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beer

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BABY, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE! SLIP INTO THIS SEASON'S COZIEST APRÈS-SKI THREADS

WINTER BARLEYWINES

Go big or go home. That's the motto with most barleywines, which have little, if anything to do with wine, other than their high alcohol content. With most barleywines weighing in between 10 to 13 percent ABV, these equally hoppy and malty beers are best enjoyed a little at a time, or with friends. They have also been proven to stand the test of time, so if you receive a barleywine as a gift, don't be afraid to stick it in your cellar for a few years.

JOHN BARLEYCORN BARLEYWINE //

Mad River Brewing, CA, 9.5% ABV

Perfect for / watching holiday movies

Pairs with / a fine cigar

True to style, this traditional barleywine pours a reddish-brown with evident alcohol aromas. The medium-bodied, surprisingly (but not offensively) creamy ale has notes of brown sugar and vanilla with well-crafted sweet flavors, finishing medium-dry.

STORMWATCHER'S WINTERFEST 2010 //

Pelican Brewing, OR, 13% ABV

Perfect for / a stormy night, of course

Pairs with / date pudding

The ideal complement to wet, windy, and cold Northwest winter weather, this beer is best in small doses and ages well. Big toasty aromas and flavors are balanced by hints of caramel and toffee. The beer finishes smooth but with a distinct warming effect.

ABACUS //

Firestone Walker Brewing, CA, 13% ABV

Perfect for / a post-dinner treat

Pairs with / Maytag Blue Cheese

Dangerously easy-drinking for a high-alcohol beer, Abacus is definitely a sipping beer and best savored in a snifter glass. Barrel-aged, Abacus has hints of bourbon and oak, giving way to rich, chocolatey undertones.

BARLEY WINE ALE //

Alaskan Brewing, AK, 10.4% ABV

Perfect for / drinking in the snow

Pairs with / meaty stew

This award-winning barleywine has a loyal Alaskan following for good reason. The dark amber-hued ale is a combination of rich, malty sweetness complemented by a healthy dose of hops in the boil and dry-hop additions during fermentation.

DOGGIE CLAWS //

Hair of the Dog Brewing, OR, 11.5% ABV

Perfect for / a holiday party host gift

Pairs with / Theo Ultimate Dark Chocolate

Bold and assertive, this classic American-style barleywine is released in November every year, and is recommended for aging. Heavily hopped, this barleywine's bitterness is well-balanced by the malts, and gives off notes of cinnamon, molasses, and caramel.

OLD FOGHORN //

Anchor Brewing, CA, 8.2% ABV

Perfect for / playing chess

Pairs with / beef bourguignon

Based on traditional English barleywines, Old Foghorn was first produced in 1975 and continues to be a perennial favorite among beer lovers. Foghorn is slightly lighter than other barleywines, and the effervescence helps cleanse the palate between sips.

