

I lived in Nolanville, TX during the COVID-19 Pandemic with my wife and puppy in a suburban house. I am an Army officer and we remained busy at my job. My wife's a nurse and worked long hours establishing COVID-19 testing sites in our area. As a result, we didn't cook many meals at home, and got a lot of fast food or takeout, which in our area was surprisingly unaffected by any shortages.

As the months dragged on, most of the local bars were closed, and the few craft breweries we enjoyed visiting in the area were also closed. While beer was still readily available for purchase from markets and gas stations, the social aspect of drinking beer was absent from this. The military also ordered all Soldiers at my post to not travel more than 100 miles from post unless on official duties as a means to protect the force from COVID. These two factors led us to many bored weekends at home. We ended up watching a lot of streaming television shows and movies, notably the Tiger King documentary on Netflix and about 30 seasons of Survivor on Hulu. In this new lifestyle of quarantine and free time stuck at home, I had the idea to try home brewing beer for the first time.

I've watched friends home-brew beer in the past and had learned the basic concepts of brewing beer, but I always thought it required too much equipment and was too time consuming to be a good hobby for me. However, with the pandemic and the fact that all of the bars were closed, I felt comfortable giving it a try. I ordered a home brewing kit online from the Northern Brewer Company online, and it was delivered in about two weeks.

I ordered a Hefeweizen recipe with the kit, as it was both one of my favorite styles of beers, and was a simple process. The recipe is attached to this submission. We called our creation Dukeweizen after our dog Duke.

We brewed it in a 5 gallon carboy and let it ferment in a closet for about two weeks. We then poured it into 12 ounce bottles and chilled in our refrigerator for another two weeks. We ended up enjoying it and sharing it with our friends and co-workers.

Overall I think it's interesting that I never would have tried brewing beer if it wasn't for the pandemic. I think it became a good source of recreation and fun at a time when so many other parts of our life were closed or restricted. We simultaneously could have bought any type of beer we wanted from a store, but making it and the anticipation of trying it endeared it somehow to us and distracted us from the fact that so much of life had changed because of the pandemic.

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