

## Beer quality needs to be communicated well!



Option to conduct a survey among friends: Which beers taste better? Incoming answers might be interesting, depending on group makeup and the number of people present. Naming a trending brand is playing it safe because price promotions and advertising ensure less opposition.

A preferable quality check is to provide a case of beer for the test subjects to taste early on a Saturday evening. Are more than half the bottles still untouched by 10 p.m., or did they ask for a second case by 8 p.m.?

A guided tasting – with explanations – can be even more informative. “Try the dark”; “Check out this bock”; “This is a great pilsner!”; “Just take a sip, leave the rest, that’s fine”. If you hear “Do you have a second bottle of this one?” you’ve got a hit in terms of quality.

Determining and communicating beer quality is never easy, especially when there is no direct contact. And of course, every brewer praises their own beer – that’s never objective. But the communication / feedback loop becomes objective when professionals who know what they’re doing are the ones presenting brews anonymously at a curated tasting event – with proper explanations. That goes down well ...

This is **Finest Beer Selection**. The registration phase started on February 1<sup>st</sup> and will continue until mid-May. In June, our jury of professionals will sample the submitted brews individually, then describe their quality using a flavor profile (Finest Beer Profile) and award a Finest Beer Score. Subsequently, the organizers behind the event will fire up the media machine so that the breweries, along with their friends and supporters, are equipped with strong arguments in favor of quality beers – backed up by our professional beer sommeliers and tasters!

Sincerely

**Dr. Werner Gloßner**  
CEO Doemens

## Finest Beer Selection 2024: Launching the second edition

With *Finest Beer Selection 2023*, Meininger Publishers and Doemens presented – for the first time – a new tasting format which featured an exclusive seal of quality for beers. The response to the first edition was remarkable, with 880 beers submitted by nearly 200 breweries from 18 countries. 248 beers with a Finest Beer Score greater than 90 made it into the coveted *Finest Beer Selection* – the best beers of the year. Now it's time for the second round. Doemens CEO, Dr. Werner Gloßner, uses the experience of 2023 to explain why the new tasting format has been so well received by the brewing industry.

**Doemens News:** *The premiere of the Finest Beer Selection came to a fitting conclusion in November 2023, and breweries have been able to register their beers since February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Why did you re-launch this event in 2024?*

**Dr. Werner Gloßner:** The participating breweries were more than satisfied with the concept and the media rollout of their award-winning beers. However, there was a unanimous request to bring the award ceremony forward so that the period for communication with the current year's selection is much longer. We have looked at this and can implement the schedule accordingly. This means that the registration phase will end mid of May, the tasting at Doemens will take place from June 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> and the award ceremony will be held on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at Meininger in Neustadt an der Weinstraße.

**DN:** *The new tasting format was followed with great interest in the brewing industry last year. Describe the main reasons why Finest Beer Selection represents real added value for the brewing industry.*



**Dr. Gloßner:** It's the overall package that counts. Individual tasting of each beer is the main focus. The presentation of the tasting results with the Finest Beer Score and the Finest Beer Profile was very well received and then, of course, we launched a broad communication rollout in an attractive manner of all the award-winning beers as a special print issue and on the web.

**DN:** *What were some reactions from the winning breweries?*

**Dr. Gloßner:** The response from the winners at the award ceremony itself was very positive indeed, but the decisive factor is what the brewers did with it. We have seen impressive examples of how participating breweries use and link to the award-winning beers on their media channels. This reels in the consumer – and we all want to show them the award-winners, of course!

**DN:** *Breweries whose beers don't make it into the Finest Beer Selection also benefit from taking part, don't they?*

**Dr. Gloßner:** Most certainly. There is very good, meaningful technical information from the tasting that

a brewer/brewmaster can use. Of course, we realize that this even has fuelled their ambitions. These breweries want to be included in the award-winning selection for the next Finest Beer Selection and will therefore make the necessary adjustments.

**DN:** 880 beers were registered and tasted at the premiere of the Finest Beer Selection, and over 200 made it into the Finest Beer Selection 2023. Were your expectations met?

**Dr. Gloßner:** Yes, they were. On the one hand, a high Finest Beer Score of 90 points or more shows that participation does not automatically lead to an award. On the other hand, all very good beers have a chance of winning an award. You don't sink into media obscurity because only three winners have been selected in a particular

beer category, as is the case in conventional tasting competitions.

**DN:** What are your hopes for this second edition of Finest Beer Selection?

**Dr. Gloßner:** We made a good start in 2023 and no longer have to explain the concept from scratch. We now have a strong foundation upon which we can build. But we have to do our communications homework in 2024, expand our reach and maintain the high quality of tasting and media implementation. If we do these things well, then I can foresee many new opportunities for further development. The good thing is that Doemens and Meininger are run by absolute professionals who really know what they're doing.

**Further information:**  
<https://finest-beer-selection.com/en>

## Successful beer sommelier course in Japan

2018 saw the premiere of the beer sommelier training programme open in Japan, operated with our local partner in Tokyo. Sebastian Hohentanner from Bet Tech is an experienced expert on Japanese culture and history, speaks fluent Japanese and enjoys an excellent reputation in the Japanese brewing industry. Together with the Japan Beer Association (JBA) and Masahiro Yamagami as course director, he has succeeded

in building up an excellent team of trainers around him. With the expertise and enthusiasm of Sebastian and his team, establishing this training programme in Japan was easy.

The beer sommelier training programme takes place in blocks of four modules, mainly at weekends. Dr. Michael Zepf, Head of Doemens's Savour Academy, travelled to Tokyo for the fourth module in spring 2024 and co-taught with Sebastian Hohentanner and Masahiro Yamagami, also conducting the oral and written exams for the 15 beer enthusiasts (Brewer; Beer Judges; Wine/Sake Sommeliers; Owner/Manager of Bars/Restaurants). After passing their exams, the enthusiastic participants received their certificates and the coveted beer sommelier pin.

おめでとう、そして乾杯



Picture: Sebastian Hohentanner

### Doemens Sommelier Training

#### Doemens Biersommelier International 2024

From **September 9<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024**, the Doemens Biersommelier training will again be held at Doemens in Gräfelfing near Munich. In 100 teaching units, the participants gain in-depth knowledge of the diversity of beer, from production to tasting and marketing.

The special knowledge is deepened through a high proportion of internships. The theoretical and practical teaching units are supplemented by numerous experiences and events. The Doemens Biersommelier program includes a written and several oral, practical and sensory tests.

Further information and registration:  
[biersommelier@doemens.org](mailto:biersommelier@doemens.org)

#### Water Sommelier in Spanish at Doemens

In 2024, a Spanish version of our successful course (Sommelier de Agua) will be offered for the first time. This will be conducted from **September 9<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024** by Rosa Elena Pita Coelho, a Venezuelan who successfully completed the course at Doemens last year. As a chemical engineer with many years of professional experience in the water sector, she has excellent knowledge of all aspects of water. The course will be held in Gräfelfing near Munich.

Further information:  
<https://doemens.org/en/savour-sensory/water-sommelier/sommelier-de-agua/>  
or Interview at page 14.

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