

170 year old beer reproduced

One of the world's oldest preserved beers has been recreated. The beer dating back to the beginning of the 1800's was salvaged from a shipwreck found in the Åland Islands archipelago for four years ago. After profound scientific analyses the original recipe has been reconstructed and the Åland brewery Stallhagen has launched the unique beer into the market.

In the summer of 2010, divers discovered a shipwreck in the Åland archipelago and salvaged more than a hundred champagne bottles and five beer bottles. The Government of the autonomous Åland Islands is the owner of the findings and had the beers analyzed at VTT Technical Research Center in Finland.

"Our analysis focused on the physico-chemical elements of the beer. We isolated and identified the microbes that are common in beers. The beer had been partly destroyed on the seabed, so it was a nice surprise to find living lactic acid bacteria in it. This type of bacteria was typical of beers in that time period, and now the bacteria have been utilized in the new-born Stallhagen beer", says Annika Wilhelmson, Customer Manager at VTT.

The research results showed that the old bottles contained two different types of beers. Experts from the Belgian university KU Leuven have participated in the demanding work in reconstructing the beer. The fermentation method has been both innovative and unique.

"The VTT results gave knowledge of alcohol content, colour, and bitterness of the beer. The living cells still present in the bottle helped us to determine the type of yeasts and bacteria used to produce this beer. For this beer, we combined history and tradition with innovative brewing knowledge. The symbiosis between the organisms and the malt flavours results in the very special overall flavour of this beer", says Professor Gert De Rouck at KU Leuven University. The result is the launching of an authentic replica of the shipwreck beer that carries the name *Stallhagen Historic beer 1843*.

"With today's launch we've reached a milestone in the exciting four-year project. Stallhagen 1843 is a sophisticated beer with refined and subtle character that gives a notion how a luxury beer tasted in early 1800s", says Jan Wennström, CEO Stallhagen.

As a result of the co-operation between Stallhagen brewery and Åland Government a part of the surplus of the sales of beer goes to charitable causes.

"The Government of Åland has decided that the surplus will go to marine archaeological research, maritime history and environmental measures of the Baltic Sea", says Johan Ehn, Minister for Culture at the Åland Government.

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