

Modern and Traditional Ciders

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PLANET



INTRODUCTION

The antagonism between *Modern* and *Traditional* is a recurrent theme all along the book *Cider Planet*.

- Cider industry worldwide is split between these tendencies.
- World cider market sees strong growth in modern ciders, and little growth in traditional ciders.

In this presentation we will look at some of the topics discussed in the book:

1. Cider style – What is this? Lookup of *traditional* and *modern* cider styles.
2. Where cider is produced, and relation between the production region and the style.
3. How cider is made, and relation between the cider making practices and the style.

1- What is a Cider Style

Ciders around the world are extremely diversified. They reflect:

- The region where they are produced (the *terroir*)
- The *pommages* used (the varieties of apples)
- The cider making practices (from orchard to bottle)

Style definition is useful as it permits to have an idea of what to expect from a cider.

Styles are also very important in competitions because we can only judge ciders of a similar style in a flight.

Modern and Traditional Cider Styles

Whether a cider is considered to be of a « *Modern* » or « *Traditional* » style depends a lot on the

type of apples

that are used to make it, and also of the

cider making practices

These will have an influence on many aspects of the cider:

– the color

– the mouthfeel

– the flavor

– the aroma

Cider Apples

**The person who drinks the cider doesn't see
the apples that have been used used to make it!**



Photo John Bunker

Modern style

Traditional style

**Consumer/market
apple varieties**

Apples
varieties

**Cider-specific or wild
or heirloom varieties**

Little color, pale yellow,
straw or greenish

Color

Deeper color, golden, amber

Light, no astringency
nor bitterness
« Easy drinking »

Mouthfeel

Some roughness from the
tannins (bitter/astringent),
persistence

Clean, fruit-forward
flavor and aroma

Flavor,
aroma

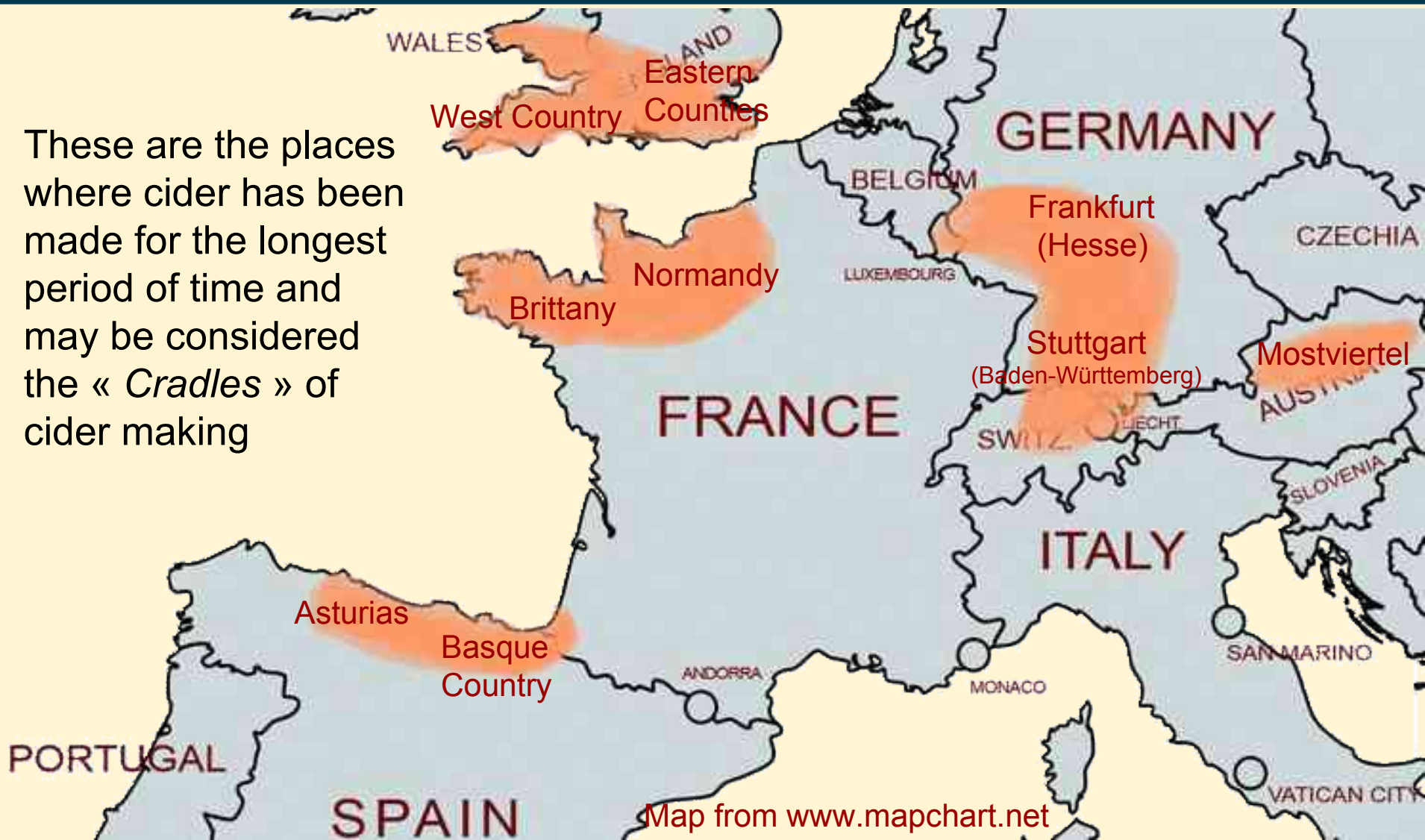
May be slightly « funky »,
more complex/strong
flavors & aromas

Which is which?



2- Traditional Cider Making Regions

These are the places where cider has been made for the longest period of time and may be considered the « *Cradles* » of cider making



Map from www.mapchart.net

Non-Traditional (or Modern) Cider Making Regions

These are newer or emerging regions where cider making is a relatively recent industry

Many are in parts of the world sometimes called « The New World »: the Americas and Oceania... Where cider making know-how was initially introduced by European settlers (English and Spanish mainly)

We also find modern cider making regions in Asia, and in some parts of Europe where there is no long standing tradition of cider making (e.g. Scandinavia)

French-style (*Cidre*)

- Very low in acidity
- Very high in tanins
- Usually medium-sweet
- Always sparkling
- Champagne-type bottle

Substyles:

- Breton and
- Normand styles



Spanish-style (*Sidra*, *Sagardoa*)



- Medium to high in acidity, with a touch of acetic flavor
- Low to medium in tannins
- Dry
- Little or no sparkle
- Special dedicated bottle and glass
- Poured from overhead (or from cask)

Substyles:

- Asturian - *Sidra*
- Basque - *Sagardoa*

German-style (*Apfelwein*)

- Medium to high in acidity
- Low to medium tannins
- Usually dry
- No sparkle except for *Apfelshaumwein*
- Traditional (*Shoppen*) and modern styles co-exist



Photo Konstantin Kalveram

English-style (*Cider*)

- Medium acidity
- Medium tannins
- Usually medium-dry
- Still or lightly sparkling
- Wide range of bottle types, but often 500mL w/caps
 - Eastern-style English is distinct and more like German-style



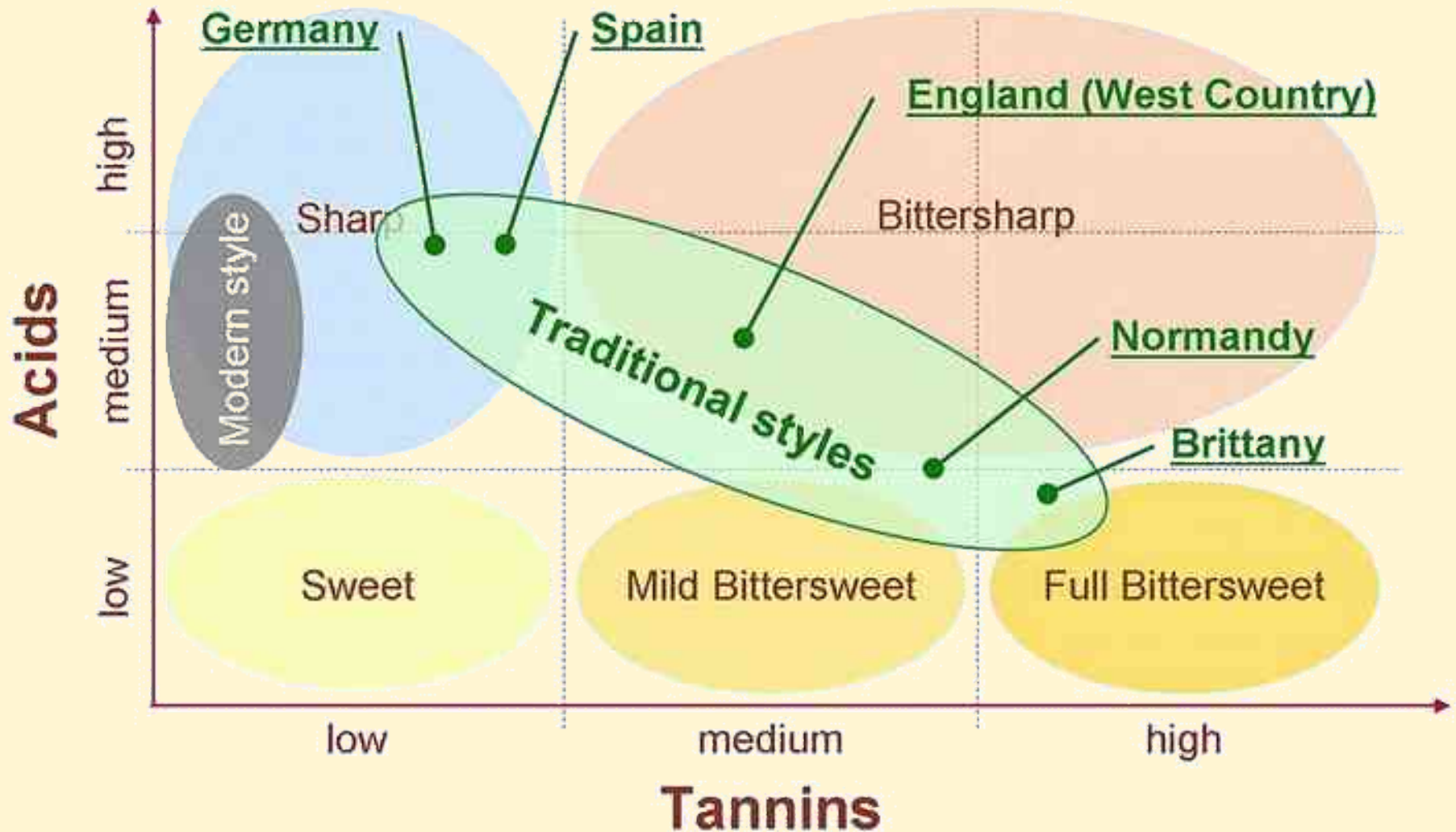
Traditional-style Ciders in Modern Production Regions

In the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and other newer production regions, there are craft makers that produce traditional-style ciders

They use either European cider apple varieties that have been introduced in their region, or heirloom varieties, or sometimes « wild » apples, or blends of all of these

In the US, such ciders are sometimes classified as
Heritage-style

Acid-Tannin balance point



3- Orcharding and Cider Making Practices

Traditional practices grossly correspond to the way apples were grown and cider was made some 100 years ago and more

Modern practices were mostly developed since the mid-1900s and include:

- Development of higher density orchards with smaller trees that increase the yield
- Yeast and nutrition technologies that permit faster and more consistent fermentations
- And other recent developments for producing the sparkle and improving the stability of the cider

Modern

Traditional

Dwarf trees in high density,
high yield orchard

Orchard

Large trees in low density,
low yield orchard

Belt press, fast extraction

Pressing
room

Pulp maceration and
slow extraction press

Selected yeast inoculation,
controlled nutrition

Fermentation

Wild (or natural) yeast,
no added nutrition

Back sweetening,
Sterile filtration + chemicals
CO₂ injection

Bottle

Natural stability
with residual apple sugar
Prise de mousse

Traditional and Modern Orchard

Le Père Jules, Normandy, France



Tatura Treillis at Drew Henry's orchard, Australia



Juicing Systems - Presses

Traditional rack-and-cloth hydraulic press



Belt presses extract the juice very rapidly (within a few seconds)



Fermentation Rooms



Domaine Kervéguen, Brittany France



Blake's Orchard & Cider Mill, Michigan USA

**Let's make this clear:
There are very few craft
makers who use only
traditional or only modern
practices. Most use a mixture
of both approaches.**

**And let's not forget that
traditional practices have
been around for centuries
and are still giving entire
satisfaction to a large
number of cider makers
around the world, while the
modern practices have only
been developed during the
last 50 years or so...**



Cider Trends

- In traditional regions, practices are quite static...
 - The pommages are well known and don't change, while producers make their ciders as their parents and grand-parents did: the evolution is slow
- It is all the opposite in modern regions such as the US, Canada, Australia, NZ, where evolution is rapid:
 - Transition from large semi-industrial cideries to small local « craft » cideries that use practices that are more traditional
 - Development of new regional styles based on locally found wild apples
 - General quality is increasing rapidly
 - Strong growth of the market share



Conclusion

The Cider Planet is fascinating, varied, and definitely worth an exploration of the production regions

- There is a lot of difference between the traditional cider styles, and it is easy to distinguish from each other a French, English, Spanish or German-style cider (even for someone who doesn't have much experience)
- Some people prefer modern-style ciders, others prefer the traditional styles – no one style is fundamentally better
- Some ciders are difficult to classify, and stand somewhere between modern and traditional styles

The Cider Planet is a celebration of diversity!

CIDER PLANET

Exploring the Producers, Practices, and
Unique Traditions of Craft Cider and Perry
from Around the World



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for more on fruit and cider.

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