

OFFICIAL BEER GLOVE

Cold-weather tailgates suck. Winter patio parties, open-air games, polar bearing, the whole lot. No matter how cozy camaraderie may be, it's not the most trivial thing to bring a sub-zero fest to rosier levels. When the wind is whipping your scarf-swaddled face, with each step toward a friend or a vulnerable snack crunching with rime, the last thing you need is a beverage in your hand sucking the last dregs of warmth from your clammy, underprepared palm. But leave those mugs of peppermint schnappy hot chocolates and mulled hot ciders to the shivering weaklings; if cold beer is what you crave, cold beer is what you get, and the Official Beer Glove aims to make it the least sufferable cold beer you'd expect on a friggin' frozen day.

So how, exactly, does the Official Beer Glove “keep your beer frosty cold and your hand toasty warm”? Well, obviously the most important part is the color selection, in which the various combinations of black, red, pink, navy, purple, gold, blue and an inexplicable shamrock-adorned green satisfy most assertions of color coordination, team pride and yarn-dyed obsession. (And if one must be picky, they can also execute custom designs.) The stretchy acrylic-blend glove comes in one size (magically accommodating my x-small hands and a colleague's x-large paws) with arrows and “PLACE BEER HERE” emblazoned on the insides in nubby, grippy splendor. Granted, the unabashed for-beer-only design manages to stir that tacky place in my heart reserved for foam fingers and fuzzy boots, but hey—it works. For that alone they deserve props, for saving the world one icy party at a time.

[\$7/pair at officialbeerglove.com]



THE BEST OF AMERICAN BEER & FOOD: PAIRING & COOKING WITH CRAFT BEER BY LUCY SAUNDERS

Despite being comfortably fed during the times I've browsed through this supple, glossy cookbook, my stomach curiously insists on working up an inevitable rumble. Attractively designed with glisteningly pornographic close-ups of Deschutes lamb chops with roasted fennel and portobello mushroom risotto and fudge stout brownies, this latest release from Lucy Saunders (author of *Cooking with Beer* and *Grilling with Beer*) concentrates on the interactive pairing of food and beer flavor profiles. “Beer is food” is the gung-ho takeaway message, and it's comprehensively explored through two main parts of the book: a detailed survey of American craft beer culture from coast to coast, and then a slew of recipes (from “Egg, Pasta, and Sauces” to “Off the Hoof”) incorporating a wide variety of dishes and experience levels.

The introductory chapters on pairing beer with cheese and with chocolate are genius, at once creating an enjoyable—yet tractable—examination on complementary flavors and experimenting with what works. Suggested couplings such as baby swiss with unfiltered farmhouse ale or Camembert with malty *Maibock* come with tasting party ideas, and chocolate-beer recipes such as Dark Lager Mole or Chocolate Stout Sorbet make me all but writhe with gastronomic glee. Readers can appreciate the suggested beer pairings with every recipe in the book (like shallot and stout-glazed steak with cumin-pepper onions paired with an American Pilsner or dark lager), and frequent interviews with American brewers and enthusiasts scattered within the pages make for grounded, passionate cooking and drinking.

[\$15.61 at amazon.com; bestofamericanbeerandfood.com]



THE CURE: THE AFTER-DRINKING DRINK

The press kit for a pastel pouchette of therapeutic effervescence gets right to the point, asking you point blank: “HUNGOVER?” What follows is an assemblage of supposedly hearsay hangover remedies, a forlorn, defenseless little grouping of imbibables one might find at The Crazy Café: CMYK bottles of Gatorade, a dose of Alka-Seltzer, a feisty pint of impaled-by-a-celery Bloody Mary, delicious pellets of aspirin and a plate of burger and fries that looks like someone sat on it. Yum. But of course, the *real* solution lies in what they're peddling, “The Cure,” a proprietary all-natural hangover remedy with the combinatorial magic of beet root powder, milk thistle and 16,667 percent of my recommended daily value of vitamin B12. A Duke University developmental biologist and a doctor of clinical psychology were somehow involved in the formulation. Plus, there's bubbles! I'm sold.

Admittedly, I'm not very prone to hangovers, both in terms of drinking responsibly and merely having a tolerant disposition for excess. But one morning after an extensive scotch tasting, my head was feeling a bit furry, my innards churning somewhere between starvation and tummy ache. Eager to test out the Cure, I ripped open that sucker and added cold water to the “tropical flavored fizzy drink mix” as directed, watching the foaming pink monster come to life. After getting my bearings and sucking it down—a tasty but bracingly citric and fruity formulation, not unlike a liquid SweetTart—I realized that the recommended directions for use is to drink it right after the *last alcoholic beverage*, not the morning after. Wait, so I have to be proactive and actually responsible at the end of the night? OK, that's fair, but asking more from me than that inert pile of fries. Post-Cure, I did feel a tad healthier, but I believe the scientists that following the directions next time will be better; in situations of doubt, always trust the scientists.

[\$2.99/packet at select grocery, liquor and convenience stores and thecuredrink.com]



Christine Liu loves respecting a good beer, especially when it happens to match her shoes. When not slurping—and photographing—a bowl of spicy noodles, find her canvassing Boston's lifestyle scene and taking her Macbook out for a walk.