

Sipping Swamp Juice is satisfying

Have you checked out the cooler section at your local variety or grocery store lately?

Quenching one's thirst has never been easier than it is today as the soft drink section at the corner store is literally bursting with variety.

Pop, seltzers, fruit juices, iced teas... you name it, it's there.

Forget peace in Ireland or Harris cutbacks, what you really need to know is what's available to wet your whistle on a hot day. And, lucky for you, your loyal servant happens to be somewhat of a connoisseur when it comes to non-alcoholic beverages. After all, I was one of the first to discover Swamp Juice—a combination of Coke, orange, ginger ale and Sprite. Some high school friends and I created this unholy-looking brown-yellow concoction by combining a bit of each drink that was available from the school cafeteria pop dispenser. But, I digress.

Today, your local cooler section can be broken down into four categories: pop, fruit drinks, off-beat and boring.

The pop category is pretty obvious. That's where the standards—Coke, Pepsi, etc. can be found. Dad's, with its line of old-fashioned sodas, has also been a welcome addition to the cooler, as has the hard-to-find Mr. Gouda's Snappy pop (particularly banana). These drinks take me back to younger days where I would drink mug after frosted mug of Buckeye root beer—without a doubt the greatest drink ever invented. Sadly, like Pop Shoppe pop and Wishing Well cream soda, Buckeye root beer is now extinct.

Perhaps the worst thing to hit the cooler section was the introduction of diet pop many years ago. Diet pop is an oxymoron. Diet soft drinks have no "pop", are devoid of flavor (unless, of course, you call a dizzying aftertaste that's a cross between Scope and battery acid flavorful) and were simply introduced as a politically correct measure by soft

THIS
'N
THAT



John McGhie

drink firms to convince mothers the firms were not out to ruin youngsters' teeth.

But, that's just one bitter man's opinion.

The fruit drink section has seen rapid-expansion over the years and will likely see more growth as scientists determine there really is a market for drinks that combine the taste of raspberries and artichokes. Today's fruit drinks also offer a wonderful assortment of names such as Mango Madness and Peach Melon Harmony that only make them more appealing.

The off-beat section is where you'll find flavored waters and Gatorades. The flavored waters are a personal favorite... as long as they are carbonated. Gatorade is great for the active set but its lack of sugar (10 tablespoons being the minimum requirement) will never make it a favorite of mine.

For the health conscious, the boring section is the place to be. There you will find various brands of bottled water. Admit it folks, there really is no difference between Perrier, Crystal Springs or Evian, is there? It's water—the same stuff that comes out of tap, only colder. Milk and vegetable juices also make their home in this section but, I ask, who finds a pint of moo juice on a July afternoon refreshing?

So, next time you're in a local store take a good look at the cooler—you might be in for a pleasant surprise. Who knows, you might even find a bottle of Swamp Juice.

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