

## Shmanners 226: Beer - Lagers

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[theme music plays]

**Travis:** Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

**Teresa:** And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

**Travis:** And you're listening to *Shmanners*.

**Teresa:** It's extraordinary etiquette...

**Travis:** For ordinary occasions! Hello, my dove.

**Teresa:** Hello, dear.

**Travis:** How are you?

**Teresa:** We were havin' a nice little—lil' shimmy fest, over here.

**Travis:** A little ratatata ramatana, gettin' some—gettin' our groove on. Gettin' in the rhythm.

**Teresa:** I'm really excited about this one.

**Travis:** Oh?

**Teresa:** Because again, I'm not presenting it.

**Travis:** Well, you know, I don't know if you know this, marriage is a partnership.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Um, and both people need to contribute equally.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Everybody needs to give—what is it? You need to give—it's 100%—

**Teresa:** Give a little bit.

**Travis:** —a little bit of your love to me?

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Okay. Now, we are gonna talk some more about beer. We've done ale—

**Teresa:** [singing] Glorious beer!

**Travis:** Beer. Beer, beer, beer. Beer, beer, beer. I'm gonna look up—'cause, uh, we were reminded that we had not done a second part of our beer series. We've done ales so far.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Now, while I look this up, Teresa, I want you to tell me. What kind of beer do you like to consume with your body?

**Teresa:** Um, let's see. I am not into the IPA, hop business.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** I like—I like a smooth, dark beer. Um, I'm a big fan of Guinness.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Uh, but I—

**Travis:** Yeah, that's a stout, yes.

**Teresa:** —yes, yes. But also, I like, um, a crispy kind of light beer, like a Harp.

**Travis:** Uh, yeah. And I also—so, um, we're talking about lagers. I'm gonna say, Rose sent in, August 30<sup>th</sup>, a reminder that we—"Hey, you haven't talked about beer in a while! What about lagers?"

Yes.

**Teresa:** [simultaneously] Yes.

**Travis:** So, um, my—there are—uh, beer is a lot like food. Not just, you know, in what I'm about to say, but in many ways. [laughs quietly] Uh, but—

**Teresa:** [laughs] In that you eat it.

**Travis:** In that you eat it.

**Teresa:** It has a lot of calories.

**Travis:** Okay, sure.

**Teresa:** And it smells like bread.

**Travis:** All of that is true.

**Teresa:** Yes, yes! Just like food. [laughs]

**Travis:** But it is, I think that... a drink of preference, more so than a lot of other things. Like, I don't know how this is true of, like, wine, or coffee or, you know, soda even, right?

Where I think that beer is so adaptable, and there's so many different types of it, right? That people will often have, like, a—"Well, this is my favorite

beer if I'm at an outdoor cookout. This is my favorite kind of beer in the winter months. Oh, this is my favorite kind of fall beer."

**Teresa:** And by people, you mean you.

**Travis:** Well, I—

**Teresa:** Because that's how you do it.

**Travis:** —well, I assume other people do, too. 'Cause the way I do it is right.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And I would say that I—you and I, uh, in the Before Times—and I don't just mean before corona. I also mean before kids—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** —um, when we would go out to bars, right? One of—

**Teresa:** [wistfully] Ahh, yes.

**Travis:** Ahh, yes. That time.

**Teresa:** Belly up to the bar.

**Travis:** Yes. Um, a—a draft beer...

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** ... that we both liked that was above, I would say, a certain level, and was often on tap, was Stella.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Yes, that we both enjoyed. That is a lager.

**Teresa:** Slightly sweet.

**Travis:** Crisp, drinkable.

**Teresa:** Um, crisp, drinkable.

**Travis:** Not too heavy.

**Teresa:** Right. Uh, a little... a little creamy. Just a tiny bit.

**Travis:** [high pitched] Just a little bit! [normally] Um, here are some other well-known lager brands, just to kind of walk us into it, right? Uh, Carling, Foster's, Carlsburg, Peroni, Stella Artois, Coors Light, San Miguel, Kronenberg, Amstel, Tennant's, um... you know, Miller, Budweiser.

Um, these are all recognizable lagers, right? Uh, but they're not the types of lagers, so here we go. These are all the types of lagers. It's a very adaptable, uh, kind. Okay, you ready?

**Teresa:** I'm ready.

**Travis:** American light lager, Pilsner, Dortmunder, Munich Heles, Marzen, Oktoberfest, Vienna lager, Rauchbier, Traditional Bock, Helesbock, Maibock, Doppelbock, Eisbock, Munich Dunkel, Schwarzbier, herb and spice, fruit, smoke, winter warmers, holiday beers, and more.

**Teresa:** Nice!

**Travis:** Right? A lot.

**Teresa:** I can remember gettin' into a nice Bock.

**Travis:** Let's see. I very much enjoy a Heles. But here's—here's the deal.

**Teresa:** I think Am—Amberbock?

**Travis:** Amberbock, yes. How... is a lager... different from an ale?

**Teresa:** Ummm...

**Travis:** And I mean technically.

**Teresa:** Technically.

**Travis:** I don't mean, like, in flavor or execution. I mean—

**Teresa:** Doesn't—it comes—the—the beer comes from a different part of the—of the... [pauses] barrel?

**Travis:** Y—you know what? I'm gonna give it to you.

**Teresa:** Okay, thanks.

**Travis:** Uh, because an ale is top fermenting, right?

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Uh, and so, it ferments through the body of the beer wort. Wort is, uh, you know, when you've got everything together, the grains and hops and everything, uh, before it ferments.

**Teresa:** The beer soup.

**Travis:** The beer soup, yes, exactly. I just made a hefeweizen, so—which is... a lager, if I'm not mistaken. Um, but—and so this was something that, uh—I made the wort recently.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Aw, man. It smells so good, doesn't it?

**Teresa:** It did smell good.

**Travis:** Oh, it smelled so good. Um, and so when an ale top-ferments, the yeast rises to the top of the mixture, uh, and it has usually a higher, um, alcohol content. Uh, so it'll yield stronger beers, right?

**Teresa:** Okay, yeah. That makes sense.

**Travis:** Now, lager is a much more fragile process, which I think will make sense when—you know, you were talking about that they're crisper, right? Lighter, right?

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** So when you're thinking of lighter things, that usually translates to more fragile.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Yeah?

**Teresa:** Okay!

**Travis:** Uh, like—as you mentioned, a lot of this corresponds directly to, like, bread, right?

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** So if you're making a dense loaf, it's not gonna collapse in on itself, right? But if you're making, like, a soufflé, you gotta be careful, because you've whipped a lot of air in there, right?

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** So, fragile equals light, light equals fragile. Right? So it has to be brewed at a very low temperature due to the fragility of the yeast, and

bottom-fermenting—so, bottom-fermenting is when the yeast ferments throughout the body of the beer and settles to the bottom of the vessel.

**Teresa:** Instead of the ale, right, where it goes to the top.

**Travis:** Right, it settles at the top, yes. Um, and the thing is, this means it develops more slowly. Right? And so you get a lower alcohol content that's, uh, super drinkable, less hoppy.

Um, they're usually, you know, crisper, uh, less fruity of a palate than ale. Um, and... so, here's a Corona, right?

**Teresa:** Yeah, yeah.

**Travis:** The drink. Not the pandemic.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Uh, it is a famous lager. Coors Light, Budweiser, these things. Um, if you have—[laughs] this is—I will quote Alex a bunch of times throughout this, because... man, I just love her writing sometimes. B—uh, all the time.

Basically—quote, "Basically, if you're day drinking beer on a boat or the beach, you're probably drinking some type of lager."

This is true. I can't imagine being, like, on a beach and going, "I'd love, uh—uh, I don't know. I'd love a... Guinness." [laughs] Right?

**Teresa:** No, yeah.

**Travis:** No, no.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Only if I want to immediately go to sleep. You know?



**Teresa:** Mmm.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Maybe you do!

**Travis:** So, when you think of lager, right? Oftentimes what people think of is, like, the—the—okay. If I say, like, Miller Lite, Coors. Uh, uh, these beers, right?

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** What is the thing people always say? They're brewed with... [pauses] no? Okay.

**Teresa:** I don't know! [laughs]

**Travis:** "Tap the Rockies. Coors Light. Crisp mountain spring water."

**Teresa:** Water. Oh, okay, okay.

**Travis:** "Oh, so—[holding back laughter] it's so cold in the mountains." Well, that didn't start in the Rockies. It started in the Swiss Alps.

**Teresa:** Oh, that makes sense.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Um, so monks in the Swiss Alps—and this is—

**Teresa:** Wasn't there—there was a beer can, or bottle, a couple years ago where, like, when it was cold, the mountains appeared on the label?

**Travis:** I think that was Coor—that might've been... oh, man. It might've been Keystone? I can't—

**Teresa:** I don't know. I don't know.

**Travis:** —yeah, I don't remember. Okay.

**Teresa:** But that's—that's what I think of.

**Travis:** But when it was cold enough you could see—I'm trying to remember. I heard on something where they were like, "If only there was another sense we could use."

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "To determine temperature of a can."

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "Instead of just visual."

**Teresa:** Touché.

**Travis:** So, monks at this time would carve their beer cellars directly into these rocky hills of the Swiss Alps, and they could pack these cellars with ice from, you know, when the streams and mountains and stuff froze over, and it would give them cold storage for their beers well into the summer months.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** And in doing this, they were creating a perfect environment for lagers, right?

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Because you had, uh, a lower temperature that you were brewing at, and because you maintained this lower temperature, you could get that slow brewing process that you need to have that crisp lager, right?

**Teresa:** Sounds great.

**Travis:** And not only that. I should also clarify, lager yeast is different from ale yeast. Not only does it settle to different points, right? That's not just a process of brewing. It is also, like, a different strain of yeast.

**Teresa:** Ohh!

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** So you can't—you can't just make a beer with wild yeast. I mean, I guess you can, but then—

**Travis:** Yeah, I mean, you could. But who knows what it would be? [laughs]

**Teresa:** [laughs] Okay, okay. So you'd have to kind of reverse engineer and be like, "Okay, this is wild yeast beer. So, then what does it taste like?" Or—

**Travis:** Well, so—yeah, that's the thing. We used to—I think we talked about this in the Ale episode. But, like—like, beer used to be brewed—like, long, long, early days, where it was like you would mix it and, like, chew up some bread and, like, spit it into the beer and stuff, right?

**Teresa:** Yeah, yeah.

**Travis:** And it was really just like, "We'll see what happens!"

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Right? And now we're more into the process of, "We know if we mix this thing and this thing and this thing, and do it at this temperature, beer is made." We might not know the exact science behind it, but we—we are now,

at this point in history, when we're talking about the monks in the Swiss Alps, it was a much more repeatable process.

**Teresa:** Got it.

**Travis:** Right. Um, but if this lager yeast was at the wrong temperature, you could end up with spoiled batches, or the yeast would be super overactive, so you would end up with, like, all these funky other flavors and, like—it just wasn't the same. Right?

So, cooler temperatures is the way to go. That bottom-fermentation happened in the cool storage, and it was because of a strain of yeast known as—ugh. This is Latin, I think? Sac—[hesitantly] *Saccharomyces uvarum*. Sure.

Um, and this is the strain of yeast that gives us this crisper, you know, taste. And lager itself actually means "cold-stored and slow-brewed."

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** And so everybody was, like, totally cool. That's the history of lager. [blows raspberry] Not quite.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Because here's the thing. Yes, European monasteries, huge—*huge* part of it, right? But there were some holes here. Uh, for—

**Teresa:** Yeah, I mean, definitely sounds a little—a little too tied up in a very neat bow.

**Travis:** A little too tidy. Little too tidy. The thing was is, for one, where did this yeast come from was kind of the big question, right? If it evolved, like, differently from ale yeast, that's, like, thousands of years, right? Not, like, a hundred years in a beer cave with some monks, right?

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** And, not only that, it was then determined in the 1980s, when we started to get better with, like, genetic research and stuff, that it was actually a hybrid strain of ale yeast *and* something else, question mark, question mark, question mark?

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** At which point is like, well, then what—what is that *other* thing? And it wasn't determined until 2011...

**Teresa:** I'm sorry, whaaat?!

**Travis:** Yes. In 2011, a dig unearthed some very fascinating findings. In the Alps, you might ask? No.

**Teresa:** Oh.

**Travis:** [holding back laughter] In Patagonia, 8,000 miles away.

**Teresa:** Now, see, here's the thing, right?

**Travis:** Uh-huh, uh-huh?

**Teresa:** This is kind of like the—the story of our times, right?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Because a lot of the—the history that we thought was true...

**Travis:** "We, the Europeans, made it!"

**Teresa:** [laughs] Exactly.

**Travis:** "Well, hold—huh—h—"

**Teresa:** It's not quite the right thing.

**Travis:** "[high pitched voice] Uh, did you?"

"Yeah, we totally did."

"Oh yeah? When did it start?"

"[through laughter] A hundred years ago!"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "Uhhh... no."

Okay. So, uh, a study was published identifying that the other strain of yeast, the other parent strain... ugh. Known as [slowly] eubayanus.

**Teresa:** Yep, sounds good.

**Travis:** Okay. Uh, was native to southern Argentina. Residue on ancient clay pots suggested that locals were using this yeast to brew low alcohol beverages as much as 400 years before the Bavarian monks decided to play with making beer caves.

**Teresa:** Ahh, uh-huh. There it is.

**Travis:** Um, when tested under a microscope, it was proved to be 99.9% match to the missing link of the lager yeast strain. So, this was the missing link. There we go. Bada bing, bada boom.

So, how did it get from South America to the Alps? Well...

**Teresa:** Well...

**Travis:** Well... in the mid 1500s, ships sailing between Europe and the Americas would barter regularly with indigenous people. Uh, Europeans

brought things like citrus fruit, livestock, alcohol... [muffled] and also... smallpox! Malaria! Measles!

[normally] They weren't offering that so much as they were freely giving it.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Aw, man.

**Travis:** And they would, in exchange, receive from the native peoples things like tobacco, potatoes, corn... and it should also be noted here, because it should always be noted, because this is something that often gets literally whitewashed in history, is also, a lot of these Native people were kidnapped and taken back to Europe as slaves. So, it wasn't just, like, goods and fruits and stuff being traded, but people were being stolen.

So. Now, here's what you're probably thinking, right? Did somebody trade them a big barrel of yeast? No.

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** No.

**Teresa:** They probably... forced them to make the beer for them?

**Travis:** No.

**Teresa:** Oh. Okay.

**Travis:** Well, I mean—

**Teresa:** Well, probably.

**Travis:** I'm not gonna say "No." I don't know.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Right? But what it probably is is—remember earlier in the episode you mentioned wild yeast, right?

**Teresa:** Yes, yes.

**Travis:** So, uh, in livestock trading, right? Like, say, llamas. That kind of thing, maybe. The wild yeast attached to them—

**Teresa:** Ahhh.

**Travis:** —or it was, like, in the wood used to make the barrels, or, um, used to patch up their ships, you know? Before they could go back.

**Teresa:** Well, 'cause it's wild yeast! You can't *keep* that stuff away.

**Travis:** Right. And so they were transporting back, you know, these barrels, some of them barrels filled with ale. Uh, and the yeast probably mingled with there, and started this new strain, right?

And so that, I think, uh, is a pretty comprehensive answer of, "Where did the lager yeast come from?" Now we know. But why, why, why—

**Teresa:** Why?

**Travis:** —has lager achieved this worldwide popularity?

**Teresa:** 'Cause it's good.

**Travis:** Well, okay, sure. But I mean, like—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** —who do we have to thank for that? And I'm willing to bet, based on the fact that we live in Cincinnati, you could tell me.

**Teresa:** Who—who do we have to thank for that?



**Travis:** For the popularity of lager?

**Teresa:** Germans.

**Travis:** Correct.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** German immigrants. And we're gonna talk more about that after a thank you note for our sponsors.

[theme music plays]

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**Travis:** We'd like to give a thank you note to DoorDash. Some of you out there will not appreciate the fact that we live in a time where you can just, like, hop onto your phone—which already, what?! And, like, order from any restaurant that is on DoorDash, right?

Used to be only places that were specifically delivery places would deliver to you. Now, with DoorDash, you can get your favorite food from your favorite restaurants safely. You can support restaurants in your community. There are thousands of restaurants open for delivery on DoorDash, and they need your patronage now more than ever. And DoorDash brings you the food you're craving right now, right to your door.

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Don't forget! That's code "Shmanners" for \$5 off your first order with DoorDash.

We also want to send a thank you note to Function of Beauty, not only for sponsoring the show, but also for making my hair smell terrific. Listen, ones—I know I start a lot of things with "Listen." I just want to make sure—well, one, I want to make sure you're paying attention. And two, I played a lot of *Zelda: Ocarina of Time*, and I just say "Listen!" a lot.

So, one-size-fits-all may work for hair accessories, but when it comes to hair care products, we all might need a little something different, right? So you go to Function of Beauty, and no matter your hair type, Function of Beauty is going create shampoo, conditioner, and treatments to fit your unique needs. They have over – get ready – 54 *trillion* possible ingredient combinations, to make sure your formula is as unique as you are.

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[music plays]

**Helen:** Hey, J. Keith!

**J. Keith:** Hey, Helen! Hey, you've got another true false quiz for me?

**Helen:** Yep! Our trivia podcast, *Go Fact Yourself*, used to be in front of a live audience.

**J. Keith:** True! Turns out that's not so safe anymore.

**Helen:** Correct! Next: unfortunately, this means we can no longer record the show.

**J. Keith:** False! The show still comes out every first and third Friday of the month.

**Helen:** Correct! Finally: we still have great celebrity guests answering trivia about things they love on every episode of *Go Fact Yourself!*

**J. Keith:** Definitely true.

**Helen:** And for bonus points, name some of them.

**J. Keith:** Recently we've had Ophira Eisenberg, plus tons of surprise experts like Yeardley Smith and Suzanne Somers.

**Helen:** Perfect score!

**J. Keith:** Woohoo!

**Helen:** You can hear *Go Fact Yourself* every first and third Friday of the month with all the great guests and trivia that we've always had! And if you don't listen, well, then you can *go fact yourself!*

**J. Keith:** That's the name of our podcast!

**Helen:** Correct!

**J. Keith:** Woohoo!

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**Travis:** Okay. Okay. Hello. It's me. It's me again. So, the German people. Man, they sure do love... that golden stuff. [laughs]

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** That—so, uh, it is estimated...

**Teresa:** I have German heritage.

**Travis:** Sure.

**Teresa:** Uh, a lot of people... in this area have German heritage.

**Travis:** In this area, too, yes.

**Teresa:** And it almost feels like this is, like, a "duh"? One of those "duh's," you know?

**Travis:** Yeah. So, um, a lot of—like, a lot of lagers that we have today—I mean, listen to the terminology, right? Doppelbock, Dunkel, Hefeweizen. German, German, German, German, German.

**Teresa:** [simultaneously] German, German.

**Travis:** Right? Uh, there is—there is some kind of lager in every beer drinking country across the world. By one estimation, it's thought that around 87.7% of beers in the world are lagers, because it's just so versatile. Um, and you can get that, you know—we mentioned the smoky one, that Rauchbier, R-A-U-C-H-B-I-E-R, which is, of course, German.

**Teresa:** German.

**Travis:** Um, there is also, like, a—a little light, sweet Japanese rice lager.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Um, and it's so, so versatile, right?

**Teresa:** We—I think one time you brought home some Japanese beer, right?

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Yeah. I mean, there's Kirin. Uh—uh, oh, why—why am I forgetting? Uh—there's a lot of great Japanese lagers.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Um, but... here's my question for you.

**Teresa:** Uh-oh.

**Travis:** If I say—if I were to say to you, "You know what's some great beer? Miller Lite, Budweiser, Coors—" That face. That face.

**Teresa:** [groans quietly]

**Travis:** Now, listen. This is the thing about lagers. [laughs quietly] I've taken off my glasses. I'm brushing back my long hair. Because they're seen as a bit basic, right? A lot of people when they're like, "Oh, I'm gonna be snobby about beer!" And listen, if you like IPA, I'm not saying you're a snob, but I am saying that snobby people—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** —tend to talk about IPAs a lot when they talk about beer, right? Because now it's like, "Oh, in craft brewing it's all about IPAs," and blah, blah, blah.

Do you remember in the "Ales" episode where we talked about, like, craft brewing and how, uh, during Prohibition—I think we talked about this. But during Prohibition, a lot of these, like, craft breweries went under—in case you missed it.

**Teresa:** Yes. I—yeah, I remember this.

**Travis:** Here's the long and the short of it, right?

**Teresa:** Give us and the audience a recap.

**Travis:** During... Prohibition... most breweries were shut down, or went out of business. There were a handful given licenses to continue to produce beer for medicinal reasons, or whatever. Right? But these licenses were very, very hard to come by.

Now, here is where I, Travis McElroy, am going to make a small, small, small mental leap. But I think that I would be proved true by anybody who knows what they're actually talking about.

**Teresa:** [laughs loudly] A caveat if I've ever heard one.

**Travis:** Do you remember one of the things we said, the difference between an ale and a lager? A lager has lower alcohol content.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** So I'm willing to bet that the reason lagers received a lot more of these licenses—

**Teresa:** Ahh.

**Travis:** —were lower alcohol content, right? So, uh, breweries like Budweiser, Coors, Miller, right? They got to keep making these beers. And I think because it's... you know, you always hear, like, "This isn't your grandfather's beer," or whatever, right?

**Teresa:** Uh-huh, yeah.

**Travis:** Or "This isn't your grandfather's 'blank,'" right? Budweiser and Miller Lite—these are your grandfather's beers, right?

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** So they're not seen as cool, a lot of the time. A lot of the time it's seen as, like, "That's what, you know, everybody drinks on their 21st birthday or whatever. If you really want to try—try blah, blah, blah, blah, blah."

Which is all pre—the people who say, like, "Oh, it's just water! Eww, don't blah, blah, blah."

Well, first of all, trust me, you can get drunk on Budweiser.

**Teresa:** Oh, I'm sure you can.

**Travis:** That is—that's a thing. It is beer. There is beer in it.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** There—there's alcohol in it! And, you know, a lot of people also say, like, "Well, it's so mass produced it doesn't have, you know, any kind of special blah, blah—"

**Teresa:** Characteristics or whatever.

**Travis:** Meh meh meh. Yeah. You know, I think it's the same as, like, anybody who knows anything about wine will tell you, like, if you enjoy drinking it, it is a good wine for you.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Right? Price, uh, exclusivity, all of that stuff is all just stuff that we tell ourselves is important so that we feel fancy, drinking or eating or doing the thing that we're doing, right? But lager is great, you know? It's light, it's fine, it—[sighs] It might not—

**Teresa:** I feel like the time that I've really enjoyed things like Budweiser or Coors or whatever has been in, like, um... you can make a margarita with beer. That's delicious. You can make Bloody Marys with beer.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Um, and I think that that's the kind of thing that I like those beers in.

**Travis:** Well, and there's—you know, there's plenty of beer experts out there. Um, the one that Alex apparently fell in love with during researching this, his name is Mark Dredge. Uh, he is the author of *A Brief History of Lager*. He is a London-based beer aficionado.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Um, and I just can't say enough how much Alex loves—literally says, "He seems like a freakin' sweetheart."

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Uh, she even says, quote, "I have a crush on him."

Um, so, the thing is, is, uh, he talks about that beers—these lagers, right? We have kind of entered, or maybe have come through a bit of a punk phase in brewing, where we kind of came back around to, like, "Now we're doin' IPAs, and these fancy beers and stuff!"

And now it's kind of coming back around to, like, "Yeah, maybe it's fine to just enjoy a nice lager."

Because like I said back at the beginning, I think that you don't have to say, "This is the only kind of beer I drink no matter what the time is, no matter what the situation is."



And I think that there are plenty of times where what I really want is a nice, crisp, easy-to-drink lager, you know? If I'm standing there, uh, grilling out for example, right?

**Teresa:** Oh, yeah.

**Travis:** Like, that's what I want. Is lager my favorite type of beer? I don't know if a Gose fruit sour is a lager. If it is, then the answer is yes.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Okay. Let's talk about lager etiquette.

**Teresa:** Ooh!

**Travis:** Ooh!

**Teresa:** Okay, alright!

**Travis:** Okay. First and foremost, perhaps the most important thing about any kind of drinking, uh, or consuming of any kind of, I guess, uh, substance that alters you, is consume responsibly.

**Teresa:** Indeed.

**Travis:** No drinking and driving, ever. Don't do it! In this day and age where there's ride shares, and cabs, and friends, and lime scooters— [through laughter] I don't know—I don't know if you should scooter.

**Teresa:** Does that—does that count as drinking and driving?

**Travis:** You know what? I'm gonna say it is.

**Teresa:** You're—you're driving a scooter.

**Travis:** Yeah, don't do it. I know a friend of mine who was not drunk, but did wreck on one of those and, like, fractured his collarbone. So, yeah, don't scooter and drive either. You—

**Teresa:** Nope. Don't drink and—don't—

**Travis:** Don't scooter and drive. And don't drink and scooter.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Um, there is no need to chug your beer. Now, this comes—listen. This comes from me, a person who has done plenty of shotgunning, plenty of beer bong, plenty of drinking games, [holding back laughter] and I'm very good at them.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Don't get me wrong. But you do not need to. Um, also, you don't have to order blindly, especially if you are somewhere where they pride themselves on their selection.

**Teresa:** Right. Like, if you go someplace and there's a wall full of taps—

**Travis:** Right. If you're in a taproom.

**Teresa:** —somebody wants to tell you about the different beers.

**Travis:** Ab-so-lutely. Uh, and you know what? It probably isn't always gonna be served in a cold glass. If you get asked, "Do you want it in a cold glass?" Think about it! You know what I mean? Because the thing is, is, cold can often change the flavor profile.

**Teresa:** Right, because you don't taste sweet as much when something is cold, right? So, like, if you have really, really cold ice cream, it's not gonna taste as sweet as, like, melty ice cream is.

**Travis:** Exactly. And, you know, in Europe, most beers are served warm. Uh—

**Teresa:** Or room temperature.

**Travis:** —or room temperature. Um, so yeah, try that. Also—and this goes once again as a very good kind of life lesson. You can drink whatever you want. Don't judge other people for drinking what they want, right? So if you pick the most obscure, fancy craft beer, and your friend gets a Budweiser... are you both havin' a good time? Enjoy each other's company. Don't razz each other. That's not nice.

Now, we should also talk about, here—we're going to include some German biergarten etiquette.

**Teresa:** Aw, man.

**Travis:** I know. [holding back laughter] I miss biergartens too! [fake sobbing]

**Teresa:** There's a pretty nice one here in Cincinnati.

**Travis:** The Hofbrauhaus.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** It's nice. Um, so biergartens have been a part of German culture since the 18th century. Uh, there are many still standing today. Um, and you—oh. If you see a picture of an Oktoberfest in Munich, probably had a biergarten.

**Teresa:** Oh yeah.

**Travis:** Yes. So, if you get to go to a biergarten, here are some things to think about. A biergarten—and I'm saying B-I-E-R-G-A-R-T-E-N-S, biergartens, biergarten, uh, is it is communal seating, right? So you're probably not gonna get a table to yourself.

**Teresa:** In fact, a lot of ones that I've been to have long, like, hall tables.

**Travis:** Right, right. Um, and so it's not really something where you can, like, reserve a whole table for, like, three people, right?

**Teresa:** Right. Right, right, right, right, right.

**Travis:** You're probably going to be sitting with some people. Same as—you know, if you're looking for a seat and you see a spot open, go for it.

**Teresa:** Cozy on up.

**Travis:** Right? Um, something to look for—uh, if there's a plaque on the table, though, this is likely a st—stammtisch? S-T-A-M-M-T-I-S-C-H. Uh, or a table reserved for regulars, or perhaps members of the biergarten.

**Teresa:** Hmm, okay.

**Travis:** Um, so this might not be up for grabs. Um, there might not be servers at this biergarten. Don't assume service.

**Teresa:** Counter service. Might be counter service.

**Travis:** Right, it's probably counter service. Um, now this holds true—this is, I think, a good rule of thumb in general that we're losing touch of. Uh, but don't assume that they take cards, right?

**Teresa:** Okay, okay.

**Travis:** 'Cause some of these biergartens can be super old, and they might be cash-only, especially if you're going to, like, a 200-year-old biergarten in Munich.

**Teresa:** Yeah, yeah.

**Travis:** Right? Don't assume that they take cards. I remember... ugh. I remember being a youngster, back in the Before—Before, Before, Before Times and, you know, having to ask—when I first got a card having to ask, like, "Do you guys take cards?" Before I ordered food or before shopping, right? Being, like, 18 and—'cause there were a couple times where, like, I'd get an armful of groceries or whatever, order food, and then they'd be like, "Oh, we don't take cards. You gotta go get cash from an ATM."

And I'm like, "What?!"

**Teresa:** Yeah. That happened to me at a gas station when I was in high school.

**Travis:** Yeah. Um, speaking of food, don't assume that there will be food at these biergartens. They don't always have food. Sometimes it's just drinking. Right? And so if you're hungry, make sure that you got food beforehand. Um, now, if they don't have food, you might be able to bring outside food in with you.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Travis:** There you go.

**Teresa:** Like at—at places like Oktoberfest, there are usually, like, food carts, food stands that you bring with you into the biergarten.

**Travis:** Yeah. Also, don't always assume you can order food to the biergarten, right?

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** It might be frowned upon. Uh, you know, it might be like—you got way too much, and—in general, this is... something to think about is, what we are looking at here is a communal space.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Where people are consuming alcohol, right?

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** So it can be really easy to tip over into obnoxious behavior, right?

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Now, this is not saying you have to be quiet. Usually beer halls are, you know, fun, a little bit raucous, everybody's-having-a-good-time kind of places. But you have to always have in the back of your head that kind of running, thinking about, "Is my good time ruining someone else's good time," right?

**Teresa:** Sure, and I think that a good, like, concrete way to think about that is, find someone who looks like a regular, and don't do anything that they're not doing.

**Travis:** Right.

**Teresa:** Right? It was really great when we went to Scotland. We went to a pub, which was counter service, and we found a couple—

**Travis:** Well, they found us.

**Teresa:** —well, they found—

**Travis:** We were sitting there kind of going, "Uhh," and they were like, "Did you just—is this your first time in town?"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** We were like, "Yes is is!"

And they're like, "Okay, here's what you need to do."

**Teresa:** And they were so nice, and so—you know, they were happy to explain to us what we needed to do, and—

**Travis:** Yes, and give us recommendations to go to places. It was great.

**Teresa:** It was great. So, in the community of the biergarten, see what—see what's around. See what kind of people you can meet.

**Travis:** Um, also, here's a quick language lesson. Heles means "light," right? Uh, weizen is "wheat."

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** And dunkel is "dark," so—

**Teresa:** Ohh, alright.

**Travis:** —as you're looking at the different kind of beers, that'll give you a good clue. Um, so for example—Hefe, H-E-F-E, hefe, is the type of yeast. Um, so hefeweizen is, like, a wheat—you get it.

**Teresa:** Yeah!

**Travis:** Um, and bitte, B-I-T-T-E, is please, danke is thank you. Um, you know, but if you're, like, full-on in Germany, you should learn more than that.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But that's a good start. Um, be mindful of portions, you know? Sometimes at these beer halls you can get, like, a liter of beer in a big old, like, huge stein.

**Teresa:** "It comes in pints!" [laughs]

**Travis:** It's super cool.

**Teresa:** [leans away to continue laughing]

**Travis:** Listen. It's super cool, and I love doing it... but that's a lot of beer. [laughs quietly] So be aware that you don't have to get that much. Don't steal the glass. This is very important 'cause, like, a lot of people—they're cool! Listen, they're cool.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Those glasses are cool. But they're also, uh, needed by the beer hall. Uh, a lot of places will actually now make you pay a deposit on the glass—

**Teresa:** Really?

**Travis:** —that you only get back when you return it. And listen, if you think it's cool, I guarantee they sell them, right?

**Teresa:** Sure, sure.

**Travis:** You can buy one of these. Do that. Um, let's see. They close, by law, at 11:00 PM. I assume this is in Germany.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** So, they stop serving drinks at 10:30, so be cool about that. Don't be a jerk about that. Uh, and listen! [sighs] This is the other thing, right? We're talking about a communal experience and being cool.

**Teresa:** Right, right.

**Travis:** It is not about, "How fast can we get drunk?"

**Teresa:** Oh, yeah.



**Travis:** Right? Like, this is... now, in my older, uh, more respectable years, I have learned that the fun experience of just being in this communal experience, enjoying a fine, crisp lager with friends and not just, like—"It's 15 minutes and I can still remember my own name! I'm not drinking enough!" Right?

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** That time—that—this is gone from me. Now it is just about enjoying the company. So, do that. Enjoy the company. And there's no reason to drink alcohol! Let me recommend this. If you're looking to slow down, but you still want alcohol, a radler, R-A-D-L-E-R, is a popular drink in Germany that is a combination of lemonade and beer.

**Teresa:** Ohh!

**Travis:** Um, yes.

**Teresa:** That sounds delicious.

**Travis:** Yeah. And oftentimes, uh, beer halls will often have non-alcoholic options, too, so you don't have to go and break your sobriety. You can enjoy a soda! Or a—a—[sighs] a—[slowly] Apfelschorle. A-P-F-E-L-S-C-H-O-R-L-E, which is a carbonated apple juice, which is a German favorite.

**Teresa:** Ugh. Also sounds delicious.

**Travis:** Doesn't that sound great? So, drink responsibly. And, uh, commune respectfully. How about those?

**Teresa:** I love it.

**Travis:** I think those are two pretty good lessons, overall. Uh, and that's gonna do it for us. But you know what? Here's what I want. I want two things. One: if you have ever been to a German biergarten and you have, like, pictures or experiences or whatever, I want you to tweet at us,

@shmatterscast. And I also want to tweet at us and tell me what your favorite lager is.

**Teresa:** Speaking of tweets...

**Travis:** Uh-huh?

**Teresa:** Uh, that is where, when we call for questions, where we get our listener questions. Um, @shmatterscast. And, let's see. Where we get our topics is the Gmail account, so—

**Travis:** Thank you again to Rose.

**Teresa:** Yes. Shmatterscast—

**Together:** —@gmail.com.

**Travis:** You looked at—

**Teresa:** Oh, man. [laughs]

**Travis:** Man. [sighs] That face. I know that face is, "And I don't know... "

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "... the next word." Uh, also, hey. We always say a big thank you to Alex, but I also want to say a huge congratulation to Alex, uh, because Alex got engaged this past week! Congratulations, Alex!

**Teresa:** Congrats! Love you.

**Travis:** We couldn't do it without you. Alex helps us with research. Could not do it without you, Alex. Thank you so much.

Um, let's see. Uh—oh! So, me and my brothers... wrote a book about podcasting, a how-to-podcast book that's an actual practical guide, that will take you—

**Teresa:** But also funny.

**Travis:** Also funny. And it will take you step-by-step through the process of creating a podcast that you are proud of. It's called *Everybody Has a Podcast (Except You)*. If you go to [mcelroypodcastbook.com](http://mcelroypodcastbook.com), you can preorder it there.

**Teresa:** I wrote several paragraphs as well.

**Travis:** Yes, indeed, about research. What else, Teresa Marie?

**Teresa:** Well, we always thank Brent "Brental Floss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Also, thank you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art. Thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover picture for our fan-run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners. You can join that if you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans!

**Travis:** And that's gonna do it for us, so join us again next week!

**Teresa:** No RSVP required.

**Travis:** You've been listening to *Shmanners...*

**Teresa:** Manners, Shmanners. Get it?

[theme music plays]

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