

**Beer** is the world's oldest and most widely consumed alcoholic beverage and the third most popular drink overall after water and tea. It is produced by the brewing and fermentation of starches, mainly derived from cereals-the most common of which is malted barley, although wheat, corn, and rice are also widely used. Most beer is flavored with hops, which add bitterness and act as a natural preservative, though other flavorings such as herbs or fruit may occasionally be included.

## Beer Families

**Ale** is the family of beers fermented with warm-temperature yeasts. These yeast strains are often referred to as top-fermenting because the yeast as it is fermenting is suspended throughout the wort, and create a big layer of foam on top of the ferment called krausen. *Morton's carries several core ales such as Guinness stout and Sierra Nevada Torpedo Extra IPA.*

**Lager** is the family of beers fermented with cold-temperature yeasts. Lager does not necessarily mean a light, straw colored beer you drink while watching football on TV. The word 'lager' comes from the German verb 'to store'; German beers were traditionally cold-conditioned in ice caves. *Many of the beers that we carry at Morton's are in this family.*

**Hybrid** there are a few of them, California Common being one (the only truly indigenous American beer) and Kolsch from Cologne Germany being another example.

## What is beer made from?

**Malted Barley** is derived from soaking and toasting barley to develop enzymes that are required to modify starches into sugars. Barley is the most commonly malted grain but wheat is used in several styles, most prominently Hefeweizen.

**Hops**, the flower of the hop vine, is used as a flavouring and preservative agent in nearly all beer made today. Hops contribute a bitterness that balances the sweetness of the malt and also contributes floral, citrus, and herbal aromas and flavours to beer.

**Yeast** is the microorganism that is responsible for fermentation in beer. Yeast metabolizes the sugars extracted from grains, which produces alcohol and carbon dioxide, and thereby turns the fermenting ingredients into beer. In addition to fermenting the beer, yeast influences the character and flavour.