



# Radical Brewing: Recipes, Tales and World-Altering Meditations in a Glass

*Randy Mosher*

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Takes a hip and creative look at beer brewing, presented with a graphically appealing layout.

## Radical Brewing: Recipes, Tales and World-Altering Meditations in a Glass Details

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Author : Randy Mosher

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## From Reader Review Radical Brewing: Recipes, Tales and World-Altering Meditations in a Glass for online ebook

### Geoff Young says

Detailed and thorough discussion of brewing history, techniques, and equipment, as well as a wide variety of once-forgotten recipes that include unconventional ingredients. Even though I'll probably never attempt the vast majority of these recipes (bog myrtle, mushrooms?), knowing that they exist has gotten me thinking about beer and its almost limitless possibilities in new and exciting ways.

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### Rob says

A splendid treatise on the art and science of beer brewing, Mosher hits a nice sweet spot between the whimsy of Papazian and the rigor of Palmer. The text is "illuminated" (in the ancient manuscript sense) with reproduced photos and illustrations of different beers, ingredients, labels, and brewing contraptions; Mosher also structures the book around the conceit of telling the story of beer, with thorough treatments of each ingredient and thoughtful, practical advice on how to use them. He writes about how beautiful beers can emerge from even the most simple ingredients, but also how to brew something truly magnificent from ever more esoteric constituents.

The book shows its age (published in 2004) ever so slightly. Some of the ingredients and techniques that Mosher positions as "radical" are ones that I've seen used often. Fruit, gruit spices, parti-gyles, and decoction mashing -- just to name a few. This isn't at all to suggest that the book is out-of-date; all of the advice is still sound, and although brewing a witbier doesn't seem so "radical" to me, I also can't remember any other books (except *maybe* Gordon Strong's?) that get so specific.

All that said: don't make this your first brewing book. There *is* a high-level overview of brewing basics, but you'll want to arrive here with a couple of brews under your belt already. Even if he has a recipe that could be "your first".

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### Eric says

This ended up being a little more technical than I anticipated, but in addition to being very interesting (if not confusing) and informative, it will serve as an extremely valuable resource going forward. My main takeaways from this book are: I'll never get bored brewing and that at some point in history literally everything has been used to flavor beer. It also reinforces the not-nearly-commonly-enough-held belief that the typical macro American lagers people insist are "real" beer while refusing to drink anything with flavor are not even close to beer. Brewing has been around for thousands of years and that crap just appeared in the last 80, and started spending billions on marketing in the last 20. Now if you'll excuse me, I need a cold one.

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### Dan Smith says

Inspiring and easy entertaining reading for those who want a kickstart for home brewing. So, this book was

ideal for me. It has a bit of a US slant, with recommendations for brew clubs, equipment and so forth which aren't much use outside the US.

The real test is in the recipes, and I've know way to brew any of them right now, so I wonder how they'll shape up. Interestingly, Mosher gives a single recipe for each style, which is about the only way you can go to cover the vast range. And I guess the point is to encourage the brewer to figure out variations on the theme. I can only hope that this gives me enough to work out what the theme is, and how to vary it, with only one data set.

I'm quibbling: this is a hugely entertaining and informative book, and what it chooses to do seems faultless.

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### **Aaron says**

I think of this book, in part, as a companion book to 'Designing Great Beers' by Ray Daniels. Randy Mosher hides nuggets of brewing wisdom among musings about twists on major beer styles. Even casually reading through this book has led me to improve certain aspects of my brewing -- the technique for white ale, for example, had eluded me for years. The only fault I can find with this book is that it encourages the reader to explore their own variations on popular beer themes, but it has SO many great ideas for twists on beer that it almost seems difficult to find something that Mosher hasn't already mentioned!

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### **Jeff says**

Allow me to wax poetic for a moment. There is something of a holy trinity in brewing books. John Palmer's How to Brew is the Father, from which all things homebrew were possible. Ray Daniel's Designing Great Beers is the Son, in whom all things were fully realized.

Randy Mosher's Radical Brewing is the Holy Spirit of the brewing trinity. Mosher pinpoints exactly what it means to be a homebrewer: creativity. It's why we do it. Can't find a good commercial example of a style, well i'll brew my own. Mosher takes this principle and expands upon it. He tells the homebrewer that it's perfectly alright to mix styles, throw random fruits, veggies, spices, chickens into beer. Do what you want and if it's drinkable do it again.

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### **John Hubbard says**

I found this more a boundary pusher of minds than so useful. Probably less important now that before as most of the ideas in here can be found in discerning beer stores.

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### **Christoph Weber says**

I wish I had read this a lot earlier. We brewed a lot of beer and made incremental changes and innovations - we could have gotten them all from this book. So, if you're a homebrewer or aspiring to be one, this is a great to book to get you started.

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## Paul says

Best brewing book I've encountered. It's definitely for the intermediate brewer because it simply glosses over the basics. However, if you've brewed a few batches and want to go from cooking up kits to building your own recipes, this book makes it easy.

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## Jim Razinha says

I tracked this book after having a beer that was inspired by a Thomas Jefferson recipe. I found a blog post that cited this book as a source of the recipe, so... I admit I don't care much about the recipes. Sacrilege for the home Brewer, but it will never be more than an infrequent hobby for me. I read this, rather, for the history. For instance, we have the Germans to "thank" for first discovering the bottom fermenting yeasts that are used in the nasty species of beer called "lagers", and then as immigrants, being responsible for polluting the brewing US with it in the 1840s-1860s (Anheuser and Busch, of course, hailed from Germany.

And for the science. (I thought IBUs were arbitrary like pepper ratings, and not spectrophotometrically determined, though there is a calculation that predicts the IBUs and I suspect most Brewers use it, if they aren't just guessing.)

And for the many nuggets of trivia... I learned what the "wee" in a Scottish Wee Heavy means. This was quite an enlightening book.

Couple of bits to share, of the many... On serving and enjoying beer:

It takes effort to brew your own beer, so you might as well make sure you serve it in the best possible manner. A well-crafted beer, when served at the proper temperature, in the proper glass, with a proper head, can be a thing of wonder.

Spot on.

And this:

The Laws of Aroma in Beer

1. You want some.?2. Use more than you think. It will go away.
3. Complexity is good.?4. Complicated is bad

Life's too short for bad beer. Prost.

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## Joe says

This is a very interesting book for experienced home brewers. The author has an encyclopedic knowledge of historical brewing recipes, and he has adapted them to the types of ingredients that are available today. The book provides very little detail regarding the specific techniques that should be used to brew, which is why I

said the book is geared to the experienced home brewer. The book gave me a number of ideas that I will try out for some of my future brews.

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### **Dan says**

This was the second book I read about home brewing, and it's a great read for someone getting into the hobby. The book builds up your basic information about the process and ingredients and then get quickly into styles and then almost immediately guides you through designing your first beer (which was a great learning experience for me).

One of the greatest parts of the book is the unique recipes Mosher provides. If nothing else it can help you make a great unique beer he designed, but actually it teaches you how to balance different flavors within the brew so that you can make that beer you've been dreaming of.

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### **Stuart says**

Lots of great history, lots of great recipes, lots of great perspective (i.e. if the beer you brew is good, then don't give a shit about styles or hot side aeration).

For as gorgeously designed, illustrated and laid-out as the book is (in the last twenty pages Mosher reveals that he is an artist by training. No shit!), it's approximately twice as long as it needs to be, assuming you are going to read it end to end.

If you're not reading it end-to-end, if you're picking through it piecemeal, the endless repetitions of facts and tidbits begins to make sense--the third time I read about the maple smell that fenugreek can provide to beer could easily be the first time you run across it if you're simply flipping to a recipe halfway through the book.

If you want to read a book about beer and the Sams-Club-jeans-and-New-Balance-sneaker over-40 white male suburban homebrewer aesthetic doesn't do it for you, Radical Brewing will.

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### **Scott says**

If beer was a religion Randy Mosher would be a modern prophet, prayed to over offerings of hops in breweries across the world. His book, *Radical Brewing*, would be a holy text taught in pubs, bars and craft beer joints.

I exaggerate a little, but perhaps not as much as you might think. Radical Brewing is, in my opinion, a foundational text for any aspiring homebrewer.

*Radical Brewing* is an essential guide to making your own beer, but it isn't a boring technical manual- it's a cheery, ale-infused jaunt through the culture, history, deliciousness and creation of the amber liquid. Mosher combines serious knowledge with a genuine passion for his subject and takes his readers on a fascinating tour through beer.

This book will show you how to make beer, but more importantly, it will show you why you should make beer- you will be part of a great tradition and a modern movement, you can make unique beers for you and your friends and you can subvert the actions of the massive beer companies that largely produce tasteless slop. Many books will show you how to brew, not many will fire you with the passion to do so. Mosher's book is one of the latter.

Along with guidance on the creation of beer, Mosher also includes many interesting and tasty beer recipes. Having made a number of these recipes I can attest to their tastiness. His 'Saison Buffoon' was one of the first beers I ever brewed- a delicious, dry farmhouse style ale made with Indian jaggery and infused with lemon peel and grains of paradise. Mosher's book, and his saison, expanded my beery horizons beyond pale ales, lagers and IPAs.

Mosher's book is copiously illustrated and full of humor, making it a rare thing among brewing books- an easy and entertaining read. You're not going to get the hard math and ratios that you'll learn in a book like Ray Daniels' *Designing Great Beers*, but Mosher's book will entertain you in ways that more textbook style brewing guides won't.

I've been brewing for years and this book remains a go-to reference text for me. If you're a homebrewer, would like to be a homebrewer, or know a homebrewer, buy this book. *Radical Brewing* is genuinely inspiring in its breadth, depth and dismissal of any and all limits in the pursuit of great beer.

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### **Michael Travis says**

Some really good information and history but to grasp the main content you really need to be beyond intermediate in your brewing.

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