

Restaurants + Bars

Brooklyn Brew Shop home brewing kit



Brooklyn Brew Shop's Erica Shea and Stephen Valand

Photograph: Roxana Marroquin

Recently, Erica Shea and Stephen Valand, the entrepreneurial beer enthusiasts behind the Brooklyn Flea's new vendor **Brooklyn Brew Shop**, poured me a glass of the Belgian Tripel Ale they'd brewed in their Prospect Heights kitchen. Impressed by the beer's light body and uncompromised summery flavor, I immediately asked where I could buy a six-pack. "Oh, we're not selling the beer," responded Shea, "but we'll tell you how to make it."

She wasn't kidding. Starting last month, the pair has been selling a home brewing kit that features a glass gallon jug, a three-piece air lock, and an auto siphon for pouring the beer into bottles, as well as grain, yeast, hops and sugar so you can go home and get started (\$40). Unlike Internet-bought sets that come with unsightly faux-plastic beer barrels (not to mention corn-syrup sweetener), Brew Shop's classy glass gets the job done without ruining your aesthetic while it ferments on the kitchen counter. Plus, Shea and Valand will coach you through the process from grains to suds. All you need is a stove, a stockpot, a strainer and 12 bottles with swing-top caps (the Brew Shop duo recommends snagging used ones from your local bar).

Additional bags of the shop's custom-mixed grain, like the one for their grapefruit honey ale, are ground to order for \$15. The beer takes two weeks to ferment, and another two to condition (i.e., get bubbly). It all works out to about \$1.21 per bottle. "I'm not super scientific, and I do it all the time," urges Shea, who moonlights as a marketing consultant. "Brewing your own beer makes you feel like you could go back in time and survive," Valand enthuses—and get drunk! *Buy your kit Saturdays at the Brooklyn Flea, 176 Lafayette Ave between Clermont and*

Vanderbilt Aves, Fort Greene, Brooklyn, and Sundays at the Brooklyn Bridge Flea, Dock St at Water St, Dumbo, Brooklyn (brooklynbrewshop.com)—Jeanne Hodesh

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