

The Art of Wine and Beer Making ... In the Garage

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"It's also easier to get beer to taste right, and there's a wider range of what's acceptable," he noted. "Beers have their own definite styles and you can tweak them so you can get exactly what you like." People have been known to add ginger or chocolate to their home-brewed beers. "Milt likes honey beer so we've added honey to every batch we've made," Feddersen said.

Both Rose and Feddersen say that temperature control is probably one of the most significant factors in making excellent alcoholic beverages at home. And both admit to being somewhat creative with managing this. Red wine is typically made in the fall "when the evenings can get quite cool," Rose said. So he wraps electric blankets around the vats of wine and regulates the temperature by turning the blanket temperature up or down. With white wine, he runs cold water through stainless steel coils, which he places directly into the wine. Feddersen's temperature control process is very similar; if it's too warm, he puts a towel with ice over the carboy (the container in which the beer ferments) and if it's too cool, he'll wrap the carboy in an electric blanket. "There are heating and cooling solutions you can buy," Feddersen said, "but my methods seem to work just fine."

Making wine and beer at home is done for the pure enjoyment of both the activity and the results. Feddersen and Rose say that while their hobbies may be somewhat cost-effective, by the time you consider all the equipment and supplies needed, they're not really saving money. "Home brewers are typically making a quality beer," Feddersen noted, "so the price is basically equivalent to what you'd pay in a store."

Bruzzone, Feddersen and Rose all have a real passion for their beer-brewing and wine-making hobbies and love being able to share the resulting bottles with their friends. No doubt, these friends happily accept.

Troy Feddersen (left) and Milt Bruzzone purchasing the supplies they need for brewing their next batch of beer.

Photo provided

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