



USACM Cider Style Guidelines

Version 2.0 - Fall 2018





USACM Cider Style Guidelines Version 2.0 - Winter 2018

STANDARD STYLES

Modern Ciders are made primarily from culinary/table apples. Compared to other Standard styles, these ciders are generally lower in tannins, higher in acidity, and their flavor is bright and refreshing.

Aroma/Flavor- Sweet or low-alcohol ciders may have an apple aroma and flavor. Dry ciders will be more wine-like with some esters. Sugar and acidity will typically combine to give a refreshing character. Acidity is medium to high—refreshing, but must not be harsh or biting.

Appearance- Typically pale to yellow in color. Ranges from brilliant to hazy, depending on the cider maker's intention.

Varieties- Commonly grown varieties such as McIntosh, Golden Delicious, Jonagold, Granny Smith, Gala and Fuji are often found in Modern Ciders.

Heritage Ciders are made primarily from the fresh juice of multi-use or cider-specific bittersweet/bittersharp apples and heirloom varieties; wild or crab apples are sometimes used for acidity/tannin balance. These ciders will generally be higher in tannins and more complex than Modern Ciders. This style encompasses those produced in the West Country of England (notably Somerset and Herefordshire), Northern France (notably Normandy and Brittany), Northern Spain (notably Basque and Asturias regions), and Germany (notably the state of Hesse around the the city of Frankfurt), as well as regional American ciders and others in which cider-specific apple varieties and production techniques are used.

Aroma/Flavor- Complexity derived from the cider maker's selection of apples and production techniques. Common attributes include increased astringency, bitterness and complex aromatics.

Appearance- Typically yellow to amber in color. Ranges from brilliant to hazy, depending on the cider maker's intention.

Varieties- Commonly used varieties include Dabinett (bittersweet), Kingston Black (bittersharp), Roxbury Russet (American heirloom) and Wickson (crab).

Modern Perries (singular, perry) are made from culinary/table pears. Compared to Heritage Perry, Modern Perry is generally lower in tannins.

Aroma/Flavor- There is a pear character, but not obviously fruity. No bitterness. Ranges from dry to sweet.

Appearance- Slightly cloudy to clear. Generally pale in color.

Varieties- Common varieties include Bartlett, Comice, Bosc and Anjou.

Heritage Perries are made from pear varieties grown specifically for perry production. Compared to Modern Perry, Heritage Perry is generally more complex and higher in tannins.

Aroma/Flavor- There is a pear character, but not obviously fruity. May have slight bitterness. Ranges from dry to sweet depending on varieties used.

Appearance- Slightly cloudy to clear. Generally pale in color.

Varieties- Examples include Gin, Brandy, Barland, Blakeney Red, Thorn, and Moorcroft.



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Fruit Ciders are ciders with non-pome fruits or fruits/fruit juices added either before or after fermentation.

Aroma/Flavor- The added fruit will be prevalent in the overall flavor and aroma.

Appearance- The added fruit will typically influence color and clarity.

Varieties- Apple varieties not specified, often dessert/culinary varieties are used. Examples of fruit additions include cherry, cranberry, blueberry, and peach.

Hopped Ciders are simply ciders with added hops.

Aroma/Flavor- The intensity of hop aroma, flavor and bitterness will be determined by hop variety and production process used.

Appearance- Ranges from brilliant to hazy, depending on the cider maker's intention.

Varieties- Apple varieties not specified; often dessert/culinary varieties are used. Examples of commonly used hops include Citra, Cascade, Galaxy, and Mosaic.

Botanical Ciders are ciders made with any combination of herbs, nectars and leaves (including tea) added either before or after fermentation.

Aroma/Flavor- The added ingredient(s) will be prevalent in the overall flavor and aroma.

Appearance- The added ingredients may influence color and clarity.

Varieties- Apple varieties not specified, often dessert/culinary varieties.

Rosé Ciders: There are two sub-styles of rosé cider, both of which have a pinkish hue. Heritage Rosé Cider is made with heritage cider apples, including red-fleshed varieties. Modern Rosé Cider is made with culinary apples and most often added adjuncts. A cider may be pinkish in color and the cider maker may choose not to use the Rosé Cider nomenclature, but all Rosé Ciders are pinkish in color.

Heritage Rosé Ciders are pink-hued ciders made with heritage cider apples, including red-fleshed varieties, without additional adjunct flavors or colors.

Aroma/Flavor- These ciders will have increased complexity derived from the cider maker's selection of apples, including red-fleshed varieties, and production techniques.

Can range from dry to sweet. Common attributes include increased astringency, bitterness and complex aromatics. Many red-fleshed apple varieties can possess flavor notes of other red-fleshed fruits including berries, watermelon, and cranberries.

Appearance- Various pink hues possible including pale blush, rose gold, pale orange, and copper.

Varieties- Niedzwetzkyana, Geneva Crab, Redfield, Hidden Rose® are examples of red-fleshed varieties used in heritage rosé cider.



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Modern Rosé Ciders are pink in color and are often made with culinary apples and added adjuncts. These ciders would typically fall under one of the other specialty categories (such as Fruit or Botanical), but are often instead marketed as Rosé because of their pink hue.

Aroma/Flavor- Can range from dry to sweet. Typically higher in acid and lacking bitterness. Some adjuncts may add slight tannins (e.g. hibiscus tea, currants). The added ingredient(s) will be prevalent in the overall flavor and aroma.

Appearance- Can range from pale pink to hot pink depending on the adjuncts used to add flavor and color.

Varieties- Modern Rosés are most often made with a Modern Cider base and apple varieties are not specified.

Spiced Ciders are ciders made with any combination of spices or spicy vegetables added either before or after fermentation.

Aroma/Flavor- The added ingredient(s) will be prevalent in the overall flavor and aroma.

Appearance- The added spice may influence color and clarity.

Varieties- Apple varieties not specified. Often dessert/culinary varieties used. Examples of additions include ginger, cinnamon, habanero.

Wood-Aged Ciders are ciders in which the wood and/or barrel character is a notable part of the overall flavor profile.

Aroma/Flavor- There is a wide continuum of intensity of flavor based on the wood to cider ratio used and the previous use of the wood.

Appearance- Color may be influenced by the wood/barrel character and time in contact with the wood.

Varieties- Apple varieties not specified.

Sour Ciders are made intentionally sour using non-standard yeasts and bacterial fermentation.

Aroma/Flavor- A sour cider will typically have relatively high levels of a variety of acids not normally present in apples. Predominant among them are acetic and lactic acids.

Appearance- A sour cider is usually an unfiltered cider that is naturally conditioned, so they range from clear to cloudy in appearance.

Varieties- Apple varieties not specified; botanicals and other fruit are commonly added.



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Ice Ciders are made by concentrating apple juice before fermentation, either by freezing the fruit before pressing, or by freezing juice and then drawing off the sugar and acid-rich concentrate as it thaws. Ice Cider can be made using artificial refrigeration, although only those ciders made by natural freezing outdoors may be labeled 'Ice Cider' per the TTB (it is the only TTB-regulated cider style name). Typically, the fermentation is stopped or is arrested before the cider reaches dryness to retain a significant amount of residual sugar.

Aroma / Flavor- Intensely flavored, with pome fruit and tropical fruit flavors and aromas prevalent. There must be enough acidity to prevent the flavor from being cloying.. Mouthfeel is smooth and full bodied. May be very slightly tannic (astringent and/or bitter).

Appearance- Brilliant. Color is deeper than a Standard cider, from gold to dark amber. High viscosity.

Varieties- Apple varieties not specified.

New England Style Cider are made by chaptalization with additional sugars and typically fermented to an alcohol range of 7 to 13% by volume. Under some circumstances they are labeled as Apple Wine per TTB regulations. Raisins are commonly added. These ciders are still or carbonated and often barrel-aged. It is thought that this style of cider was produced in Colonial America.

Aroma/Flavor- The added sugars and raisins will be prevalent in the overall flavor. The addition of raisins may add tannins. Notes of caramel, spices and barrel impressions can exist.

Appearance- The added sugars and raisins may influence color and clarity. May range from dark honey to deep amber.

Variety- Apple varieties not specified.

Specialty Cider and Perry is an open-ended category for cider or perry with added ingredients or special processes that do not fit an existing category. Aroma/Flavor, appearance and varieties may vary widely.



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Addendum

These cider style guidelines were designed to build a foundation for the lexicon we use to discuss cider. We hope they will be helpful for journalists, consumers, retailers, servers, cider makers and more. This is a living, growing document. Cider is a diverse, complex beverage, and additional definitions will be added with time to reflect this. For now, with the consumer in mind, we release these guidelines to begin unifying the language we use to converse about cider. This guide builds on the pioneering work of GLINT-CAP and BJCP to define cider styles. We recognize and appreciate their efforts.

Version 1.0 adopted by the USACM Board of Directors in September 2017.

Version 2.0 adopted by the USACM Board of Director in October 2018.