

# Dining Stout?

Irish beer isn't for just pints; it also adds buzz to stews and desserts

Tomorrow's St. Paddy's Day celebrations may tempt you to down extra glasses of Guinness. But your Irish eyes will weep when you remember that you probably still have to work Friday.

Such a buzzkill.

But celebrating all things Irish — specifically stout, the coffee-like brewski that's Ireland's No. 1 export — doesn't mean you have to be tipsy by sunset. Stirring, braising and baking with beers like Guinness, the dark ale that stuck with Ireland through famines and U2's dalliance with Europop, might make for a hang-over-free holiday — if you don't imbibe while stirring.

**"With beer, really, the sky's the limit. ... Choosing the right beer with a dish is the hard part."**

— **KYLE BAILEY, EXECUTIVE CHEF, BIRCH & BARLEY**

"With beer, really, the sky's the limit," says Kyle Bailey, executive chef of Birch & Barley (1337 14th St. NW; 202-567-2576). "Stouts work well with heavier meats and dishes with flavors that can stand up against full-bodied beers."

Birch & Barley is known for elevating beer to the status formerly reserved for wine lists. With 50-plus brews on tap, characterized by properties such as "fruity" or "toasty," Bailey can easily cook with stout, too. From brat burgers braised in Allagash White to cheese rinds doused in Belgium's Chimay pale

ale, dishes both sweet and savory can get richness, fullness and, sometimes, a welcome bitterness from beer. Short ribs, marinated in Schlafly Irish Style Extra Stout (recipe, right), will be on the menu later this spring.

Still, there's a science to cooking with brews as delicate as surviving pub crawls in Dublin. As with wine, beer with longer fermentation processes tends to be higher in alcohol, which helps it retain flavors when boiled or baked. "If you cook with hoppy ones that're low in alcohol, you get mostly bitterness," says Greg Engert, Birch & Barley's beer director. "The alcohol cooks out, but the fermentation ensures richness."

At the Irish Inn at Glen Echo (6119 Tulane Ave.; Glen Echo, Md.; 301-229-6600), chef Ross Vandiver uses stouts for beef stews, brewing broth from stock and beer to intensify hearty, traditional Irish dishes. "The malt and barley adds

## sip tip

Stouts aren't for everyone. For drink-loving Irish patriots, new Michael Collins 10 Year Old Single Malt Irish whiskey fetes Irish whiskey making and the Cork-born hero credited with leading Ireland to independence (\$40, liquor stores or Michaelcollinswhiskey.com).

## Did you know?

Birch & Barley beer man Greg Engert notes that when Ireland started exporting Guinness to the U.S. in 1817, brewers added more malt, sugar and grain to the stout, and fermented it longer, to help it withstand long journeys. In 2010, Guinness revived the original formula as Guinness Export Stout, which Engert recommends for cooking.

## Recipe File



### SCHLAFLY STOUT-BRAISED SHORT RIBS FROM BIRCH & BARLEY

#### Ingredients

- Three 3-oz. beef chuck short ribs
- 1 cup Schlafly Irish Style Extra Stout
- 1 medium carrot, medium rough chop
- 1 celery stick, medium-rough chop
- 2 shallots, medium-rough chop
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1/4 bunch thyme
- 1 pint chicken stock
- 1 poblano pepper, roasted, peeled and seeded, then smoked over hickory chips
- 1 celery root, medium diced and cooked in vegetable stock
- 1 Roma tomato, medium diced

#### Serves Two

1. Sear short ribs; remove from pan.
2. Lightly brown carrots, celery, shallot and garlic. Add tomato; cook until browned.
3. Add chicken stock and beer. Add thyme. Bring to boil. Add meat.
4. Put into 300 F oven. Braise for two hours.
5. Assemble on plate. Garnish with celery leaf.