





law was only codified in 1871, upon the founding of bismarck's german empire. the legal code of 1871 incorporated the pioneering bavarian original, but for lagers only. this means, as bavarians are fond of pointing out, that strictly speaking there is no such thing as a "german beer purity law of 1516." in bismarck's time, the use of malt derivatives, malt substitutes, and various additives-such as pure starch, rice, and potato flour-was still legal in the northern german states for use in all beers. the law of the german empire even contained provisions for taxing such non-malt beer ingredients within the framework of what was then called the "north-german brewing tax community." it was only after a change of the beer tax law in 1906 that the beer purity law was applied uniformly to the entire country, at least for lagers. in the text of the law published on december 12, 1906, the german emperor sounds much like the bavarian dukes of 1516, when he proclaims: "we, wilhelm, german emperor by divine right, king of prussia, declare in the name of the empire...: in the preparation of bottom-fermented beer [lagers] may be used only barley malt, hops, yeast, and water." but on the issue of starches and sugars as ale ingredients, german and bavarian brewers still did not see eye to eye. in 1918, in the wake of the first world war and the collapse of the german empire, germany embarked on its first attempt at a constitutional democracy, of course, a beer purity law had to be, once again, part of its legal framework, because the state of bavaria was only willing to join the new republic after it was granted permission to continue to enforce within its borders its own traditional and more restrictive interpretation of the beer purity law for both lagers and ales. in 1949, after the second world war, when the modern german federal republic was founded, history repeated itself: the whole country got one form of the beer purity law, while bavaria retained its 1516 version. as a result of this historical evolution, two key differences between the bavarian and the german versions of the reinheitsgebot have come down to us to this day: first, cane, beet, or invert sugar, and their derivatives are legal outside bavaria for top-fermented beers [ales], while bavarian brewers would never use such ingredients for any beer. second, while in the rest of germany, the restrictions of the beer purity law apply only to beers brewed for the domestic market, in bavaria, they apply to all beers brewed within its borders, including those intended for export to other countries. even in times of severe shortages and economic plight - as bavaria and, in fact, the whole of europe experienced after the two world wars - bavarian brewers did not deviate from their traditions as set forth in the historic bavarian beer purity law of 1516. they are pledged to preserve, henceforth and forever, the designation of "bavarian beer" as a unique, all-natural, and "pure" appellation in the global beer market of the future. bavarian beer is good for you because of the goodness that's inside. bavarian beer-making has been ruled by the beer purity law since 1516, which means that you, the consumer, can have complete trust in its wholesomeness. consumer protection was one of the key motives that propelled duke wilhelm IV and his brother, ludwig X, to proclaim the purity law in the 16th century. since then, it has become the oldest still-valid food-safety law in the world - and all bavarian brewers follow its prescriptions to this day. considering how long the law has been in force, it obviously has had enormous beer-cultural and economic-historical implications, but its most lasting impact is probably in the area of consumer protection. the main objective of the beer purity law, through all its iterations over the centuries, has always

been the supply of the populace with safe and affordable beer. in the middle ages, it used to be common for brewers to "flavor" their beers with herbs, seeds, tubers, roots, legumes, tree bark, even soot from their chimneys and gall-bladder bile taken from oxen at the nearest butcher. some of these additions had the express aim of enhancing the brews' intoxicating effects, while saving money on the "real" raw materials of hops and malt. the often noxious health effects of these additives were simply accepted as a necessary evil and par for the course. the beer purity law finally put an end to such brew house practices - and for almost 500 years now, bavarian brewers have had nothing to hide. instead, they now proudly list the ingredients for all their brews right on the label ... and the list could not be simpler: water, hops, malt, and yeast! one other key ingredient that is not mentioned on the label is the bavarian brewers' unsurpassed artisanal craftsmanship and brew-technical knowledge. bavarian brewers are living proof that it is possible to make a superb premium brew without adulterating it with preservatives, foam stabilizers, chemical taste enhancers, artificial color, or cheap flavorless cereals such as rice and corn. even though there are only four ingredients in bavarian beers, their variety and complexity in terms of color, flavor, texture, and strength is simply endless - a true testimony to the brewing skills of the bavarians and a source of justifiable pride. while many branches of the food industry all over the world are now "rediscovering" traditional methods of making products for the table that are wholesome, natural, nutritional, and free of additives, bavarian brewers have been showing the way for almost five centuries.

oans zwoa gsuffa!

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