Hazy or New England IPAs are defined by their intense hop aroma but relatively low bitterness, as well as their juicy flavor, rich mouthfeel, and turbid appearance. This popular style can be confusing when it comes to terminology. The term New England IPA appears to be the oldest, first showing up around 2005 in connection to Heady Topper by The Alchemist Brewery in Vermont, a beer widely regarded as the style’s pioneer. New England IPA, and derivative terms like Northeast and East Coast IPA, maintained supremacy until 2018, when a dramatic increase in the popularity of the style resulted in a complete reversal of the trend. By 2019, the term Hazy IPA was nearly three times more popular than its competitors.

The haze that so many find defining can be thought of as a side effect rather than a goal. Haziness can be the result of certain alterations to the brewing process meant to affect the aroma, flavor, and mouthfeel of a beer. Some yeast strains that excel at imparting fruity flavors during fermentation also have a tendency to stay suspended in the beer, giving it a fuller mouthfeel and cloudiness. The use of high-protein grains like wheat or flaked oats gives beer a soft, creamy character that also increases haziness.

When it comes to hops, timing is crucial. Adding hops late in the boiling process diminishes the extraction of bitter compounds while retaining flavor. Hops can also be added after boiling and during fermentation, a process known as dry hopping, as a way to maximize a beer’s aroma. Dry hopping can leave behind vegetable particles that create haziness when left unfiltered. The term DDH, double dry hopping, is closely associated with this style and can refer to the quantity of hops used or to dry hopping at two different stages of the conditioning process, as is the case with the Animal Hazy IPA by Denizens. The choice of hops also matters, and this style demands juiciness—tropical hops with notes of lime, passionfruit, and mango are ideal.

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