

Pabst Blue Ribbon. "For a Red, White and Blue Ribbon 4th What'll You Have?" 1952. Print Advertisement. <https://brookstonbeerbulletin.com/beer-in-ads-2691-for-a-red-white-and-blue-ribbon-4th-whatll-you-have/>

This vintage Pabst Blue Ribbon beer print advertisement displays designs for a backyard Independence Day celebration surrounded by family and friends. In the advertisement, colorful text designed in patriotic red, white, and blue stripes pose the question "what'll you have." The same patriotic text design is used to describe four images of beautiful food spreads, all of course, paired with a full glass of the American brewed lager. As the viewer moves their focus from the top to the bottom of the colorful advertisement, they are left with the final words of "good food tastes better with Pabst Blue Ribbon; Satisfy Your Thirst for Better Beer!"

The website that hosts the advertisement is not an archival source, however it does state that the advertisement originates from 1952. The foods that are displayed are consistent with that year. The style of picnic blanket is also logical for the time frame suggested by the website that hosts the image of this advertisement. In addition to that, the action of taking the time to have a picnic with family and friends would also be common for the time.

The top of the advertisement suggests that for Fourth of July celebrations to truly be held in the modern American fashion of the time, Pabst Blue Ribbon brand beer should be present.

The language used to describe the suggested food pairings helps to paint visions of wholesome family ideals. "Outdoor picnics," "party-time snacks," "quick-fix suppers," and "backyard barbeques," prompts the viewer to imagine the model family of the 1950s; father, mother, and a few kids, enjoying their time together. The spreads of food are large enough to indicate that it is more than a singular family enjoying the meals paired with Pabst Blue Ribbon beer, leading the viewer to the desire of enjoying this product among the company of friends or community.

A Pabst Blue Ribbon beer is always to the front and center of the advertisement. At the very top of the advertisement, the first image to accompany the text is a hand holding a Pabst Blue Ribbon bottle pouring the golden lager into a glass. If the viewer is to analyze the images of displays of foods individually, a Pabst Blue Ribbon is also in the foreground and toward the center of those as well. This is done intentionally so that the viewer of the advertisement understands that no matter what it accompanies, Pabst Blue Ribbon beer is the highlight of the meal. Each display in the advertisement is depicted in vivid color and appealing arrangement and showcases the use of an American brand of food to compose the arrangement.

The advertisement is probably directed towards middle-class American families, or anyone who wanted to live like a middle-class American. The patriotism is found not only in the red, white, and blue colors, or the text suggesting that the viewer will be celebrating the Fourth of July, but perhaps also in the fact of what it would cost for the viewer to recreate the spread of food and drink in their own homes. If the images depicted in the advertisement are familiar to the viewer in their own homes, they surely have a hard-working father earning income and talented home-making mother to create these lovely spreads of food. Could every American in 1952 afford the tasty treats and lagers displayed in the advertisement?

Uncovering the magazine or newspaper that this “Red, White and Blue Fourth” advertisement was originally published in would assist in understanding who the intended and target audiences were. After the line of text that encourages the viewer to “satisfy your thirst for better beer,” there is an even smaller line of text that reads: “Follow Pabst Blue Ribbon Boxing Bouts...Every Wednesday Night...CBS Television Network.” This line of text reinforces the likelihood that the advertisement was published in 1952, however, the date listed following those words on the advertisement itself is concealed in the loss of quality of the digital image.

Depending on the average household income and cost of the products displayed during the time of publishing, analyzing the advertisement could help the viewer understand whether this source is prescriptive, descriptive, or a combination of both. Are the food arrangements depicted in the advertisement considered typical or luxurious for an average American home? If the arrangements were not the typical American meal at the time, what was? Was Pabst Blue Ribbon an affordable beer or a pricey one? Research on incomes and current events at the time of publishing could help explain the traditional family and patriotic tones of the advertisement.

I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work. I did meet with a tutor from the UMW writing center. Ashleigh Liang Foster.

For a **RED, WHITE** and **Blue Ribbon 4TH**
WHAT'LL
YOU HAVE?!

OUTDOOR PICNICS!

PARTY-TIME SNACKS!

QUICK-FIX SUPPERS!

BACKYARD BARBECUES!

Good food tastes better with *Pabst* Blue Ribbon
Satisfy Your Thirst for Better Beer!

FOLLOW PABST BLUE RIBBON BOXING BOUTS . . . EVERY WEDNESDAY NIGHT . . . CBS TELEVISION NETWORK. Copy 1962 Pabst Brewing Co., Milwaukee, Wis. Trade Marks Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.