

BETTER TRAINING, BETTER BUSINESS:

Choosing the Right
WSET Level for Impact

Mirella Amato & Natalya Watson

04.21.2026



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!

Provided the beers for:

1. This seminar

2. WSET Hospitality Lounge

WSET Hospitality Lounge #11

10am – 4:45pm

SENSORY ACTIVITY

3. Tasting activity

Ultimate Palate Challenge

11am & 1pm



Mirella Amato

Senior Business Development Manager - Beer

Master Cicerone®

Beer & Cider Academy Sommelier (Guild of Beer Sommeliers)

Doemens Biersommelier

WSET Level 2 Beer

Grand Master BJCP Judge

Author of the award-winning book, Beerology: Everything You
Need to Know to Enjoy Beer...Even More - now available in
French and German

Creator of the online course: Mastering Beer & Food Pairing
brought to you by Beerology

With WSET full-time since January 2022



Natalya Watson

Business Development Manager - Beer

Joined WSET in September 2023

Former UK Marketing Manager for Duvel Moortgat

Author of *Beer: Taste the Evolution in 50 Styles*

Background in beer education

- IBD Beer Sommelier

- Advanced Cicerone

- Founder of Virtual Beer School

- WSET Level 2 Award in Beer

- WSET Certified Educator



WHAT WE'LL COVER

Who is WSET?

The benefits of training

How to train your team

- WSET beer qualifications
 - Our unique approach to education
 - Course sneak peak: Tasting activity
-

Questions?



QUALITY DRINKS TRAINING

WSET is the world's leading provider of drinks qualifications in wine, spirits, sake and beer.

Our courses are designed to inspire and empower anyone looking to develop their drinks knowledge and expertise.

With progressive levels of study offered through an extensive network of course providers, WSET qualifications are globally recognised as the international standard in drinks training.



WSET AT A GLANCE

125k+

Candidates
annually

700+

Course
providers

75+

Markets
represented

12

Globally
recognised
qualifications

15

Languages
offered

55+

Years of
experience



WSET QUALIFICATIONS

WINES

WSET® Level 1 Award in Wines

WSET® Level 2 Award in Wines

WSET® Level 3 Award in Wines

WSET® Level 4 Diploma in Wines

SPIRITS

WSET® Level 1 Award in Spirits

WSET® Level 2 Award in Spirits

WSET® Level 3 Award in Spirits

SAKE

WSET® Level 1 Award in Sake

WSET® Level 2 Award in Sake

WSET® Level 3 Award in Sake

BEER

WSET® Level 1 Award in Beer

WSET® Level 2 Award in Beer

BENEFITS OF TRAINING



WHY INVEST IN TRAINING?

Businesses using WSET for staff training:

90%

Reported an
increase in
profits

97%

Saw an
increase in
employee
satisfaction

95%

Found the WSET
course inspiring
& empowering
for their
employees

WHY INVEST IN TRAINING?

Trade professionals with a WSET qualification:

96%

Agreed it
increased
their product
knowledge

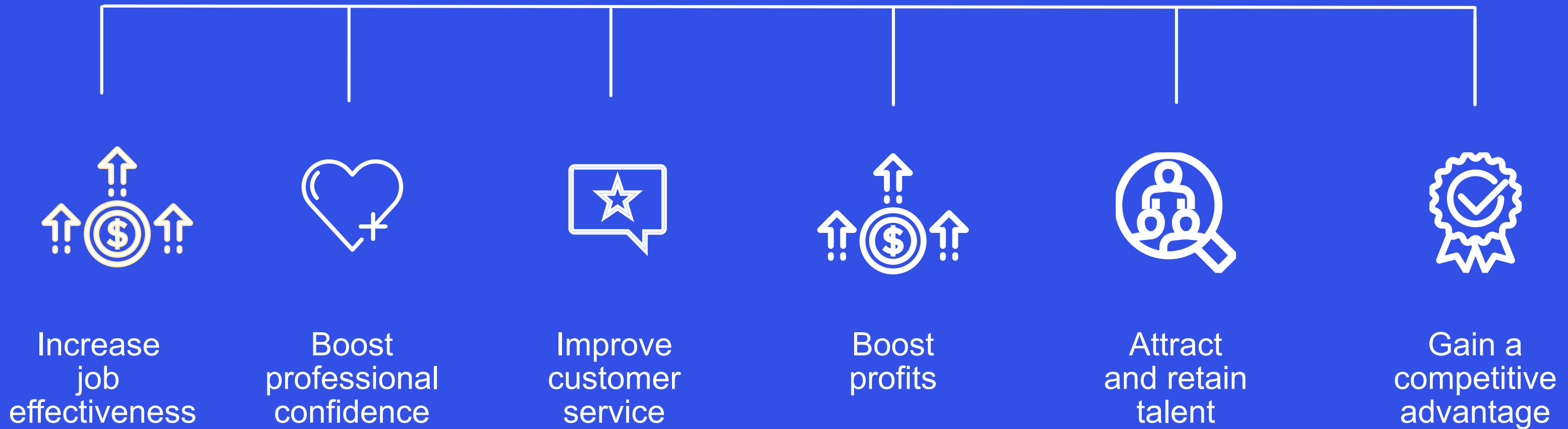
88%

Said qualifications
made them more
effective in their
role

97%

Were more
confident selling
because of their
training

WHY INVEST IN TRAINING?



WSET BEER QUALIFICATIONS





WSET LEVEL 1 AWARD IN BEER

- Explore the main ingredients used to make beer
- Learn the essentials of beer production
- Learn the principles of beer storage, service and food pairing
- Get to know the characteristics of 20 key beer styles
- Gain the basic skills to taste and describe beer

Minimum delivery time

Six hours of guided learning, in person or online.

Assessment

A closed-book exam of 30 multiple-choice questions.



WSET LEVEL 2 AWARD IN BEER

- Explore the main ingredients used in beer production
- Learn how production processes influence beer characteristics
- Understand the key principles and processes involved in beer storage, service and food pairing
- Learn the characteristics of over 60 beer styles and how they are produced and labelled
- Gain the skills to taste and describe beer with confidence

Minimum delivery time

28 hours of study, including 16 hours of guided learning (in person or online) with a WSET course provider.

Assessment

A closed-book exam of 50 multiple-choice questions.

COURSE COMPARISON



LEVEL 1



Beginner level



6 hours | all guided



20 styles covered



10-13 recommended
tasting samples



Know
identify; state; name; list



30 multiple choice
questions



LEVEL 2



Intermediate level



28 hours | 16 guided



60 styles covered



28-31 recommended
tasting samples



Understand
describe; state; identify



50 multiple choice
questions

WHAT MAKES WSET BEER QUALIFICATIONS UNIQUE?



**Courses led by
rigorously trained
expert educators**



**Course materials for
exam preparation**

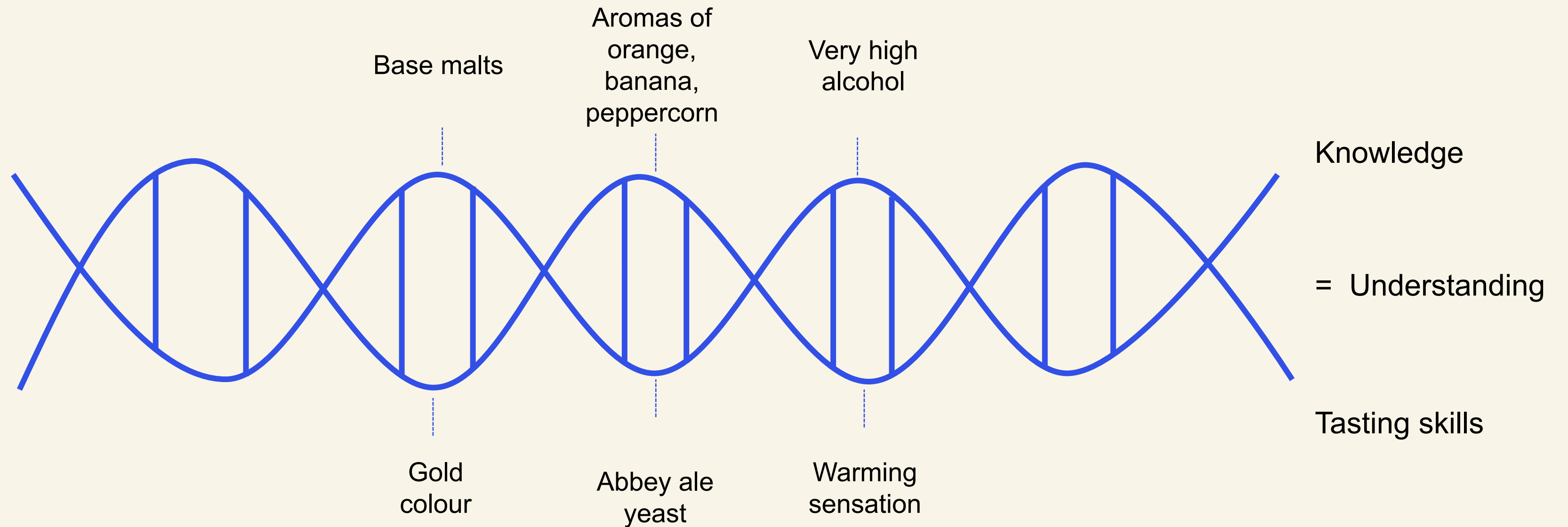


**Universally
applicable
knowledge**



**Key focus on tasting
skills development**

DNA OF WSET EDUCATION



WSET's Systematic Approach to Tasting®

A universal language to describe beer and assess its quality.



01  **Appearance**

Clarity

CLEAR | SLIGHTLY HAZY | HAZY/CLOUDY | OPAQUE

Colour*

STRAW | GOLD | AMBER | COPPER | BROWN

BLACK | ? | OTHER

*These colours are an approximate guide to colour terms used for beer

Foam

NONE | SMALL | MEDIUM | LARGE

Other observations

E.G. HEAD RETENTION (FOAM STAND), HEAD (FOAM) COLOUR, SEDIMENT

02  **Nose**

Aroma intensity

LIGHT | MEDIUM | PRONOUNCED

Aroma characteristics

MALT AND GRAIN | HOPS | YEAST AND BACTERIA | ? | OTHER AROMAS | POSSIBLE OFF-FLAVOURS/OFF-AROMAS

03  **Palate**

Carbonation

NONE | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH

Body

LIGHT | MEDIUM | FULL

Alcohol

LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH | VERY HIGH

Bitterness

NONE | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH

Sweetness

NONE | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH

Aroma intensity

LIGHT | MEDIUM | PRONOUNCED

Aroma characteristics

MALT AND GRAIN | HOPS | YEAST AND BACTERIA | ? | OTHER AROMAS | POSSIBLE OFF-FLAVOURS/OFF-AROMAS

Finish

SHORT | MEDIUM | LONG

Other observations

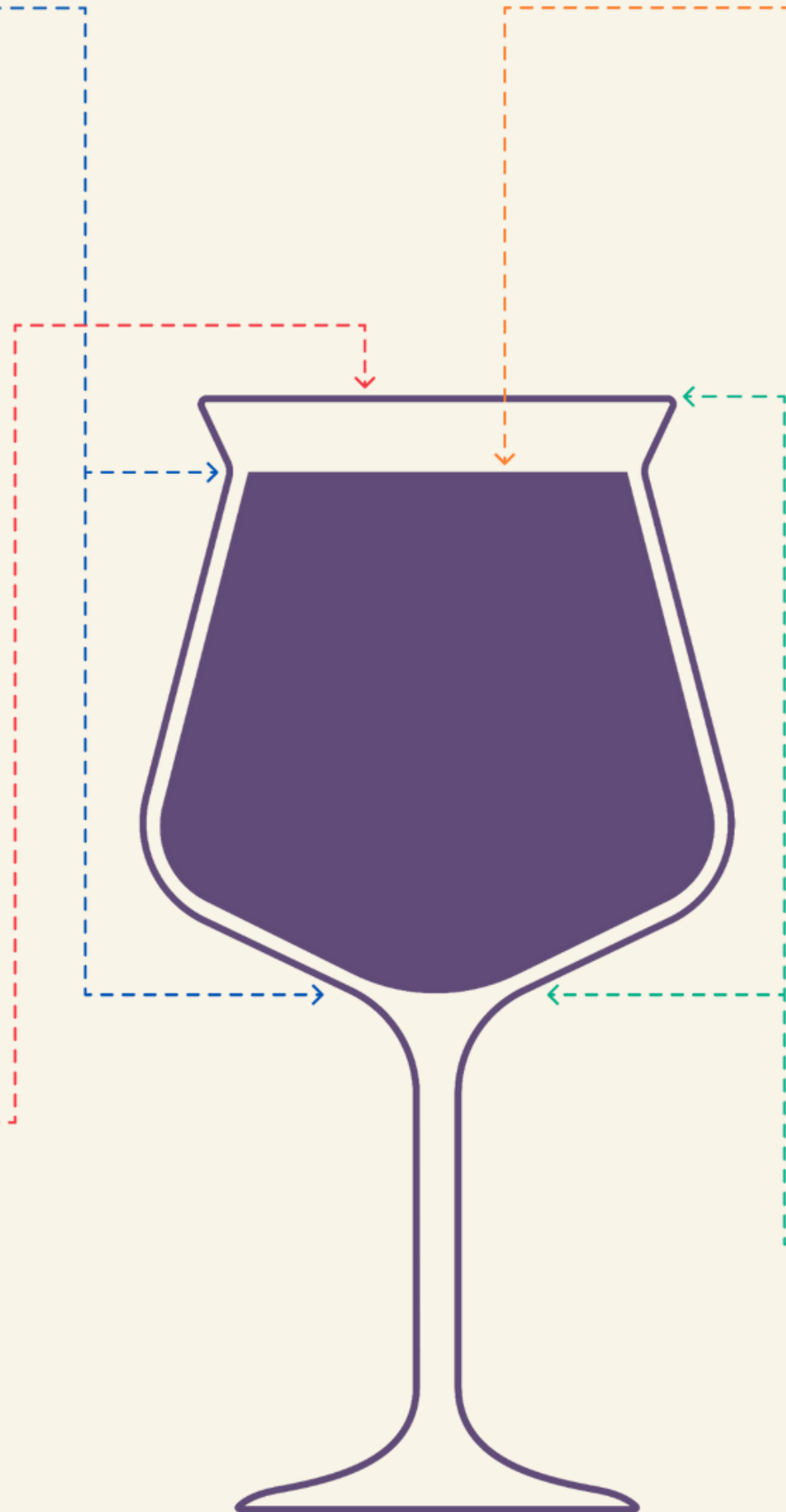
E.G. ACIDITY, TEXTURE, ASTRINGENCY, WARMING SENSATION, LINGERING BITTERNESS

04  **Conclusions**

Quality

FAULTY | ACCEPTABLE | VERY GOOD

POOR | GOOD | OUTSTANDING





WSET Level 1 Award in Beer

[wsetglobal.com](https://www.wsetglobal.com)



The main ingredients of beer



malt
(malted grains)



yeast



water



hops

Aromas

malt

hops

yeast

other

WSET Level 1 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Appearance

Clarity clear – hazy – opaque

Colour straw – gold – amber – copper – brown – black

Other observations e.g. foam

Nose

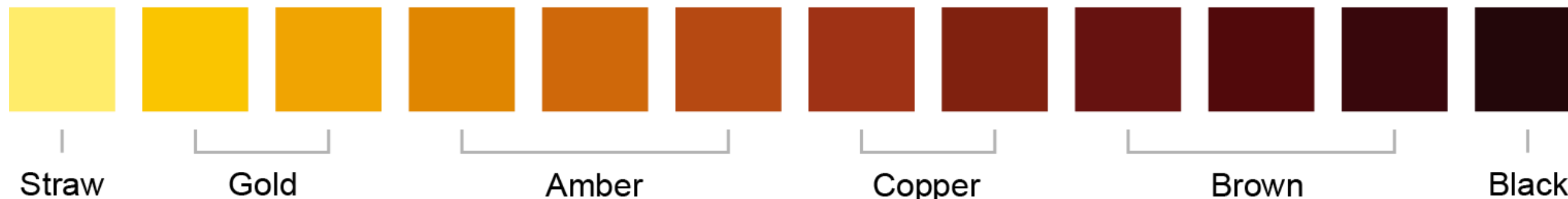
Aroma characteristics e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast, other

Other observations e.g. intensity

Palate

Aroma characteristics e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast, other

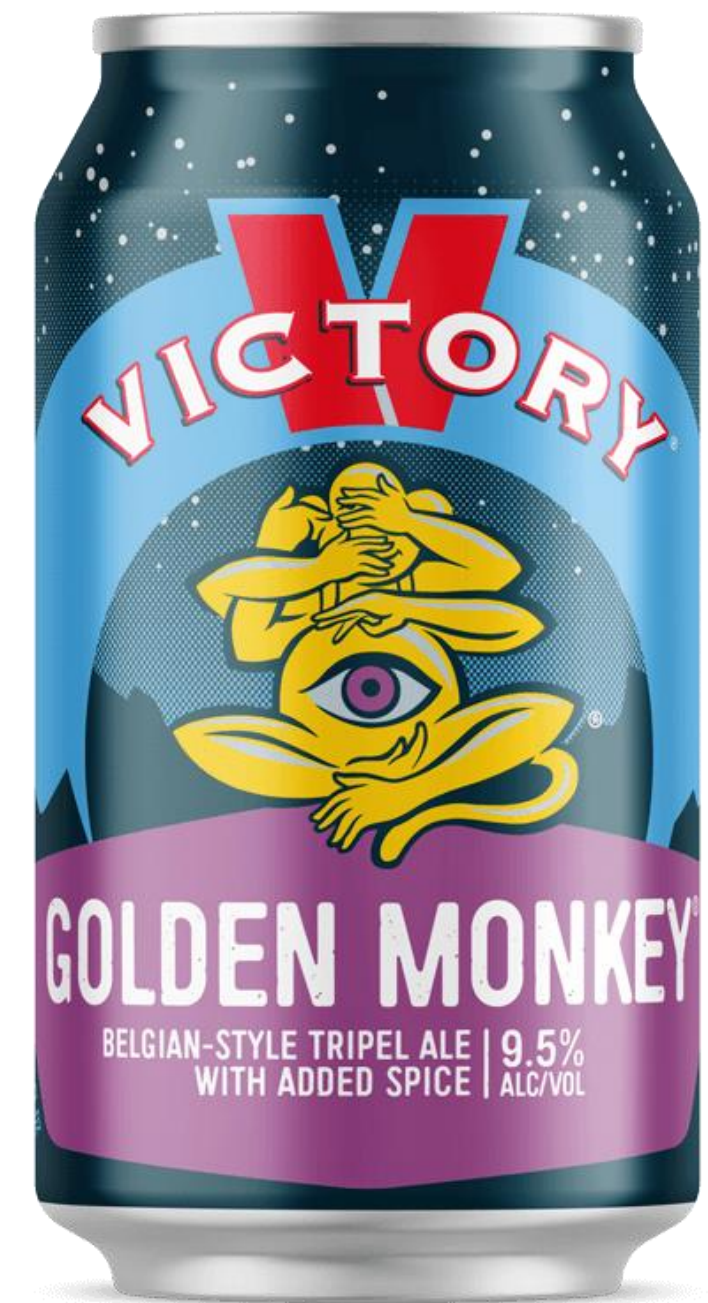
Other observations e.g. intensity, carbonation, body, alcohol, bitterness, sweetness, acidity



WSET Level 1 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Beer #1: Victory Golden Monkey (9.5%)

- Tripel = a yeast-driven style



WSET Level 1 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Appearance

Clarity clear – hazy – opaque

Colour straw – gold – amber – copper – brown – black

Other observations e.g. foam

Nose

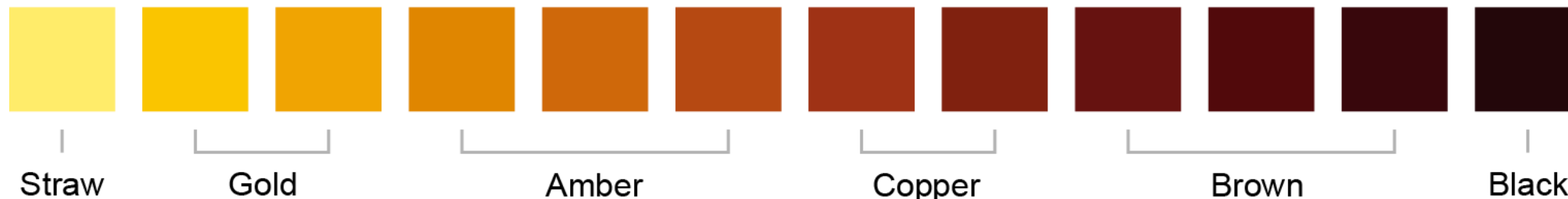
Aroma characteristics e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast, other

Other observations e.g. intensity

Palate

Aroma characteristics e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast, other

Other observations e.g. intensity, carbonation, body, alcohol, bitterness, sweetness, acidity



WSET Level 1 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Aromas from malt and grain

Bread	bread dough, water cracker, bread crumb, bread crust, digestive biscuit/ graham cracker, toasted bread, burnt bread
Sweet/confectionery	honey, caramel, candy floss (cotton candy), black treacle (molasses)
Dried fruit	raisin, prune, date, dried fig
Nut/bean	toasted nut, chocolate, coffee, cocoa

Aromas from hops

Floral	rose, geranium, lavender, jasmine, elderflower, blossom, chamomile
Berry	strawberry, raspberry, redcurrant, blackcurrant, gooseberry, blueberry
Pome fruit	apple, pear
Citrus fruit	grapefruit, lemon, lime, orange, mandarin, bergamot
Stone fruit	peach, apricot, nectarine, cherry, plum
Tropical fruit	lychee, mango, melon, passion fruit, pineapple, papaya, guava, coconut
Herbaceous	grass, blackcurrant leaf, lemongrass, hay
Herbal	mint, dill, sage, thyme, fennel, basil, black tea, green tea
Other	pine, spice, earth, forest floor, onion, garlic, cedar, peppercorn

Aromas from yeast

Fruit	apple, pear, lemon, orange, grapefruit, strawberry, grape, apricot, cherry, peach, banana, pineapple, fig, dried fruit
Spice	clove, nutmeg, white peppercorn, black peppercorn, aniseed
Farmyard	hay, horse blanket, leather, earth, damp wool
Other	bubblegum, fruit candy, nail varnish, liquorice

WSET Level 1 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Aromas from yeast

Fruit	apple, pear, lemon, orange, grapefruit, strawberry, grape, apricot, cherry, peach, banana, pineapple, fig, dried fruit
Spice	clove, nutmeg, white peppercorn, black peppercorn, aniseed
Farmyard	hay, horse blanket, leather, earth, damp wool
Other	bubblegum, fruit candy, nail varnish, liquorice

WSET Level 1 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Aromas from malt and grain

Bread	bread dough, water cracker, bread crumb, bread crust, digestive biscuit/graham cracker, toasted bread, burnt bread
Sweet/ confectionary	honey, caramel, candy floss (cotton candy), black treacle (molasses)
Dried fruit	raisin, prune, date, dried fig
Nut/bean	toasted nut, chocolate, coffee, cocoa

WSET Level 1 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Aromas from hops

Floral	rose, geranium, lavender, jasmine, elderflower, blossom, chamomile
---------------	--

Berry	strawberry, raspberry, redcurrant, blackcurrant, gooseberry, blueberry
--------------	--

Pome fruit	apple, pear
-------------------	-------------

Citrus fruit	grapefruit, lemon, lime, orange, mandarin, bergamot
---------------------	---

Stone fruit	peach, apricot, nectarine, cherry, plum
--------------------	---

Tropical fruit	lychee, mango, melon, passion fruit, pineapple, papaya, guava, coconut
-----------------------	--

Herbaceous	grass, blackcurrant leaf, lemongrass, hay
-------------------	---

Herbal	mint, dill, sage, thyme, fennel, basil, black tea, green tea
---------------	--

Other	pine, spice, earth, forest floor, onion, garlic, cedar, peppercorn
--------------	--

WSET Level 1 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Appearance

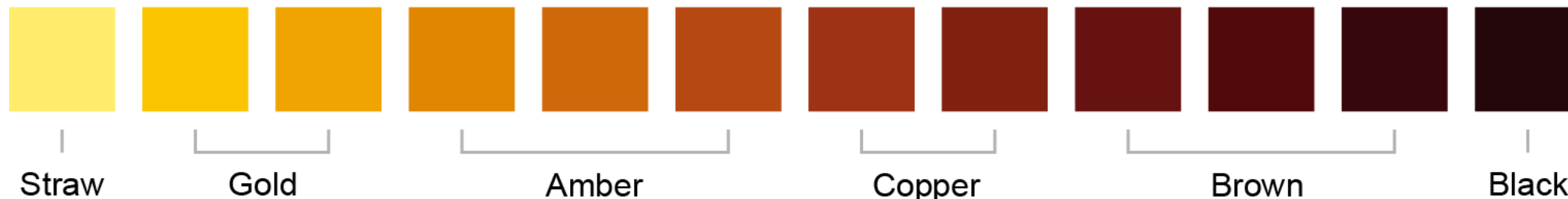
Clarity	clear – hazy – opaque
Colour	straw – gold – amber – copper – brown – black
Other observations	e.g. foam

Nose

Aroma characteristics	e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast, other
Other observations	e.g. intensity

Palate

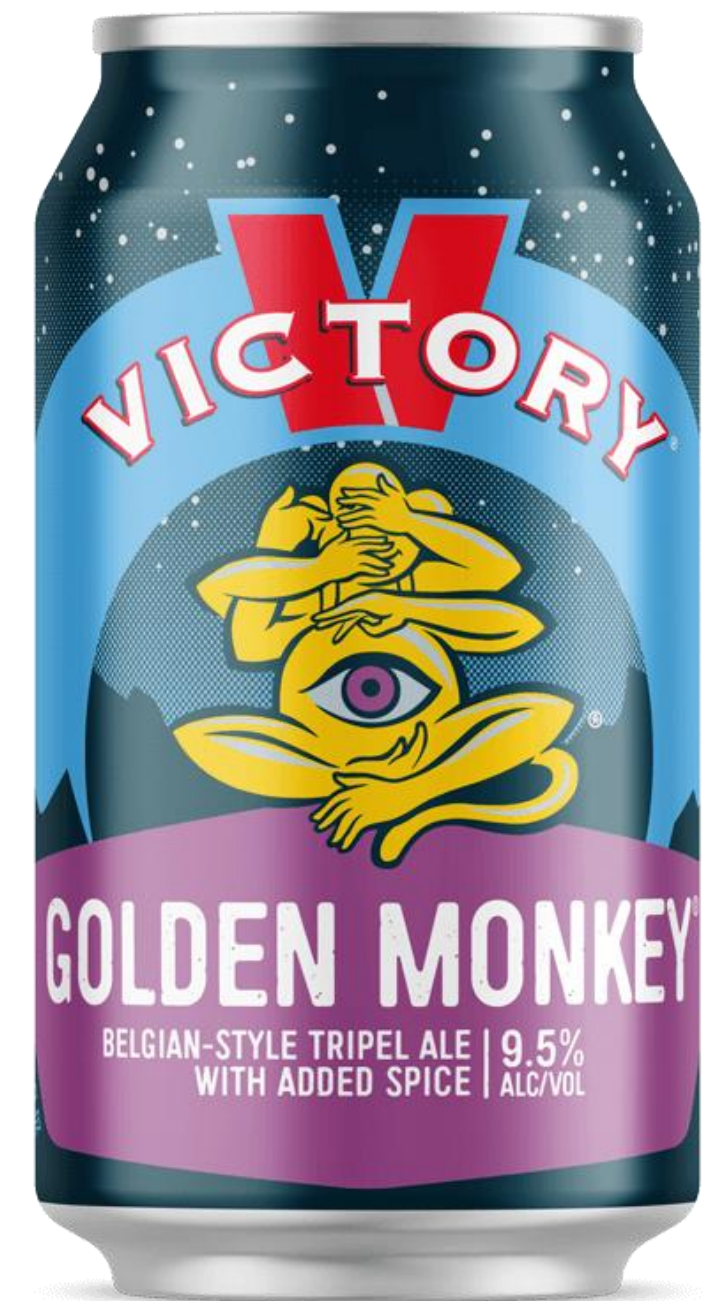
Aroma characteristics	e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast, other
Other observations	e.g. intensity, carbonation, body, alcohol, bitterness, sweetness, acidity



WSET Level 1 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Beer #1: Victory Golden Monkey (9.5%)

- Tripel = a yeast-driven style
 - Clear, gold, large foam
 - Aromas from yeast
 - Banana, orange, clove, nutmeg
 - Aromas from malt and grains
 - Bread crumb, water cracker, light honey
- High carbonation
- High alcohol with a warming sensation





WSET Level 2 Award in Beer

[wsetglobal.com](https://www.wsetglobal.com)



Four main beer ingredients



malt
(malted grains)



yeast



water



hops

Aromas



malt and grain

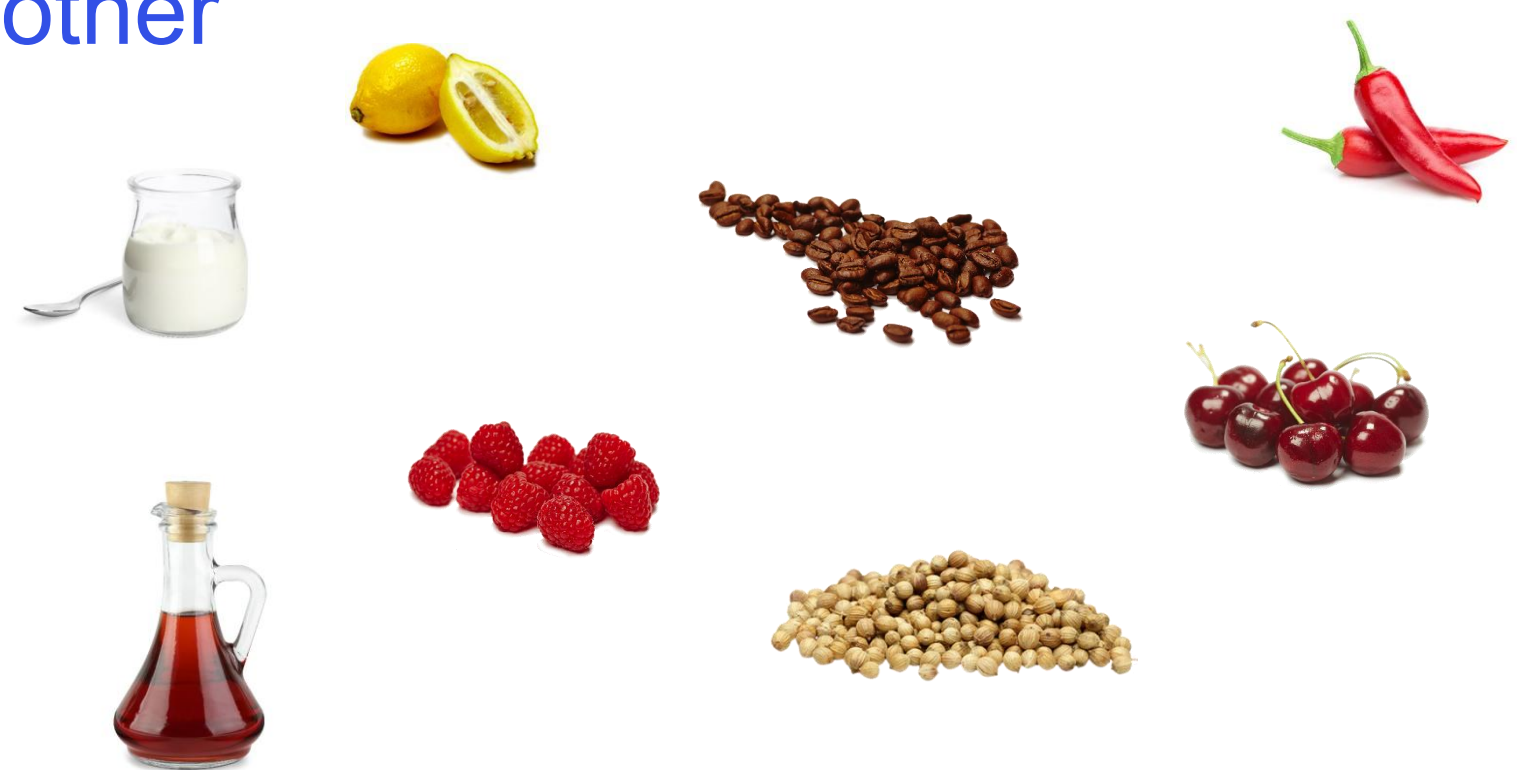


hops

yeast



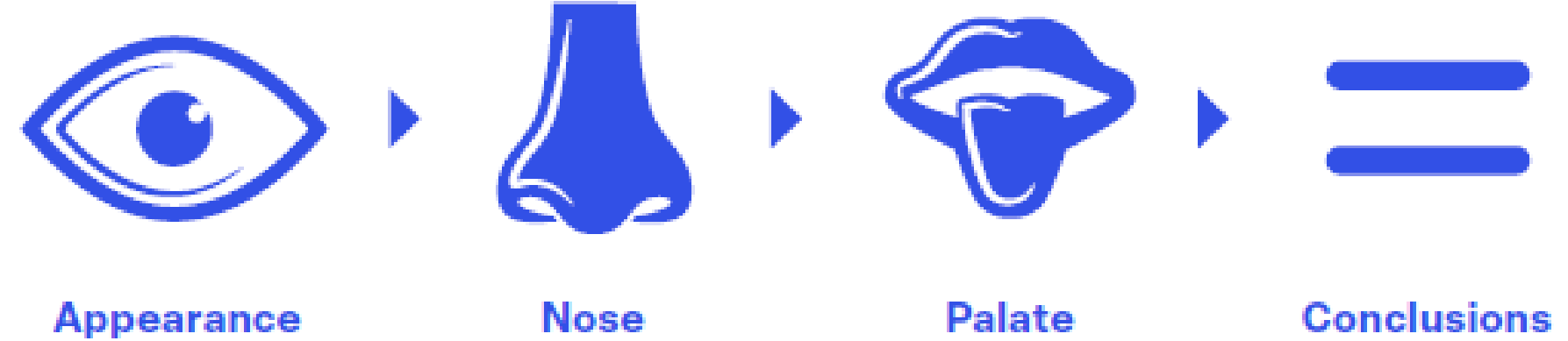
other



WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Reasons for using the SAT

- To have a common language to describe beer
- To calibrate the palate
- To evaluate a beer's:
 - Appearance
 - Nose
 - Palate
 - Quality



WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

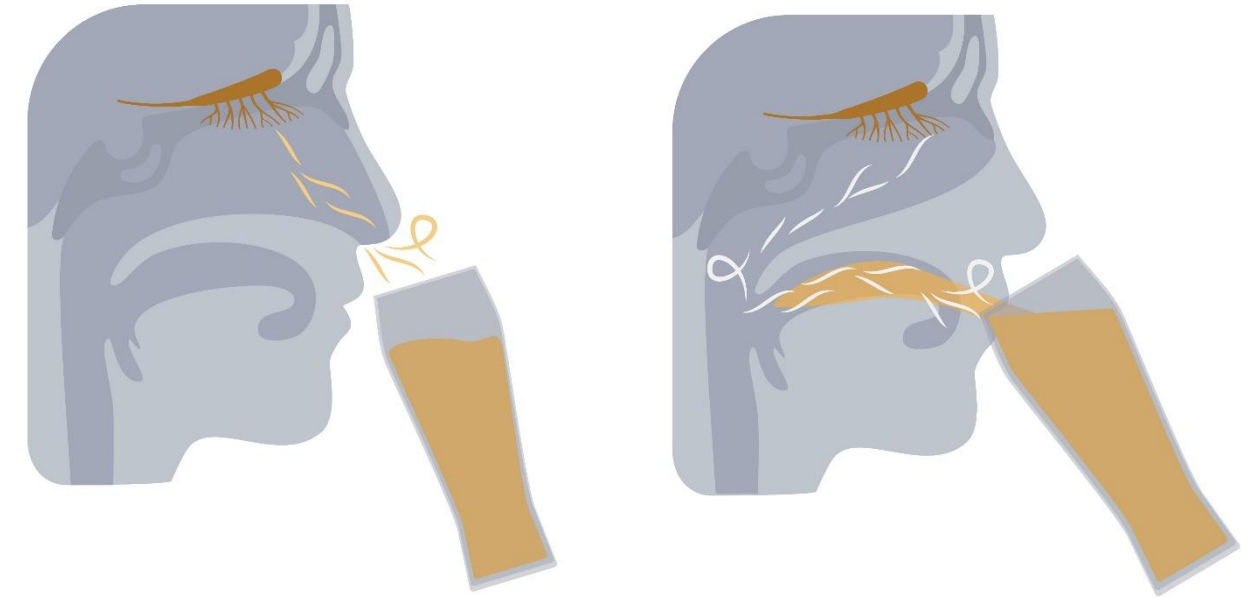
Taste

- Sensations detected by taste receptors
- Sweet, bitter, sour/acid, salt, umami



Aroma

- Sensation detected by sense of smell

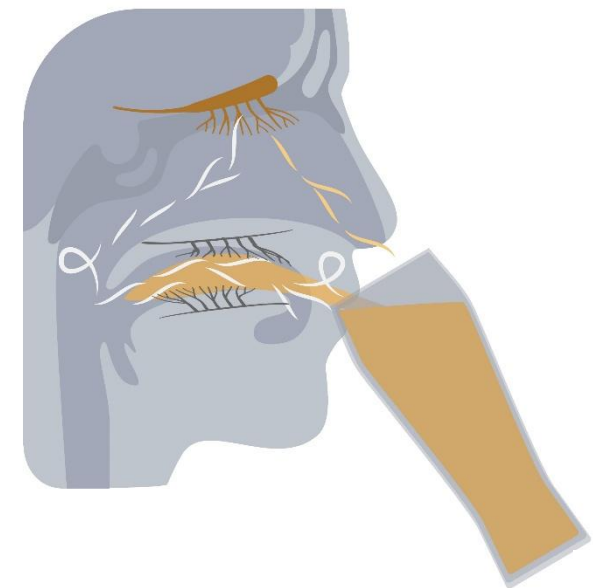


Mouthfeel

- Sensation detected by sense of touch as well as other sensatic...

Flavour

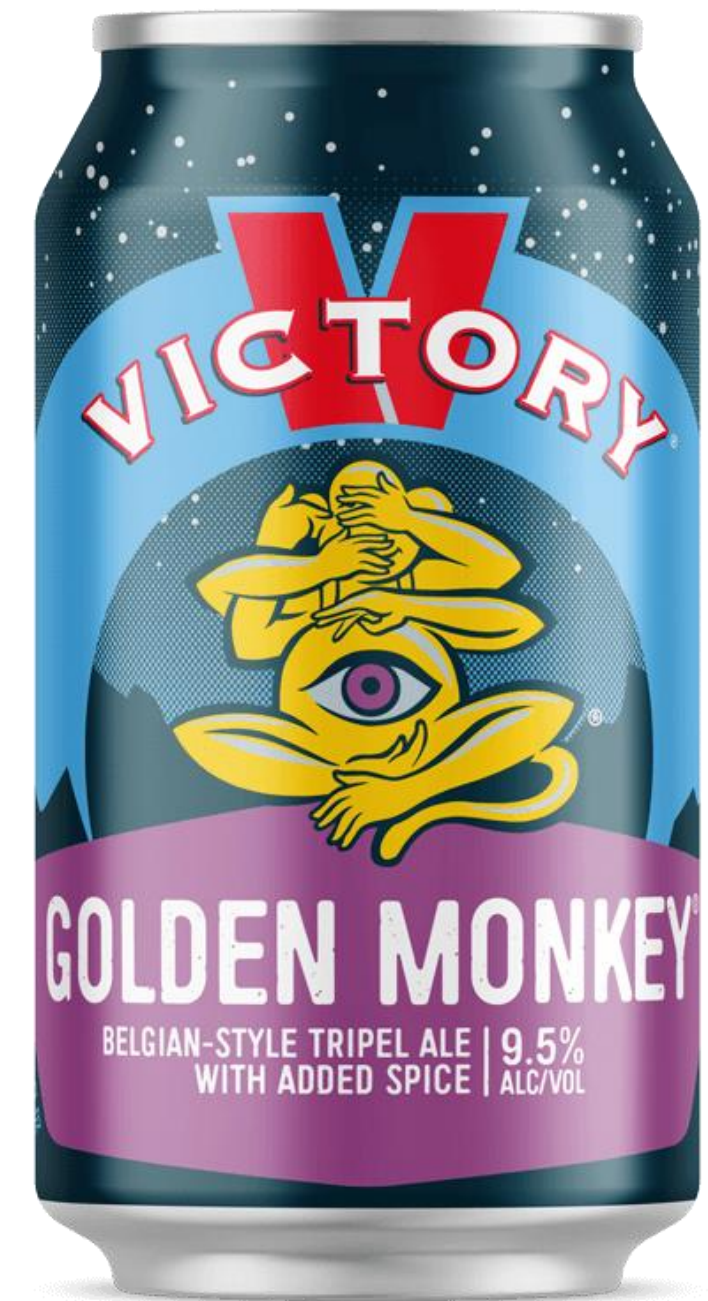
- Overall picture painted by the brain
- Combining signals including aromas, tastes and mouthfeel sensations



WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

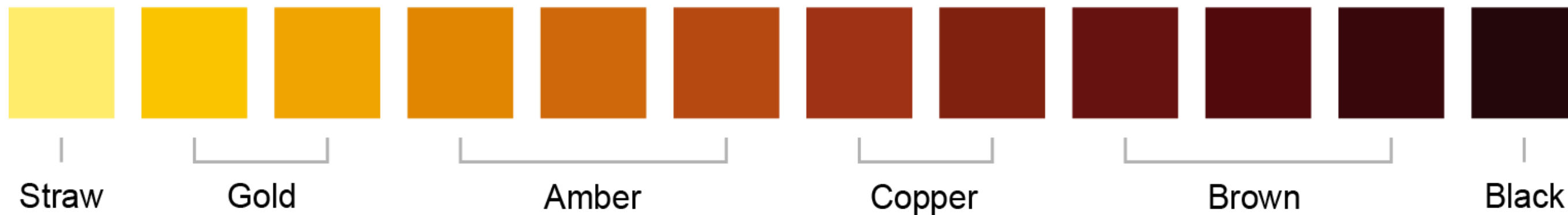
Beer #1: Victory Golden Monkey (9.5%)

- Tripel = a yeast-driven style



WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Appearance	
Clarity	clear – slightly hazy – hazy/cloudy – opaque
Colour	straw – gold – amber – copper – brown – black – other
Foam	none – small – medium – large
Other observations	e.g. head retention (foam stand), head (foam) colour, sediment



WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Nose	
Aroma intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast and bacteria, other aromas, possible off-flavours/off-aromas

Describing aroma

Aromas from malt and grain

Bread	bread dough, water cracker, bread crumb, bread crust, digestive biscuit/graham cracker, toasted bread, burnt bread
Sweet/ confectionary	honey, caramel, candy floss (cotton candy), toffee, black treacle (molasses)
Dried fruit	raisin, prune, date, dried fig
Nut/bean	toasted nut, chocolate, coffee, cocoa
Smoke	woodsmoke, smoked bacon, smoked cheese

Describing aroma

Aromas from hops

Floral	rose, geranium, lavender, jasmine, elderflower, blossom, chamomile
---------------	--

Berry	strawberry, raspberry, redcurrant, blackcurrant, gooseberry, blueberry
--------------	--

Pome fruit	apple, pear
-------------------	-------------

Citrus fruit	grapefruit, lemon, lime, orange, mandarin, bergamot
---------------------	---

Stone fruit	peach, apricot, nectarine, cherry, plum
--------------------	---

Tropical fruit	lychee, mango, melon, passion fruit, pineapple, papaya, guava, coconut
-----------------------	--

Herbaceous	grass, rocket (arugula), blackcurrant leaf, lemongrass, hay
-------------------	---

Herbal	mint, dill, sage, thyme, fennel, basil, black tea, green tea
---------------	--

Other	pine, resin, spice, earth, forest floor, onion, garlic, cedar, peppercorn
--------------	---

Describing aroma

Aromas from yeast and bacteria

Fruit	apple, pear, lemon, orange, grapefruit, strawberry, grape, apricot, cherry, peach, banana, pineapple, rhubarb, fig, dried fruit
Spice	clove, nutmeg, white peppercorn, black peppercorn, aniseed
Farmyard	hay, horse blanket, leather, earth, damp wool
Other	vinegar, bubble gum, fruit candy, nail varnish, liquorice, yoghurt

Describing aroma	
Other aromas	
Oak	vanilla, coconut, almond, smoke, cinnamon, toffee
Fruit and other additions	raspberry, cherry, blueberry, blackberry, grape, apricot, peach, plum, marzipan, rhubarb, coriander seed, other
Ageing	dried fruit, toffee, caramel, Port, tobacco

Describing aroma

Possible off-flavours/off-aromas

Acetaldehyde	green apple, raw pumpkin, emulsion paint
---------------------	--

Diacetyl	butter, buttered popcorn
-----------------	--------------------------

Dimethyl sulfide (DMS)	cooked sweetcorn, cooked cabbage, tomato juice
-------------------------------	--

Staling	papery, stale, wet cardboard
----------------	------------------------------

Light struck	skunk, cat urine, scorched hair
---------------------	---------------------------------

Phenolic off-flavours	clove, medicinal, smoke
------------------------------	-------------------------

Bacterial infection	rancid butter, vinegar, cooked cabbage
----------------------------	--

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Nose	
Aroma intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast and bacteria, other aromas, possible off-flavours/off-aromas

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Palate	
Carbonation	none – low – medium – high
Body	light – medium – full
Alcohol	low – medium – high – very high
Bitterness	none – low – medium – high
Sweetness	none – low – medium – high
Aroma intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast and bacteria, other aromas, possible off-flavours/off-aromas
Finish	short – medium – long
Other observations	e.g. acidity, texture, astringency, warming sensation, lingering bitterness

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Conclusions

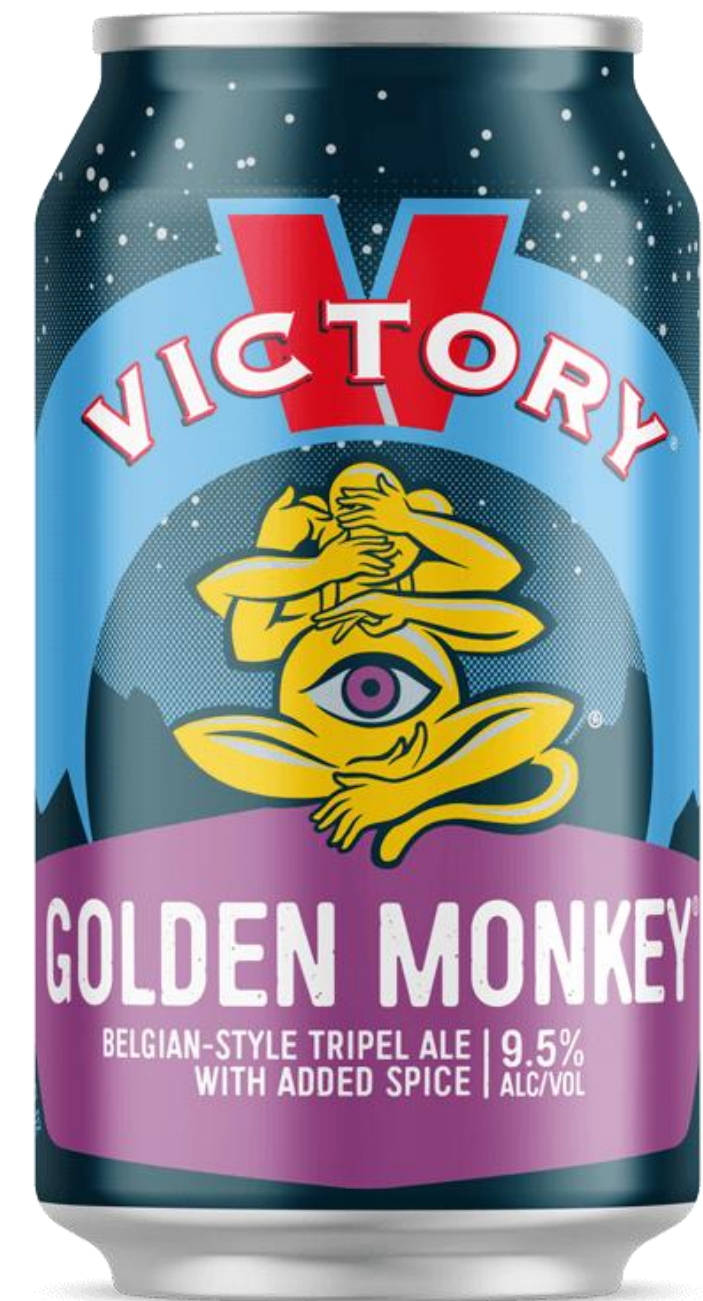
Quality faulty – poor – acceptable – good – very good – outstanding

- Absence of faults
- Balance
- Complexity and definition
- Expressiveness

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Beer #1: Victory Golden Monkey (9.5%)

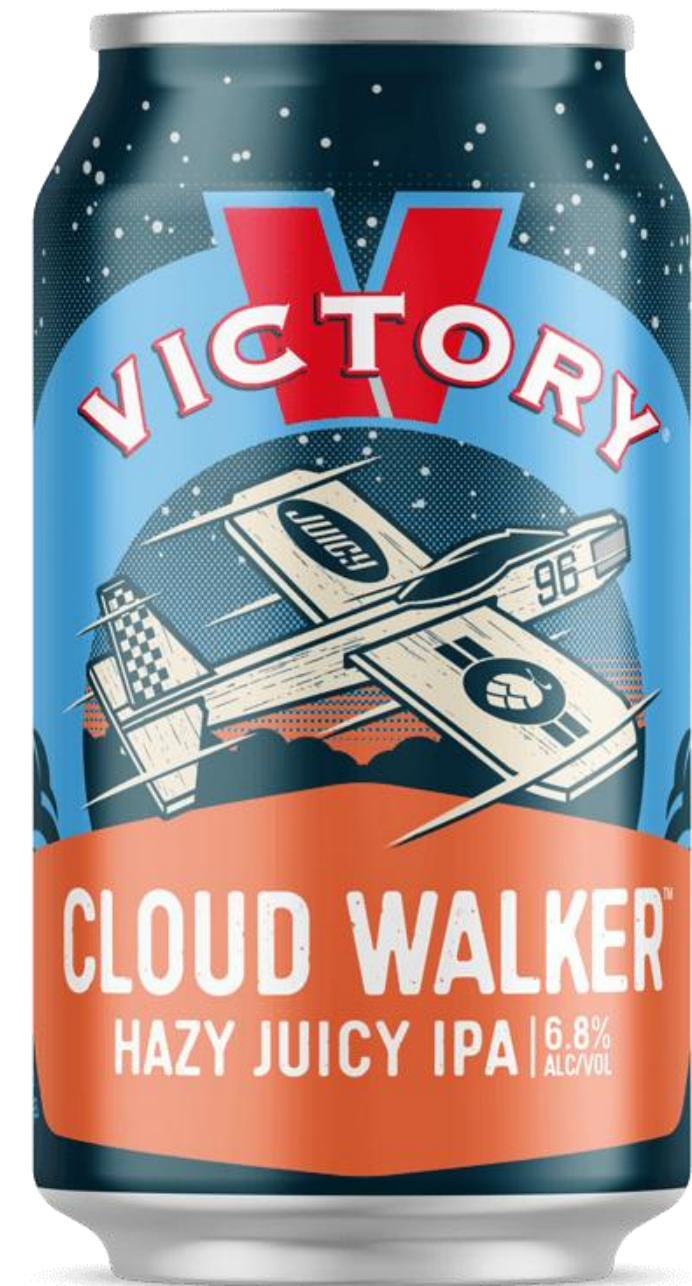
- Tripel = a yeast-driven style
 - Clear, gold, large foam
 - Medium aroma intensity
 - Aromas from yeast
 - Banana, orange, clove, nutmeg
 - Aromas from malt and grains
 - Bread crumb, water cracker, light honey
 - Medium finish
- High carbonation
- Medium body
- Medium bitterness, low sweetness
- High alcohol with a warming sensation



WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

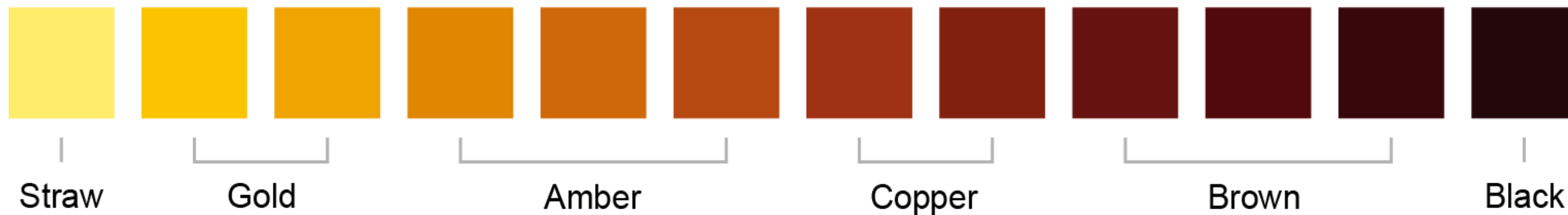
Victory Cloud Walker (6.8% ABV)

- Hazy IPA = a hop-driven style



WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Appearance	
Clarity	clear – slightly hazy – hazy/cloudy – opaque
Colour	straw – gold – amber – copper – brown – black – other
Foam	none – small – medium – large
Other observations	e.g. head retention (foam stand), head (foam) colour, sediment



WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Nose	
Aroma intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast and bacteria, other aromas, possible off-flavours/off-aromas

Describing aroma

Aromas from hops

Floral	rose, geranium, lavender, jasmine, elderflower, blossom, chamomile
---------------	--

Berry	strawberry, raspberry, redcurrant, blackcurrant, gooseberry, blueberry
--------------	--

Pome fruit	apple, pear
-------------------	-------------

Citrus fruit	grapefruit, lemon, lime, orange, mandarin, bergamot
---------------------	---

Stone fruit	peach, apricot, nectarine, cherry, plum
--------------------	---

Tropical fruit	lychee, mango, melon, passion fruit, pineapple, papaya, guava, coconut
-----------------------	--

Herbaceous	grass, rocket (arugula), blackcurrant leaf, lemongrass, hay
-------------------	---

Herbal	mint, dill, sage, thyme, fennel, basil, black tea, green tea
---------------	--

Other	pine, resin, spice, earth, forest floor, onion, garlic, cedar, peppercorn
--------------	---

Describing aroma

Aromas from malt and grain

Bread	bread dough, water cracker, bread crumb, bread crust, digestive biscuit/graham cracker, toasted bread, burnt bread
Sweet/ confectionary	honey, caramel, candy floss (cotton candy), toffee, black treacle (molasses)
Dried fruit	raisin, prune, date, dried fig
Nut/bean	toasted nut, chocolate, coffee, cocoa
Smoke	woodsmoke, smoked bacon, smoked cheese

Describing aroma

Aromas from yeast and bacteria

Fruit	apple, pear, lemon, orange, grapefruit, strawberry, grape, apricot, cherry, peach, banana, pineapple, rhubarb, fig, dried fruit
Spice	clove, nutmeg, white peppercorn, black peppercorn, aniseed
Farmyard	hay, horse blanket, leather, earth, damp wool
Other	vinegar, bubble gum, fruit candy, nail varnish, liquorice, yoghurt

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Nose	
Aroma intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast and bacteria, other aromas, possible off-flavours/off-aromas

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Palate	
Carbonation	none – low – medium – high
Body	light – medium – full
Alcohol	low – medium – high – very high
Bitterness	none – low – medium – high
Sweetness	none – low – medium – high
Aroma intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. aromas from malt and grain, hops, yeast and bacteria, other aromas, possible off-flavours/off-aromas
Finish	short – medium – long
Other observations	e.g. acidity, texture, astringency, warming sensation, lingering bitterness

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Conclusions

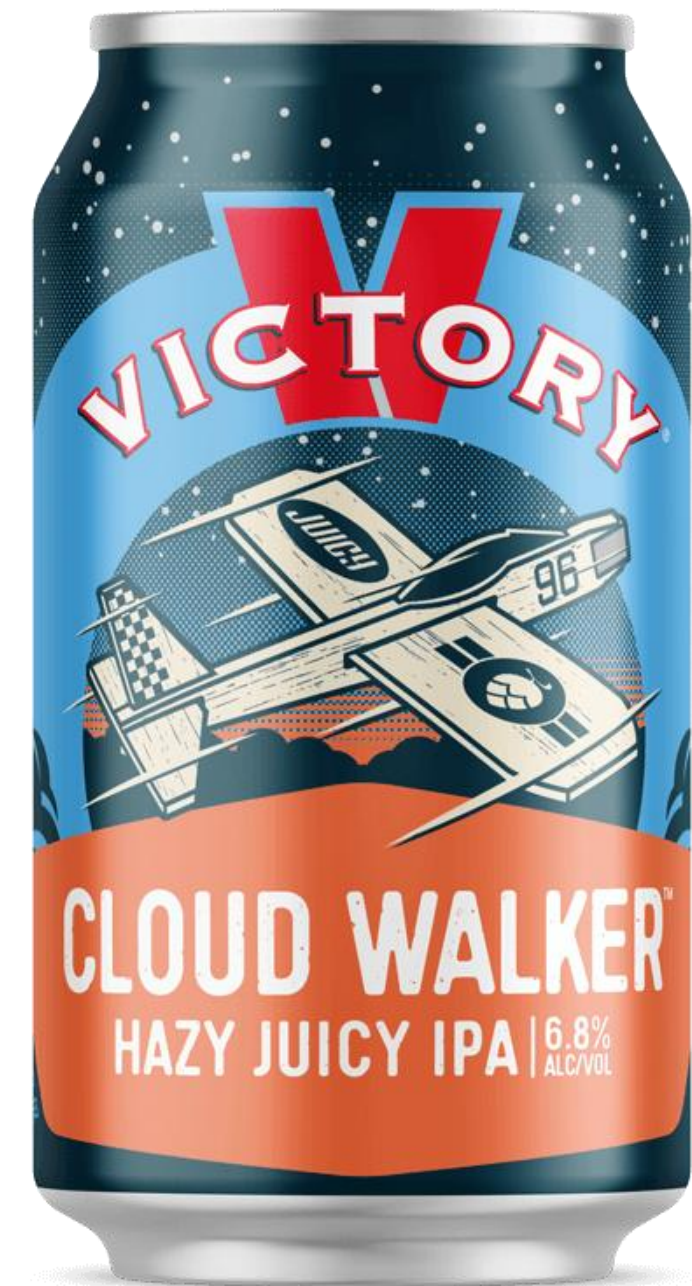
Quality faulty – poor – acceptable – good – very good – outstanding

- Absence of faults
- Balance
- Complexity and definition
- Expressiveness

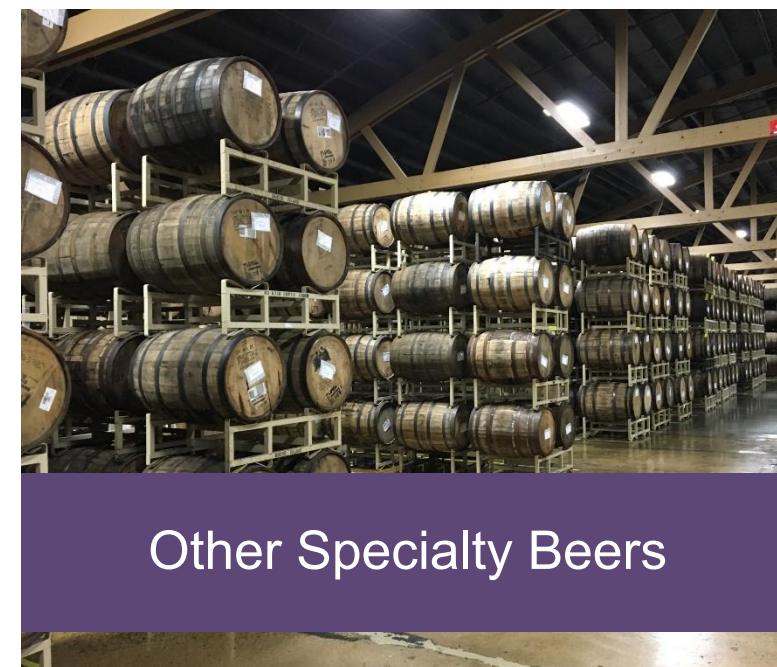
WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Beer®

Beer #2: Victory Cloud Walker (6.8% ABV)

- Hazy IPA = a hop-driven style
 - Hazy/cloudy, gold, large foam
 - Pronounced aroma intensity
 - Aromas from hops
 - Mango, orange, lychee, melon
 - Aromas from malt
 - Bread dough, bread crumb
 - Long finish
- Medium carbonation, medium body, and creamy texture
- Medium bitterness, medium sweetness
- High alcohol with a warming sensation



Beer styles grouping



SUCCESS STORIES



WHO TRAINS WITH WSET BEER?



**LUCKY
SAINT**



AMSTERDAM
Brewery



THE
VANCOUVER
CLUB



Asahi UK



WHAT WSET BEER STUDENTS SAY



*“Easily one of the **best beer courses** that I have taken part in.”*

**Guinness
Storehouse Staff**



*“**100% recommend this for beer enthusiasts and professionals looking to upskill.**”*

**Heineken
Marketing Staff**



*“Really informative, fun and engaging. **Definitely piqued our interest in signing up for the next level!**”*

**Mitchells &
Butlers Staff**



*“**I learnt so much and feel a lot more confident to talk about our beer and also represent the brewery at events.**”*

**Women in Beer
UK Mentee**



WHAT WSET BEER STUDENTS SAY

In a survey of industry professionals who have completed a WSET beer course, the following percentages agreed that the course:

98%

**Increased
product
knowledge**

97%

**Built
professional
confidence**

99%

**Developed
tasting skills**

99%

Was fun

WHAT BUSINESSES SAY

*“[A WSET qualification] makes you **more credible** because you've got an **understanding of the industry**, as opposed to just your brands.”*

**Paul Rudge,
Beer Champion
Molson Coors**



*“I thought the course was really engaging and **perfect for our team's requirements**. I'd **highly recommend** this to any sales team however experienced they are.”*

**Aaron Duffett,
Commercial Director
Two Tribes**



WHY STUDY WSET BEER?



Progressive
levels of study



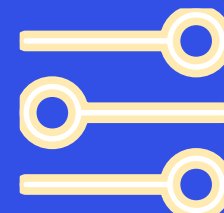
Brand neutral
expertise



Active
learning



Tasting skills
development



Flexible
Study options



Accredited and
regulated



Globally
recognised



Globally
relevant

QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU!

Grab a beer and WSET socks!

Join us in Hospitality Suite #11



beer@wsetglobal.com



wsetglobal.com