

## 6 Great-Tasting "Session" Beers

You Could Spend All Night Partying With These Lower-Alcohol "Session" Brews and Still Be Sane, Sober, and On Your Feet

By Brian Good, Managing Editor



Light beers are like certain hot chicks you meet at bars—fun at first but ultimately shallow and unfulfilling. Dark, heavy beers are more like everybody's favorite party guy in college—packed with personality but easy to get your fill of, fast. But "session" beers, with their moderate alcohol but still satisfying flavor, are like your longtime best buddy or the girl you end up marrying: the happy middle ground. Here's a six-pack of our favorites to get you started:

### **Pilsner Urquell**

Born in the Czech Republic in 1842, Urquell is the world's first pilsner. In the more than century and a half since its inception, the beer's changed very little, although the advent of refrigeration means the fermenting beer no longer needs to be stored in caves. "With its deep golden color, rich, velvety body, and thick, creamy head, it's still considered a luxury in its home country," says Jeff Alworth, of *The Beer Bible*. 4.4% ABV, [pilsnerurquell.com](http://pilsnerurquell.com)

### **Bell's Oarsman Ale**

Big on flavor despite its überlow 4% alcohol content, Oarsman combines wheat, hops, citrus, and spices into a unique, slightly crisp session favorite. It's a good option for guys looking to try their first sour beer, says Thirstie's Southworth. "It's crisp and refreshing, without being overly aggressive," he says. 4% ABV, [bellsbeer.com](http://bellsbeer.com)

### **Dr. Jekyll's Beer Attack Irish-Style Red Ale**

Although its 5.4% ABV pushes the boundaries of what's truly a session beer, we'll let it slide, thanks to its many other healthy attributes. For starters, each bottle is brewed with non-GMO, vegan-friendly organic hops and malt. Dr. Jekyll's mad-scientist brewers also mix cinnamon oil, garlic, hawthorn berry, flaxseed oil, and other good-for-you superfoods into their brew, amping up the sweet, nutty, slightly smoky flavor and overall nutritional profile. 5.4% ABV, [drjekylls.com](http://drjekylls.com)

### **Founders All Day IPA**

Started just 18 years ago in Grand Rapids, MI, Founders Brewing Co. is now a mammoth. Its philosophy in short: "We don't brew beer for the masses...Our beers are crafted for renegades and rebels who enjoy a beer that pushes the limits of what's commonly accepted in taste." Founders is the gold standard of session IPAs, says Kurt Taylor, CEO of Next Glass, an app that helps you find wines and beers you'll like based on how you've rated previous picks. "It's sharp, hoppy, and super-refreshing after a long day," he says. 4.7% ABV, [foundersbrewing.com](http://foundersbrewing.com)

### **Samuel Smith India Ale**

"IPA-style beers are nearly synonymous with American brewing, but it's good to sample Samuel Smith if you want to know what an original India ale tastes like," says Alworth. "Smith's version has the typical hard, mineral-water-and-bready-malt taste of an old-school beer, along with the unusual herbal hopping of today's modern IPA." 5% ABV, [samuelsmithsbrewery.co.uk](http://samuelsmithsbrewery.co.uk)

### **Shiner Bock**

"Countless guys are used to fueling their days with this delicious and well-crafted beer," says Southworth, "and most would be surprised to find that it's technically a session." First brewed in 1913 in the tiny Texas town of Shiner (population 2,107), this lightly hopped lager was only a seasonal beer for the company until ardent fans persuaded the owners to start selling it year-round back in 1973. Since then, the beer's won a dozen global titles, including a couple of golds as one of the top beers on the market. 4.4% ABV, [shiner.com](http://shiner.com)