

# Women and the Brewing World



by David Wollner, Owner and Brewmaster

Over the past millennia women have played a pivotal role as innkeepers, healers, alewives, and, of course, Brewster's. It wasn't until the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that women's role in brewing began to wane. The Church took over the brewing of beer to supplement their needs and to raise money. Brewster's were often labeled as witches since they used a cauldron (brew kettle), a stirring paddle, and various herbs to concoct their elixirs.

*"What's in this beer? Why does it taste so damn good?"*



Society [www.pinkbootsociety.com](http://www.pinkbootsociety.com), a forum for women in the brewing industry. **Visit our living landmark restaurant and pub brewery and find out for yourself why so many women choose to drink FRESH beer.**

**T**housands of years ago when people were nomads, the world began to change and it was due, in large part, to women.

In those prehistoric lands women began gathering barleys and grains while the men hunted. As they gathered the seeds, some were scattered to replenish the land while others were chewed or broken, releasing their inherent sugars. These sugars, when left in a vessel such as a gourd, would spontaneously ferment and the liquid was found to be intoxicating. Another positive effect of this fermentation was greater nutritional content from these grains and barleys. This discovery helped the early hunters and gatherers survive their often harsh conditions and enabled them to become more sedentary which eventually led to civilization. Today, some societies throughout the world adhere to these simple practices ensuring their survival.



Today we are in a renaissance of brewing here in the United States and abroad. This new found attraction to fresh and flavorful beers has lured many women into the brewing culture. An icon in the brewing industry is Carol Stoudt, who in the late 1980's opened Stoudt's Brewing Company, a microbrewery in Pennsylvania. Her influence on the industry as a Brewster, owner, and spokesperson has enlightened many young women to pursue a career in this field.

**To familiarize you with some beer lingo, here are some basic facts:**

- Beer has been around for at least 20,000 years and was the sustenance for many people. Beer has been made with barley, oats, wheat, sorghum, corn, rye, and many unique grains often relying on wild yeasts to ferment the sugars into an alcohol brew.
- Women had been the brewers in most societies until the late 1600's and still are in many cultures around the world today.
- Ninkasi was the Sumerian goddess of beer. The Sumerians often drank their beer through golden straws.
- Brides Ale, later to become Bridal beer was brewed to sell at the wedding and the money given to the couple.
- Honeymoon was derived from putting honey in beer and giving some to the couple to encourage conception.
- Most beers consist of four ingredients – water, barley, hops, and yeast.

Today there are dozens of women brewers, owners and beer writers. At a recent Craft Brewers Conference in San Diego, Teri Fahrendorf, former brew master at the Steelhead Brewery, held the first meeting of the Pink Boots



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