

## Was trinken die Deutschen? das BIER, die Biere

## 10 FASCINATING FACTS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT GERMAN BEER

## 8. Separated by about 40km, Cologne and Düsseldorf a world apart in beer terms

Cologne and Düsseldorf are next door neighbours, but there has always been a rivalry between the two. Whereas Cologne has a long and rich history, and its people regard themselves as easy and laid back, Düsseldorf is more modern, smarter and ritzier.

Aside from the football and ice hockey rivalries, their beers are also different. Kölsch (from Cologne) is a light lager, whereas Düsseldorf's Altbier (literally old beer) is much darker and more of an ale. Früh, one of Cologne's breweries, mocks Altbier in its adverts such as the one above, which says "Before it gets old".

Cologne band the Wise Guys also sang about a girl from Düsseldorf in their song "Nein, Nein, Nein": "I've got to go, I'm not the man who's going to travel to a town where the beer tastes just like its name."

But as it turns out, the rival beers are actually more alike in flavour than locals would like to believe. A study published in August found that when die-hard Cologne and Düsseldorf beer fans were blindfolded and asked to do a taste test, *they virtually couldn't tell the beers apart.*

## 10. Namibia may have lost many of its ties to Germany, but beer's not one of them

Interestingly, after Germany placed fourth in a 2014 *ranking of global beer consumption* per person, Namibia followed up at fifth. It might seem odd that an African country comes way above the US (17th) and the UK (27th), but Namibia was a German colony from 1884 until 1919, and the German beer culture lives on there.

The Namibia Brewery still sends its trainees to Ulm in Baden-Württemberg for seven months, and brews under the purity law, according to an *article* in the Allgemeine Zeitung Namibia. They even have an *Oktoberfest* in the capital, Windhoek, on October 28th and 29th.

## GERMANY IS NOT "WELTMEISTER" IN BEER DRINKING

While Germany produces a third of the world's beer varieties and boasts some 1500 breweries, Germans do not take the gold medal for beer consumption. Germans drink around 110 liters of beer per person per year (that's roughly 300 to 320 beers), while the Czech Republic takes the lead with 140 to 150 liters per capita. That country is, after all, home to "Pilsener."

## Heavy drinking:

Despite consuming a little less every year, Germans remain the third biggest beer drinkers in Europe after the Czechs and Austrians. The average Berliner drinks 105.5 litres of beer per year, enough to fill a bathtub. The national average in 2011 was even higher at 107.6 litres, compared to the 71.6 litres drunk by the average Brit and 76.6 litres by the average American.

## UNRIVALLED VARIETY

To many people, "beer" and "Germany" are synonymous. German brewers have created a vast diversity of beers: The country brews more than 5,000 different beers. In 2014, Germany had more than 1,300 breweries. The craft beer movement has also hit Germany, and although microbreweries are busy experimenting with unusual ingredients, they'll all definitely need hops.