. “Conversely, intense lacquered pork belly or chao tofu will overpower a delicate beer like a pilsner. You won’t be able to taste the beer’s delicate breadly and herbal notes.

“Incorporating complementary flavours can be delicious. You can amplify certain flavours if they’re present in both the dish and the beer, and