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## The El Segundo Kid

by Daniel Drennon

*I first met Rob Croxall, the owner of El Segundo Brewing, at a beer festival on the Rock & Brews patio in 2011. It was a sunny summer day in the South Bay and I told Croxall his Citra Pale Ale was my favorite beer of the fest. He seemed genuinely surprised. His brand new brewery was literally across the street.*

Photo Credit: Eli Buck

(FULL COVER STORY ON PAGE 12)

## INSIDE

### PROFILE



PAGE 4

### WISHFUL DRINKING



PAGE 6

### YAEGER SHOTS



PAGE 16

### HAZE CRAZE



PAGE 18

### FOOD PAIRINGS



PAGE 20

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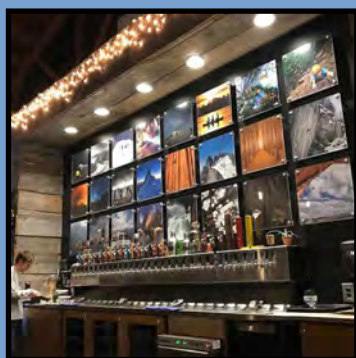
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## PROFILE

# HOUSE OF BILLIARDS 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

## THE BEER IS EVEN BETTER THAN THE BILLIARDS

by DANIEL DRENNON



Ben Meskin, third generation owner of House of Billiards

Photo Credit: Hawk Vaccaro

One of LA's premier destination beer bars is turning 40 years old this month.

Impossible you say?

Well, yes. That's true. The destination beer bar era of House of Billiards in Sherman Oaks is only six years old. But any place with this much cool history is an anomaly in Tinseltown, so allow me to give you the back story of a joint I consider to be one of the best kept secrets in our ever-burgeoning craft scene.

Way back in 1979, Barney Meskin bought Mother's, a pool hall located along Ventura Boulevard in Sherman Oaks. He renamed it House of Billiards. Needless to say, bad beer was the drink of the day.

In the mid-80's, Barney turned over the reins to his then 30-year old son, Harry Meskin. Harry oversaw the cool pool hall through the ensuing two decades which included the smoking ban. He built an outdoor patio so the smokers could be accommodated and also brought in a bunch of TVs to

make it more a sports bar and added a juke box for ambience. HoB became a destination in the Valley, but not for beer needless to say.

That transition occurred when in 2009, Harry passes the baton to a third generation of Meskins, his son Ben. This is where this story gets exciting for beer drinkers, because young Ben was one of us. His first major decision was to bring in great, fresh, local craft beer. Meskin shares, "Beer was my passion. Experimenting with different taps. I don't like to drink the same beer every time. I wanna have one of everything on the tap list."

Nowadays, you will find Beachwood, Cellador, Craftsman, Green Cheek, Highland Park, Kern River and Modern Times on tap, just to name a few of the world class breweries represented on the House of Billiard's wall. The state-of-the-art draft system was installed by Erik Huig of Huig Draft Systems, who like Meskin, runs his own family-owned destination beer bar, Barbara's at the Brewery in

fan myself, I make sure my lines are super clean, my beer is super fresh and the taps are always rotating so you have choices. I am never buying for next week. I'm buying for today."

Ben's presence extends far beyond the ability to purchase beer however. He's a constant figure holding court with locals, regulars, brewers, fellow buyers and craft beer personalities at frequent events where his knowledge and passion for beer takes a backseat to his genuine and giving nature. Bring a safe word to the bar as Meskin is prone to passing out aged bottles of Peche n' Brett from his personal cellar. Trading beer for good times, the way it used to be.

Let me not overlook the billiards by the way. House of Billiards has 20 tables that look absolutely pristine. When I make that comment, Meskin grins and tells me, "Those tables are 35 years old! One thing I learned from my grandfather is that you've gotta have the best tables in LA. And we take care of them." That is an understatement. HoB is a gorgeous and inviting pool hall and surprisingly (at least to me), is that it is open to all ages before 8 pm and 18 and over after that.

downtown Los Angeles (another *Beer Paper* favorite).

Meskin prides himself on cleaning his own draft lines and says, "As a beer



Ben Meskin in the cold box

Photo Credit: Hawk Vaccaro



Ben Meskin playing billiards

Photo Credit: Hawk Vaccaro

I ask Meskin how he pulled off the conversion to destination beer bar. Another grin and he offers, "I went to a lot of beer events. Making friends in the beer industry was more important to me than getting the beer, but then it just so happened that because we became friends, brewers and industry folks would give me their beers."

When asked about how he has seen the beer scene evolve and change in LA, Meskin responds, "Now there is so much good beer. It's abundant and it's fresh." He cites his personal favorite breweries as those already listed above and then adds Homage and HopSaint,

the latter of which he considers to be the most underrated brewery in the region.

House of Billiard's 40th Anniversary Party will be held Thursday, January 17 from 7 pm to close. Meskin promises me, "The tap list is gonna kill it." He will also feature several collaboration beers he brewed with Cellador and Kern River Brewing Company along with others to be announced. Expect many of your favorite brewers to be in the house (of Billiards) that night.

Rest assured, *Beer Paper* will be there.

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## WISHFUL DRINKING

# LONDON FALLING THE DUVEL MADE ME DO IT

by TOMM CARROLL

“We don’t want any trouble here.”

Those words were addressed to me the moment I walked into The Bottle Shop in the Bermondsey neighborhood of London on a Saturday in late November. Not the most welcoming greeting I’ve received at this venue that I frequent every time I’m in the English capital — which has been rather, well, frequently. But I’m getting ahead of myself; let me back up a bit...

I’d no plans to pop across the pond to pay a visit to Blighty last year, until I checked my e-mail in early November. It was a missive from the British Guild of Beer Writers (of which I am a member) that left me gobsmacked: I had been shortlisted by the guild for a beer writing award in the Regional Media category for several *Beer Paper* articles I had submitted last summer, the only Yank to receive a nod in the competition.

Interestingly, the awards ceremony was scheduled for the 22nd of the month, which was the evening of Thanksgiving — or as the Brits call it, “Thursday night.” Was that an omen? I also noticed there were only two other nominations in the Regional Media category, a pair of sisters from Kildare, Ireland, and a bloke from Newcastle upon Tyne. *And* there were two awards in each category, the Gold (£1,000) and the Silver (£500). The odds definitely looked promising. How



British beer writer Pete Brown, left, and the author enjoying their second (or third) pints of Landlord at the Hero of Maida pub. Photo Credit: Mark Dredge

could I *not* attend the ceremony? I’d kick myself if I won something and wasn’t there to accept it.

But that meant being away for Thanksgiving. However, my wife and several friends convinced me I’d be daft not to attend the awards ceremony, and that they could handle Turkey Day without me. So I quickly made arrangements for a five-day jaunt and flew out of LAX a fortnight later, arriving at Heathrow the day before the event.

Thanksgiving in London was a sunless, chilly (5° C, 41° F) day, but the warmth and camaraderie at the Chelsea Harbour Hotel on the River Thames that evening was a great respite, affording me the opportunity to catch up with some of the Brit beer scribes I know, and to meet many others, including fellow nominees. UK beer was flowing, and so were conversations, be they about beer, writing, Brexit or Trump — but no arguments over the dinner tables, as no doubt would be going on back in the States a few hours later.

To cut a long story short, I wound up on the short end of the shortlist when the awards were announced. The Gold was grabbed by the Geordie (a person from Newcastle and surrounding areas). I actually beat the odds by *not* winning!

### Beer Brunch & Bermondsey

For the following day, Black Friday (which, curiously, the Brits *do* celebrate), Mitch Adams, beer sommelier, writer and beer buyer, had invited all the BGBW Award nominees to a “Beery Brunch,” hosted by his employer Euroboozer, a UK beer importer and distributor, at The

Hero of Maida, an upscale pub in the Maida Hill section of London. About two dozen of us attended, including guild chairman Pete Brown, renowned author of the 2004 book *Man Walks Into a Pub: A Sociable History of Beer*, among several others.

The delicious and judiciously paired four-course brunch, each with a beer component, also featured two beery apéritifs and a pair of digestifs — the latter of which offered a special rare treat for this visiting SoCal Yankee: a pint (imperial, or course) of a kegged West Coast Pale Ale called Pecking Order, a hoppy and orange-zesty collab between North Yorkshire’s Rooster’s Brewing (where Torrance’s Yorkshire Square Brewing head brewer Andy Black interned) and Orange, CA’s own Green Cheek Beer — not available in the Colonies.

Advertised as a 10:00 a.m.-noon affair, the brunch lingered on...and on for those of us who could afford to dawdle, like me, turning this into a typical British “session” of imbibing, though not particularly with session-strength beer. Euroboozer’s founder and director Martyn Railton kept plying us with brews from the Maida’s inventory, ranging from the classic Timothy Taylor’s Landlord on hand pump to bottle pours of



Pecking Order on tap at The Hero of Maida pub in London. Photo Credit: Tomm Carroll

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I also had a long chat with Pete about his career, his advocacy for real ale (he was the head researcher for a recently published report on cask beer) and our mutual love of British and American rock 'n' roll (he was jealous I had interviewed John Cale in '78) over dimpled-mug pints of Landlord.

To bring this tale back on track, I also got to talk to award-winning beer and travel writer Mark Dredge (who won a silver award in that category the night before) about famous beers that are not available on draught. I mentioned the benchmark Belgian Golden Ale Duvel — not the lower ABV (6.8%) and unfiltered version known as Duvel Single (née Duvel Green), but the original 8.5% version, which I had heard was not even on draught at the Duvel Moortgat brewery in Breendonk-Dorp, Belgium.

Not so, replied Mark, who told me that, in fact, the original Duvel was actually now on tap at a couple places in London, including The Bottle Shop in Bermondsey. What? I was already

considering a return to the so-called “Bermondsey Beer Mile” (actually close to two miles now) Saturday, as that is when all of the breweries, taprooms and bottle shops — each of them housed in a railway arch — are open to the public. So now I *had* to go.

The next day, starting out at one of my favorite Bermondsey breweries, Brew by Numbers (BBNo) to sample its excellent saisons and IPAs, I planned to work my way to The Bottle Shop. Even though I was last in the area 14 months ago, there were suddenly so many more new beer venues to visit — several literally next door to BBNo.

Manchester’s famed Cloudwater just opened a taproom a week or so before, and was understandably crowded. The 16 taps were pouring clear as well as hazy beers, among the latter two brand-new juicy, mango IPAs, Red Lorry and Yellow Lolly (named for a popular tongue twister for English children).

In the next archway was London Calling Sweden, a taproom for that country’s Poppels Bryggeri, featuring mostly British- and US-style ales. And one arch over was the relatively

(LONDON FALLING continued on page 8)



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The original Duvel is now on draught in London and select European cities

Courtesy of Duvel.com

#### (LONDON FALLING continued)

new taproom and barrel vault of the award-winning Bristol brewery, Moor Beer (SoCal native Justin Hawke is the owner and brewmaster), one of the few Bermondsey beermongers that offer cask beer. The Smokey Horyzon, a rauch rye real ale, was simply outstanding.

#### Duvel-Determined

But I couldn't be distracted from my real goal that day (which was night by now, as the sun sets at 4:00 p.m. in late November): the Duvel-on-draught that drew me here in the first place. The Bottle Shop was just around the corner.

Some crosswalks on many London streets are raised, like speed bumps, and after looking both ways (twice, of course, as Brits drive on the opposite side of the road as we do), I stepped into the crosswalk, immediately tripped on the raised asphalt, and literally face-planted in the middle of the street, smashing my eyeglasses,

and banging up my knee pretty painfully. Startled and embarrassed, I quickly got up and hobbled over to the sidewalk. (Yes, I had been drinking one-third pints throughout the afternoon, but I was *not* stumbling drunk.)

Some young ladies came by and asked if I was all right. "I think so," I replied. "Am I bleeding?" I needn't have asked as my hand was full of blood when I felt my nose to make sure it wasn't broken (fortunately, it wasn't). One of them gave me a packet of wet wipes, and I began sopping up the blood, which was seeping mainly from a gash on the bridge of my nose.

I declined any further assistance from the women and they went on their way. When the traffic subsided, I went back to the center of the street, and despite being now completely farsighted, managed to find the unbroken left lens of my shattered glasses. Holding it up to my eye like a monocle, I could at least read my phone! I hung out on the corner, trying not to look conspicuous,

and continued wiping my face, going though almost the whole packet of wet wipes (and disposing them in a nearby dustbin) for what seemed like 20 minutes until the bleeding pretty much stopped. Then I took a selfie to see how bad I looked. Not pretty, but at least I wasn't disfigured.

I started to order an Uber to return to my hotel, but then gazed up at the sign of The Bottle Shop, only 150 feet away. I thought, "I'm this close to that elusive Duvel on draught, and if it's still on tap, and I pass it up to go back, I'll kick myself if I miss it." I felt my nose — no bleeding — looked at my selfie again, and decided to go for it. Limping slightly with my sore knee, I entered The Bottle Shop.

"We don't want any trouble here," shop manager Steve Taylor immediately said to me, assuming that with my ruddy and puffy proboscis and glazed, farsighted look, not to mention my long, shaggy grey hair, I was some sort of bruiser hell-bent on wreaking revenge on the bugger who'd punched me out. I literally burst out laughing at his remark, and quickly explained my unfortunate mishap in my quest for the original Duvel on draught — then asked, "Is it still on tap?"

It was, and Steve interrupted his bartender to pour me a glass, and even refused to take any money from me for it. I thanked him and deposited some poundage from my pocket into the tip jar (an item not often seen in British bars). They brought me behind the bar, opened the special Duvel dispenser to show me the works, and explained the process to me. I was grateful, but even holding up my "monocle," I couldn't really see much.

#### The Duvel in the Details

In short, because of the original Duvel's high CO<sub>2</sub> content, due to its secondary fermentation (which usually takes place in that thick, stubby bottle), the beer won't dispense properly from a standard draught system. The beer line, which must be replaced after each keg, has to be 3 millimeters (0.118 of an inch) in diameter to throttle back the CO<sub>2</sub> pressure, and only 2 meters (6.5 feet) long, so the keg must be housed just below the tap and refrigerated at precisely 4° C (39.2° F) in a dedicated unit. Also, the Duvel glass should be placed under the tap two seconds after the beer starts flowing from it, and held at a 45° angle to get the perfect pour, stopping 2 centimeters (0.78 of an inch) from the rim.

And let me tell you, the draught Duvel drinks *exactly* like the bottled version: silky-smooth yet effervescent, with that massive head. If you're a fan of the beer, you *need* to try this version. I wouldn't recommend falling on your face to get it, but it is worth the extra effort to taste this devil of a draught beer.

It's currently not available in the US (London is the closest opportunity), but with Duvel Moortgat owning Firestone Walker Brewing, wouldn't it be nice if FW's Propagator brewpub in Venice added a draught Duvel dispensing unit as its first guest beer? Whaddaya say, Adam and David?

*Award-winning beer writer Tomm Carroll is a longtime contributor to Celebrator Beer News. He was honored to be shorted, er, shortlisted, for a BGBW award, and delighted he was able to drink Duvel on draught, despite the damage he inflicted upon himself in his quest to do so. Contact him at beerscribe@earthlink.net.*



Bruiser with a brew: Looking the worse for wear, the author finally gets a Duvel on draught

Selfie by Tomm Carroll

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## FOOD PAIRINGS

# SOUTHLAND BEER ON FOOT

by TREVOR HAGSTROM

The cliché in Los Angeles is that you can't walk anywhere. Being an avid walker, this rumor was almost enough to scare me away from originally moving here. Even scarier was the chatter about how there were no good craft breweries in the county. Today, the dynamic beer scene is enough to silence beer skeptics. They built the breweries, but it's still a challenge to get people to walk between them. L.A. is a great place to walk. From beach strolls on the Westside to hikes in the hills and canyons of the Eastside, there are great walks in almost every neighborhood of the Southland. Still, we enjoy walking between breweries the most. It is during these walks that exertion can be recessed with a cold, tasty reward.

Besides the obvious advantage of not having to worry about designating a driver, walking between breweries gives you a chance to pace yourself

between sessions and work off some of the calories. Beer walking is one of our favorite ways to spend a free afternoon.

The best areas we've found to do beer walks are in Torrance, The Arts District near Downtown Los Angeles and in the Northwest of Anaheim. Torrance offers the most beer per mile of any of these neighborhoods, with nine breweries set within two square miles. The most efficient walk within this beer-centric neighborhood is to start at Del Amo and Western, where Monkish, Smog City and Cosmic are all clustered. As you walk down Van Ness, you'll pass Strand, Red Car and Yorkshire Square. Then you'll head back up Torrance Boulevard to Western Avenue and finish at The Dudes Brewing Co. To complete the loop and wind up back at Monkish Brewing Co. you will have walked three miles, and will have had ample



LA Ale Works Exterior

Photo Credit: Maggie Rosenberg

opportunity to taste through the L.A. area's most exciting beer block.

When beer walking, we tend towards lighter, peppier beers to keep the energy up. Smog City Little Bo Pils is a favorite, Monkish usually has some good small-beers available, like the Subliminal Sequel. The "Los Dudes" Mexican Lager is a nice chuggable choice for sunny days. Yorkshire Square is always chock full of low alcohol beers. We usually always drink from cask here, but in the midst of a walk, we are sometimes tempted by the kegged versions of their beers. Flavor usually wins out and we go for a Perfectly Adequate Ale on cask.

Although there is a dense concentration of good breweries in Torrance, the warehouse scenery isn't quite idyllic. The gritty urban landscape of the Arts District is a bit of a step up in atmosphere. This two-mile stroll traverses six breweries from Boyle Heights to Little Tokyo. You could easily stop off at Indie Brewing, Dry River Brewing, Iron Triangle Brewing Co, Arts District Brewing, Angel City Brewing, and Mumford Brewing. Some good refreshing pints along the way include the Indie Pacific Highway Kölsch, Dry River's

refreshingly tart Para Sol, Iron Triangle Lager, and Mumford Brewing Legend Has It, a dry-hopped Pilsner. The highlight of this walk is finishing at the eerie alleyway that separates Indie Brewing from Dry River Brewing. It's a nice reward for crossing the river.

Our choice for the most scenic beer walk is in Anaheim. The beer is worth the effort, and even a Metrolink ride out to Orange County. Northwest Anaheim has a couple pockets of breweries that are in walking distance of each other. Our favorite walk follows the north shore of the Santa Ana River and passes six breweries, a the Terreux tasting room for the wild ales of The Bruery, and a new meadery/cidery along the four-mile path. Start at the brewery, meadery, restaurant, and home-brew shop Phantom Ales and then cut down towards the river. There are three breweries worth checking out on the same block, Hoparazzi Brewing Co., Asylum Brewing, and Bottle Logic Brewing. A couple more blocks down the river is the incoming Brewery X (set to open in 2019). Then treat yourself to something special at the iconic Family Rue's Bruery Terreux Tasting Room. Take a break to gaze into the Santa Ana River Lakes and

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then, if you can handle any more tasting, check out Stereo Brewing and All-American Ale Works. Next door to All-American is the new Honey Pot Meadery, which offers mead, cider and fruit wines on draught.

Refreshing choices along the way include the Savannah Sunset Mexican Lager and the Cranberry Pomegranate Mead at Phantom Ales. Also refreshing and tasty is the She Shot First Pale Wheat Ale from Bottle Logic Brewing, The Bruery's Orchard Wit and Stereo Brewing 5-String Session IPA. Outdoorsy types can even take a fishing break in the Santa Ana River Lakes to help break up the drinking sessions.

We're always on the lookout for new places to walk, sip and get some dubious exercise. Based on the dynamic growth of the brewery scene in Southern California, more good brewery walking neighborhoods will develop in the coming years. Hawthorne now offers two breweries right across the street from each other: Common Space and Los Angeles Ale Works. It's not quite enough for a beer walk, but good for an abbreviated brewery crawl.

The area around Claremont, on the eastern edge of L.A. County, is showing promise. Claremont Ales has a cidery and distillery right next door to each other, as well as two breweries (Rok Höuse Brewing Company and Last Name Brewing) right across the county line in Upland. For those looking for a day trip for a brewery walk, we recommend heading west to the beachside town of Ventura, which boasts four breweries in their small, quaint Downtown.

Because the weather is mild year-round, you can beer walk in the winter, but we still prefer to do these strolls in the summer when the daylight lasts through happy hour. As always, make sure to sneak in a water break between rounds, and don't be afraid to call a cab if you get a cramp.

*Trevor Hagstrom and Maggie Rosenberg are food, beverage, and travel content creators who specialize in local foodways. Trevor writes and Maggie takes photos. Their combined experience has seen them organizing beer festivals, designing beverage menus, and exploring some of Europe's oldest breweries. Examples of their work can be found at [www.tandmworks.com](http://www.tandmworks.com).*



Common Space Interior

Photo Credit: Maggie Rosenberg



Phantom Ales - Savannah Sunset

Photo Credit: Maggie Rosenberg

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## COVER STORY

# THE EL SEGUNDO KID

by DANIEL DRENNON

I first met Rob Croxall, the owner of El Segundo Brewing, at a beer festival on the Rock & Brews patio in 2011. It was a sunny summer day in the South Bay and I told Croxall his Citra Pale Ale was my favorite beer of the fest. He seemed genuinely surprised. His brand new brewery was literally across the street.

Soon after, we met for lunch at The Village Idiot on Melrose. Croxall was there to deliver a keg and he looked up at the tap list on the wall and asked the manager which tap handle El Segundo was getting. The answer was a local brewery's handle. Rob shook his head emphatically saying, "Absolutely not. Their owners helped me so much and are friends."

The competition for tap handles at beer bars that rotate was fierce and is more so now with over 900 California breweries. I was impressed by Croxall's loyalty...and integrity.

Rob has been the President of the Los Angeles County Brewers Guild and serves on the board now. He is a former athlete and thus a competitor. But he does not value winning over doing what is right.

Croxall is, first and foremost, a family man. He coaches his daughter's softball team. He surfs with his son. Sure. He is a business man. But in a business where camaraderie is beginning to fray around the edges as profit margins dwindle with the big beer buy outs and their dubious distribution practices, along the proliferation of other small independent breweries opening and slicing the pie thinner and thinner, Croxall is a role model who other brewery owners should look to as an example.

**DRENNON: Where were you born and raised and how did it form you into who you are now?**

CROXALL: I was born in and raised in El Segundo, literally seven blocks from the brewery. My wife Amy also grew up in El Segundo and my parents still live here after 50-something years. El Segundo is a small, down-to earth,



Rob Croxall, owner of El Segundo Brewing

Photo Credit: Eli Buck

almost Midwest-type town except you can surf. I was lucky enough to be part of the huge baseball legacy of the town, which certainly had a significant impact on where I went to school (Cal Poly SLO) and the direction my life has gone since. I was lucky enough to play baseball at the college and professional level and had no idea that that was actually preparation for real life. Dealing with success, dealing with failure, perseverance, dealing with different people from different backgrounds, and depending on a team are all things that are directly applicable to running a small business.

**DRENNON: What were you into?**

CROXALL: Baseball and the beach. Baseball was huge for myself and my friends. We had several big-leaguers come from our high school program so it was easy to find and

keep motivation. How many high school kids get to practice with (Hall of Fame) George Brett? When I wasn't playing baseball, I was at the beach living the cliché California lifestyle. It was a great, fun place to grow up. To this day I am still doing the same things, either on the diamond coaching my daughter in softball or at the beach with my son.

**DRENNON: What was your career before beer?**

CROXALL: I was in Finance and Business Management for several major aerospace companies for 13 years before opening ESBC. I was never very happy in that field and I don't think I would have loved any traditional company/desk job. It just took me 13 years to do something about it.

**DRENNON: Your boss at Northrop was a homebrewer. Is that how you got into homebrewing?**

CROXALL: Pretty much. Sometime around 2003 a buddy of mine gave me a brand new kit he had never used. I had no idea what to do with it. As luck would have it, the engineering director I was supporting was a homebrewer. We talked more about beer than we did about business. He literally had to explain to me what hops are. In fact, my very first brew was his recipe for a Pale Ale with Cascade and Pearle hops and Wyeast 1056. I still have the recipe card as I do for every beer I've ever brewed. So, under his tutelage and by re-reading and re-reading Charlie Papazian's book I got my homebrewing feet under me. From then until ESBC opened, I was homebrewing pretty much weekly.

**DRENNON: When and how did you decide to open El Segundo Brewing?**

CROXALL: I truly had an epiphany. I was in a good place career-wise, working with the CFO and finance directors of the company I was at and would regularly operate in that circle. One day I was sitting in the CFO staff meeting thinking to myself that my next job and every future job would be one of the jobs of the people in that room. When I looked around the room, I realized I didn't want any of those jobs.... So, with a new mindset, I took a career derailing, easy job to buy time to do my business plan. I applied and was accepted to the Professional Brewers Program at UC Davis, secured backing (yes, mostly help from my parents), and started getting to know people in the business, most importantly Tom Kelley.

In November of 2010, my company was going to require me to lay off some of my staff. I told my boss that I was going to brewing school and leaving the company and that she should lay me off instead. So, I got laid off, got a check to walk out the door, and went to UC Davis Professional Brewers Program in early 2011. We opened the doors of ESBC in May of 2011. There were a handful of brew

pubs around at the time including Wolf Creek, Ladyface, and Red Car. There were only a few packaging breweries in LA: Craftsman, Angel City, Eagle Rock, and Strand. It was a fun time. I had no idea how little I really knew.

**DRENNON: How and where did you meet Tom Kelley and tell us about his contribution to ESBC?**

CROXALL: Sometime around 2010, my dad and I invested in Library Alehouse and we would frequent it as often as we could. We got to know the GM, Tom Kelley, who was a Cicerone and knew volumes about beer and about the developing LA market. After tasting a couple of my beers and getting to know us, he eventually agreed to come on board as what I would call Director of Sales, or what he calls “Rain Maker”. That does sum him up very well. To say Tom is confident is an understatement, but he has the substance to back it up. I can honestly say that ESBC would be far from the company it is today without Tom’s input, insight, and straight up hard work. He has a sales team of himself plus 2.5 people.

Per the Brewer’s Association numbers, we produced more beer than any independent in LA in 2017 and the prior three years. All of that was moved by Tom and his tiny sales team. His contributions are far beyond just sales. He is key on the vision of the company, where the market is going, and what is the strategy. We really work well together and have a great division of responsibilities. I handle the production side and the finance side. Tom handles the public side of things, sales, and marketing. It is the vision and strategy side where we work closest. It is a great working relationship. We are friends

now, but we didn’t start this as friends. So early on no one felt the need to hold back for fear of hurting someone’s feelings. Honest communication, even if you don’t want to hear it, is what makes you better.

**DRENNON: Your brother Dan has an interesting position in craft beer. Tell us about that.**

CROXALL: Yeah, my brother is a lawyer who started with a huge, international firm then opened his own practice. When we were opening ESBC, I started asking him all kinds of brewery specific legal questions. He came to the realization that that legal resources for breweries are pretty limited. So, after a few years representing breweries and other alcohol producers, he made a pitch to McGeorge School of Law, which was where he went to law school, about a craft beer law program. They bought the idea and his first class filled up immediately. Today he is teaching the only craft beer law courses in the country.

**DRENNON: You have somewhat remarkably had around a dozen different brewers over your eight years as a brewery. How do you maintain quality and consistency?**

CROXALL: That’s funny you ask. I feel as though we’ve had a couple ups and downs as the brew staff has changed over time. We absolutely strive for quality and repeatability. In the first few years it was actually easier in one sense. I was brewing and packaging. Tom would sell and help on sensory and style. It was a very closed loop. Today we have three brewers and two cellarmen, so there is always the vulnerability to human variation.

(THE EL SEGUNDO KID continued on page 14)



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Rob Croxall stabbing Tom Kelley

Photo Credit: Eli Buck



(THE EL SEGUNDO KID continued)

Logan Smith, my lead brewer for the last two years, is key to our continual quality and is much more a scientist that I am. He gets my beer, and that is not something that is automatic with different brewers. He is always conducting small experiments and coming up with new process ideas. My simple original batch card has evolved to two pages of notes and measurements on every batch brewed. We conduct panels and keep notes on every batch that leaves the brewery and will make the hard decision when we have to. Fortunately, although maybe not obvious to the casual customer, I have seen quality improving consistently since the

beginning. We seldom find ourselves with flawed beer these days, but we did just dump a batch of Mayberry IPA we were not happy with in November. I firmly believe that decisions like that are what maintain the perception for quality we have in the market.

**DRENNON:** *Do you have a brewing philosophy?*

CROXALL: Quality above all else and brew the beer that I want to drink. The quality is self-explanatory, but the brewing beer I want to drink really helps keep direction. We have dabbled some in styles that I do not like much, such as the hazy IPA, but our strength is doing West Coast and doing it well so we stick to our guns there.



Rob Croxall and Logan Smith at Hop Selection

Photo Credit: ESBC

**DRENNON:** *What do you consider your biggest successes so far?*

CROXALL: The easy answer is the handful of wins that we have had at the Bistro Double IPA Festival over the past several years. I see this as the most specific competition for beers in our West Coast style against what I consider to be a list of the best breweries in the country. To even be included with those breweries is humbling. But in a more personal

sense I think the biggest success is the community we have built in El Segundo. We have 29 staff members who we treat like family and we have developed a beyond-loyal customer base of craft beer fans that did not exist in El Segundo before. I still get blown away sometimes when I come into the taproom and see people enjoying our beer and being part of this community. That is what all of this is about in the end.

**DRENNON:** *Many are saying that the long talked about “bubble bursting” for the incredible growth of craft beer over the past ten years is finally here. What are your assessments as a former finance guy?*

CROXALL: We are certainly already in a new phase in this industry. We are seeing acquisition of formerly pure independent breweries by investment groups, we are seeing congestion at the tap handles, we are seeing overload on shelves, and we have seen the hijacking and devaluation of the term “craft” by Big Beer. Unfortunately, I believe that the “independent” angle is also losing its impact and the regular customer is tuning out that message.

It is getting tougher in the distribution arena and I believe that over time we will see many independent breweries pull out of the distribution game altogether. The fact is that with the death of the 22-ounce bomber and the associated high margin, the profitability of a small brewery in distribution is peanuts, if they are even profitable at all.



ESBC tap room

Photo Credit: Eli Buck



Rob Croxall

Photo Credit: Eli Buck

The Big Beer strategy of purchasing a formerly independent brewery and then dumping their beer in the market at prices they know small breweries can't come close to is highly effective. They are able to keep the prices the market will bear low and will weed out most small independents from distribution over time. Taprooms are the more certain future and I see the true independents becoming more and more localized as the more commercial breweries will conglomerate. But even here locally focused breweries are vulnerable as long as breweries keep opening on top of each other, making each piece of the pie smaller and smaller. "Build it and they will come" or "the more the merrier" are pure fantasy unless one of the breweries is a major player with a major draw. I hope that owners of breweries in planning understand that because, if they don't, they are the ones that will learn the hard way.

**DRENNON:** *You're on the verge of opening "Slice and Pint" in El Segundo. What prompted that move?*

CROXALL: I realize that my assessment of the market sounds all doom-and-gloom but I don't necessarily see it that way. I see it as an opportunity to create strategy while understanding what the hurdles are. We most certainly have been adjusting strategy over the years and our volley into the restaurant game is part of that. The Slice & Pint is our pizza restaurant under the ESBC banner and will be located about one block away from the brewery. When we open in January, we will feature hand tossed pizzas, locally sourced greens, ESBC beer, guest taps, and wine. The restaurant will operate under the same philosophies as the brewery: quality, freshness and, most importantly, community. The

overarching theme we are proceeding under is to rely less on distribution and focus on retail, where we interact directly with our guests and are more in control of our own destiny. That is not to say we are pulling out of distribution. That's not the case at all. We are just moving forward with our eyes open to what is going on around us and using a traditional approach of broadening the portfolio.

**DRENNON:** *Where do you see ESBC in ten years?*

CROXALL: Still independent and making quality beer.

**DRENNON:** *If you had to describe yourself in one word or phrase, what would it be?*

CROXALL: Very lucky and very fortunate.

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## YAEGER SHOTS

# WINTER WARMERS! WHAT'S WINTER?

by BRIAN YAEGER

Fun fact: from Ana to Ynez, there are a dozen Santa cities in California. You'd think, or at least hope, that in a city with the word Santa in it, Santa Barbara brewers would have developed something of a Christmas beer tradition, even if winter is just something we see on other people's Facebook pages. Down in Carpinteria, where there's Santa Claus Lane, how do none of the three breweries celebrate this via a seasonal recipe? This isn't to suggest that the dozen breweries in the greater SB area—or five dozen including all the ones from Ventura to Paso Robles—brew wassails and winter warmers meant to put meat on the bones of people suffering through arctic temps. The closest thing Santa Barbara will ever have to a polar vortex is a can of Captain Fatty's Vortex IPA if someone foolishly chilled it down in their freezer. But still, it's a craft beer tradition to honor the seasons via beer.

When I lived in Portland, most breweries had a winter release and they didn't need to taste like reindeers romping through satchels of mulling spices or sipping schnapps by a fireplace atop the Matterhorn. They have the Holiday Ale Fest that takes over the entire square in the center of town that, yes, does offer a glut of barrel-aged spice bombs, but perhaps the most celebrated wintry welcome

is Hopworks Urban Brewery's Abominable Winter Ale, a 7.3% IPA built on Munich and caramel malts. Then there's Laurelwood's Vinter Varmer. It's a brown ale with nary a hint of egg nog or cranberry bog.

Here in the American Riviera, where winter simply means larger swells for surfing and a cold spell is anytime the thermometer dips below 65, my favorite beer trend, if we can call it that, is what I shall call "the whack and unwrap."

### Whack & Unwrap

Y'know those confections that come out in December that are foil-wrapped spheres of chocolate designed to *whack* against a table and in doing so, once you *unwrap* it, you're treated to wedges designed to look like orange slices? Orange and chocolate is a wondrous love-hate flavor combo (I'm on Team Chocolate-Orange, but I know I'm in the slight minority). Santa Barbara now brews three, count 'em three beers bursting with cacao and citrus. It truly is the most wonderful time of the year. Or not.

One of the three beers, dating only as far back as 2016, is Third Window's Walkabout. It's not necessarily a holiday beer, but I hold onto at least one bottle until now. Walkabout is an 8.2% imperial stout with cacao nibs



James Parrish (Figueroa Mountain) and Jim Crooks (Firestone Walker Barrelworks)  
Photo Credit: Kevin Lara, courtesy Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co.



Feliz Nibs & Orange collaboration

Photo Credit: Kevin Lara, courtesy Figueroa Mountain Brewing Co.

from the brewery's neighbor, Twenty-Four Blackbirds, plus Madagascar vanilla beans and a bunch of oranges foraged from customers' yards.

The second such beer is a new release from Telegraph. Established in 2006, a year ago owner Brian Thompson sold it to Utah's Epic Brewing. Epic, already highly regarded for their Big Bad Baptist, which is a bourbon-aged impy chocolate and coffee stout, "collaborated" with Telegraph on the brand new Big Bad Baer. It's a twist on Baptist, essentially taking the beer out of whiskey barrels and then into port barrels, then coming out at 13%. Yup, double-barreled, but built for sipping, not shotgunning. Also, the coffee hails from Santa Barbara's premier roaster, Handlebar. And, as you guessed, it welcomes an addition of orange peels.

The third beer on this list is sort of a reverse image. Figueroa Mountain, based in Buellton but brewed by James Parrish from their Arroyo Grande satellite brewery, collaborated with Firestone Walker Barrelworks' Jim

Crooks, to create Feliz Nibs & Orange (5.7%). Unlike the chocolaty beers with an orangy kick, this is a wild ale with oranges so it's already tart and citrusy, then dry hopped with cacao nibs making the end result more like getting chocolate in your orange instead of orange in your chocolate. All three are out of this world.

### Giving 2019 110%.

Even if you're going to give the new year your all, giving one hundred percent still only gets you so far. To start the year off on the right foot, find that extra ten percent (or more) with these warmers that put those HotHands pocket-furnaces to shame.

Starting at the "low end" of double-digit ABVs with this ten-percenter, Third Window released With Best Wishes. They don't release bottles that often, but when they do, it's a special occasion. With Best Wishes takes their winter saison brewed with ginger and orange peel and ages it in wine puncheons. The result is like *glühwein* or mulled wine, but cold. And beer.



A few blocks away on State Street, SB's second-youngest brewery—Night Lizard—is itself only months old but didn't let that stop themselves from releasing Grand Cru Vintage 2018. Calling a beer a *grand cru*, from the French for “great growth” and popularized as a way to connote superb *terroir*, means it's the brewers best expression. Night Lizard's brewer Chip Nasser fixed this elixir fermented with French saison yeast from the Zenne Valley (known Stateside as the Senne Valley, where Lambic comes from). The result is not remotely lambicky or sour, yet rather akin to a Belgian strong golden with a pretty great phenolic hit and a finish that says apples'n'honey making this a great bottle to buy this year and give next Hannukah. Incidentally, start your verticals from the get-go since Grand Cru Vintage 2019 will contain a component of 2018, and so and so forth.

Up in Goleta at M. Special, there's nothing stranger than their Barrel-Aged Demogorgon. This Russki imperial stout abounds with rich dried fruit and dark-roasted coffee. At 10.5%, it may not keep the Kremlin out of the White House or your Facebook, but it'll have you Putin on the Ritz.

Finally, and fortuitously, Fig Mountain's anniversary falls in late fall so during any cold snaps we may suffer, we'd be well-served to go in for their 8th Anniversary Ale, a 12.5% barleywine inspired and cajoled by my favorite cocktail, an old fashioned, so this warming beer proffers hints of brown sugar, chocolate and a single maraschino cherry.

All in all, now that you'd need an advent calendar with roughly 345 chocolates to get you through next Christmas, Southern Californians can be forgiven for forgetting that December 23 marks the beginning of wintertime, but it's still fun to pour beers like those poor saps in all states east of here. So pack your 3/2 wetsuits, or even a 4/3 if you want to dress like it's a real winter, and surf up the coast to explore the wonderland that is Santa Barbara in January.

*Brian Yaeger is the author of Red, White, and Brew and contributed to the Oxford Companion to Beer. If he's not writing for beer publications he's planning beer festivals. Along with his wife and son (I.P.Yae.) he recently moved to (and is learning to surf in) Santa Barbara.*



James Parrish (Figuroa Mountain) and Jim Crooks (Firestone Walker Barrelworks)  
Photo Credit: Kevin Lara, courtesy Figuroa Mountain Brewing Co.



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## HAZE CRAZE

## ISO FRESH HOPS

by TIM CRIST

The Fat Man drops down the chimney with gifts. The ball drops in Times Square on New Year's Eve. And if you're a connoisseur of hops there's only one drop that should concern you: your local brewery's next high quality, limited quantity, one of a kind drop. Liquid gold for some, my favorite drops these days are coming from Monkish. This brewery has some of the freshest, most flavorful haze one can regularly enjoy. New to the scene and want to know how to catch these limited edition drops? Look no further than your smartphone for your initiation into the scene that epitomizes the benefits of local, craft, folk, art, culture; beer.

Being in the know for craft beer drops is the only surefire way to get your hands on exclusive brews that sell in minutes! Check Twitter and Instagram for those posh pics of artful cans and heady pours. For Monkish beer, release posts usually occur between Tuesday and Thursday after 2:30pm but things can get tricky. Friday drops happen too, usually at noon sharp right before the brewery opens. Saturday drops are the hardest to catch; keep your head in the game, concentrate, and shake off those Friday brews. Be savvy. Start your mornings off right by checking the

"Release Information" on the brewery's web page (it doesn't get any more straight forward than that!). While you're there, take a look at the brewery hours; that way you'll be first in line while the rest of your crew is still scrolling through Instagram.

Once you have determined what day the brewery is dropping their beer, *Get There*. And fast. Because some days you await the sweet slice of green in neat, monitored, ID'd, and braceleted lines. Gotta work? *Call in sick*. Did you have plans? *Cancel them*. First child being born? Maybe go to that, yeah, probably go to that. But for the rest of you, the juice is worth the squeeze my friends. Artisanal brew's like triples and collaborations will go faster than others. The allotment for those who patiently wait is a few select four-packs of deliciously canned goodness.

For me personally, it's ideal to get there before the drop. Parking is better. I get the beer quicker. Traffic is milder. And now I got time to meander. Until the drop happens, I am talking beers with those around me and the latest in the brewery scene. Pay attention to the rules on line sharing. Line sharing is almost non-existent at Monkish due to the chance of getting



Can release at Monkish

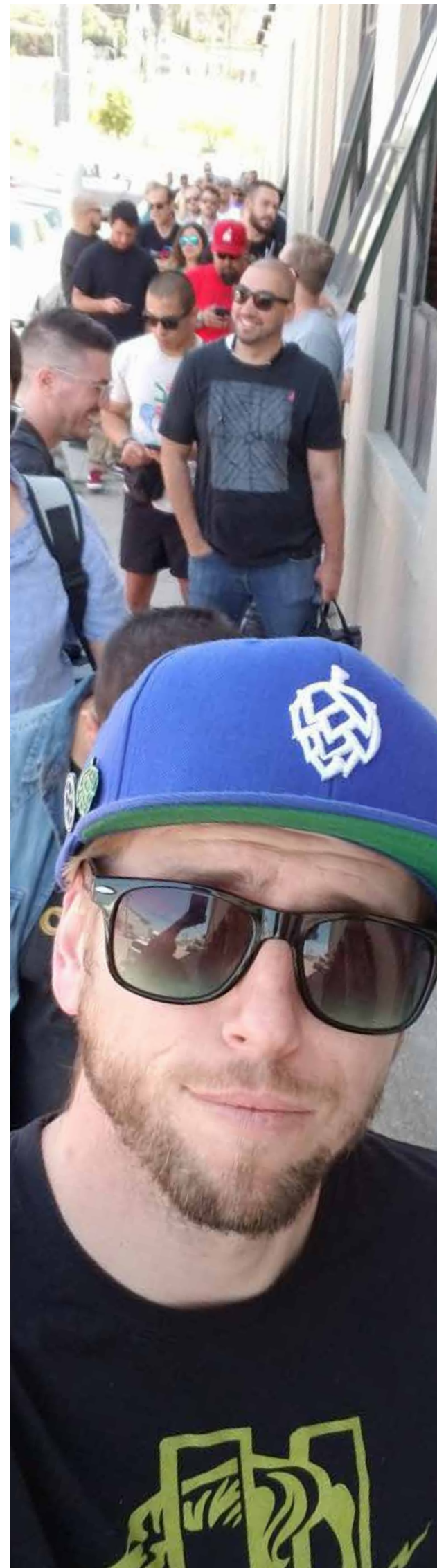


Photo Credit: IPA Tim IPA Tim in line at Monkish

Photo Credit: IPA Tim

banned. And that just wouldn't be worth it. Most other breweries that have can releases with a line will have some line shares going on. And that is super fun. If I show up after a drop, I get in line and get my ID scanned and numbered wristband put on. It's time to socialize. Here's where local, micro, craft, folk, culture beats anything on social media: talk to those around you.

Everybody in line is there for the drop. Everybody in line has a common passion. Everybody in line has a common hobby: local craft beer. Sometimes I get a bite to eat from a food truck or, by Monkish, "Fantastics." The whole time I'm keeping track of the line and my place in it. IF, on the rare occasion, I get skunked...then I always have my cooler ready for some growler fills. Gotta get that freshie.

Here's what success looks like: You've checked to see if there was going to be any releases for the week starting Monday and throughout the week. You've stayed on the lookout for the

can release post. You raced to make it there, chatted up those around you, maybe grabbed some food. You kept track of your place in line, and purchased your own cans of liquid gold. Monkish beer. To me the most flavorful, delicious, fresh haze around. And now it's your turn to enjoy this great beer with friends, after work, on your day off, on the day your first child is born. You could also use the cans you've purchased to make trades for other limited brewery releases. This could allow you to try craft beer from all around United States and the world. But that story will come next month. #micDROP

*Tim Crist a.k.a IPA Tim has been working in L.A. food service the last fifteen years. Today, he's driven by the query: "What is good beer?," and he's been experiencing craft beers ever since. Can releases and limited bottle sales are his forte. He can be seen at Monkish Brewing where he enjoys trading and enjoying beers from coast to coast.*



IPA Tim at Monkish

Photo Credit: IPA Tim



Monkish LA Hat

Photo Credit: IPA Tim



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## FOOD PAIRINGS

# BEER PAIRINGS IN ACTION: FIRESTONE WALKER PROPAGATOR BEER DINNER

by TREVOR HAGSTROM



*Cheers to Evan Partridge*

*Photo Credit: Maggie Rosenberg*

Chefs and winemakers have long collaborated to create multi-course meals that showcase how food and wine improve each other. When tasted together, good food and beverages are much more than the sum of their parts. Their combined forces equal new flavors that a dish or drink cannot achieve alone. When brewers and chefs collaborate, the pairings have the potential to be much more adventurous. While multi-course wine pairing dinners are common, beer dinners are a much wilder ride.

For one, beer is more versatile than wine. Sommeliers often try challenge themselves to dream up the right wine to go with deep-fried pub grub favorites or umami-rich Asian dishes.

The answer, of course, isn't wine at all, but beer. Beer fills those gaps in wine pairing, but it also should be seen as a suitable alternative to wine for dishes that are usually considered wine friendly.

Wine directors approach pairings by first considering a wine's acidity and astringency (from tannin). Beer too offers varying astringency, whether from hop bitterness or the charred finish on a dark stout or schwarzbier. Recently, more brewers have added acidic beers to their line-ups, allowing beer to stand in for wine in more pairing applications. Rich foods that require some acidity to cut through the fat now have many sour beer pairing options.

Because brewers may use fermentables besides grain, smoke their malts, or add all kinds of herbs and spices to their kettle, beer can be flavored very deliberately. While wine may be smoky or spicy in certain ways, it is never as explicitly flavored as beer. The flavors that grapes develop may change with vintage variation and aren't easy to control. This means a brewer and a chef can coordinate recipes for pairing in a way that a winemaker would be unable to do.

There are also broader tastes available in beer. Most wine exists on a spectrum between sweet and acidic. Beer, on the other hand, may be bitter, acidic, sweet or even slightly salty. Beer also has wide variations in gravity, it may be barely thinner than water when a cleansing texture is desired, or thick and sharp when necessary. This allows a progressive beer pairing dinner to match with everything from salad to dessert. This is the way the seven-course extravaganza at the Firestone Walker Propagator Restaurant began and ended.

The meal started with RB3 "Beer Rosé," a beer/wine hybrid from the Propagator's pilot brewery. Host and brewhouse manager, Evan Partridge, explained that this beer made use of the juice from eight Central Coast white grape varieties. The resulting beer had a soft fruit acidity, rather than the sharp tartness that lactic or aged

sour beers produce. It was paired with an arugula salad with pickled grapes and brûléed citrus. Chef Justin Lewis created a salad to match the split personality of the hybrid brew. The bitter arugula matched the beer half, and fruit in the salad played against the wine half of the wine/beer.

The next course showcased another one of the Propagator's original beers, MH2, a hazy IPA, paired with yellowtail crudo. The citrus aromas of the beer were a natural match for the fish, and the pairing also thoughtfully navigated a common challenge when pairing beers. Beer styles with aggressive hop bitterness, like IPA, are notoriously challenging to pair with food. Hops can easily overpower delicate flavors. The creamy texture of the yeasty hazy IPA helped to mute some astringency and allowed for a successful pairing.

The next course matched the Firestone Walker Lager with pork-based ramen. Ice-cold, chuggable beer with hot soup is always a winning match. This was particularly successful because their lager is quite dry, lacking the sweet-malt character of Bavarian styles, and so it was particularly refreshing against a salty pork broth.

Foie gras, the fatted liver of a duck, is a favorite ingredient for high-end wine tasting menus on both sides of

(PROPAGATOR BEER DINNER  
continued on page 22)

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*Hazy IPA with Crudo*

*Photo Credit: Maggie Rosenberg*

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## Absolution Brewing

2878 Columbia St, Torrance  
absolutionbrewingcompany.com

## Angel City

216 S. Alameda St, Los Angeles  
angelcitybrewing.com

## Angry Horse Brewing

603 W Whittier Blvd, Montebello  
angryhorsebrewing.com

## Barbara's at the Brewery

620 Moulton Ave #110, Los Angeles  
barbarasatthebrewery.com

## Beachwood Brewing

7631 Woodwind Dr, Huntington Beach  
beachwoodbbq.com

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210 E 3rd St, Long Beach  
beachwoodbbq.com

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247 N Long Beach Blvd, Long Beach  
beachwoodbbq.com

## Beachwood BBQ

131 ½ Main St, Seal Beach  
beachwoodbbq.com

## Bluebird Brasserie Brewery & Eatery

13730 Ventura Blvd, Sherman Oaks  
bluebirdbrasserie.com

## Brew Kitchen Ale House

10708 Los Alamitos Blvd, Los Alamitos  
brewkitchenalehouse.com

## Brewyard Beer Company

906 Western Ave, Glendale  
brewyardbeercompany.com

## Chapman Crafted Beer

123 N Cypress St, Old Towne Orange  
chapmancrafted.beer

## Cismontane Brewing Company

1409 E Warner Suite C, Santa Ana  
cismontanebrewing.com

## Claremont Craft Ales

1420 N Claremont Blvd #204c, Claremont  
claremontcraftales.com

## Common Space Brewing

3411 W El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne  
commonsplace.la

## El Segundo Brewing

140 Main St, El Segundo  
elsegundobrewing.com

## Farmers Market Bar 326

6333 W 3rd St., Los Angeles  
fmbar.com

## Figueroa Mountain Brewing - Westlake Village

30770 Russell Ranch Rd,  
Westlake Village  
FigMtnBrew.com

## Firestone Walker - The Propagator

3205 Washington Blvd, Marina Del Rey  
firestonebeer.com

## HopSaint Brewing Company

5160 W 190th St, Torrance  
hopsaint.com

## Ironfire Brewing Co.

42095 Zevo Dr Suite #1, Temecula  
ironfirebrewing.com

## Liberation Brewing

3630 Atlantic Ave, Long Beach  
liberationbrewing.com

## MacLeod Brewing

14741 Calvert St, Van Nuys  
macleodale.com

## Mikkeller

330 W Olympic Blvd, Los Angeles  
mikkellerbar.com/la

## Naja's Place

154 International Boardwalk, Redondo Beach  
najasplace.com

## Riley's

5331 E 2nd St, Long Beach  
rileyson2nd.com

## Skyland Ale Works

1869 Pomona Road E & F, Corona  
skylandaleworks.com

## Smog City - Steelcraft

3768 Long Beach Boulevard #110,  
Long Beach  
steelcraftlb.com/smog-city-brewing

## Smog City Brewing

1901 Del Amo Blvd, Torrance  
smogcitybrewing.com

## The Stalking Horse Brewery & Freehouse

10543 Pico Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90064  
thestalkinghorsepub.com

## State Brewing Company

1237 W 134th St, Gardena  
facebook.com/statebrewingco

## Strand Brewing

2201 Dominguez St, Torrance  
strandbrewing.com

## Timeless Pints

3671 Industry Ave C1, Lakewood  
timelesspints.com

## Trustworthy Brewing

156 W Verdugo Ave, Burbank  
trustworthybrewingco.com

## Unsung Brewing Co.

500 S Anaheim Blvd, Anaheim  
unsungbrewing.com

## Ximix Craft Exploration

13723 1/2 Harvard Pl, Gardena  
ximixcraft.com

## Zymurgy Brew Works & Tasting Room

22755 Hawthorne Blvd, Torrance  
zymurgybrewworks.com

(PROPAGATOR BEER DINNER continued)

the Atlantic. Typically this rich delicacy is paired with sweet wines or very fruity whites. To meet the challenge of pairing the dish with beer, it was matched with a unique beer from Firestone Walker's Barrelworks Brewery. The Capt. Franc made use of Santa Barbara County Cabernet Franc grapes and was made use of wine barrels. The resulting beer was complex with a nose of brett yeast and a balanced tartness in the finish. The pairing pushed the capabilities of beer pairing to the limit. If the butter foie gras needed a little more acidity than the beer offered, charred wine grapes were served as garnish.

An intermezzo of salami and cheese came next, which was thoughtfully matched with the Walker's Reserve Robust Porter. The dark beer had enough roasted malt astringency to stand in for red wine. With the pork rib entree that came, a heartier porter was served, the Fireside Wookie. The beer was infused with vanilla in the brewery, but The Propagator added an extra layer of flavor by adding smoke to the beer before serving. The smoke was held in the glass by a coaster and wafted up when it was served. The brash smoke and sweet vanilla were the kind of bold flavors that a glazed, barbecued pork needs. Matching BBQ with always wine tastes forced, it's really a job for beer.

Dessert brought out a pour of the much anticipated 2018 Parabajava, Firestone Walker's annual celebratory imperial coffee stout aged for one year in Bourbon barrels. This thick, complex beer was a dessert in of itself and complemented the coffee cake that was served. When you're serving a beer that is so very bold, a simple uniced cinnamon cake is the right move. The jolt of coffee in the beer gave exhausted palates and minds a boost. It also allowed us to forego our customary after-dinner coffee and whiskey. It was already in the beer.

Chef and brewer guided beer dinners are pushing the boundaries of how beer can be used in dining. Beverage directors have gradually begun to make room for more beer in their cellars to explore the pairing possibilities that get tested and proven by pioneering chef-brewer collaborators like Evan Partridge and Chef Justin Lewis. We look forward to seeing more brewpubs develop collaborative flavors from both their kitchens and breweries.

*Trevor Hagstrom and Maggie Rosenberg are food, beverage, and travel content creators who specialize in local foodways. Trevor writes and Maggie takes photos. Their combined experience has seen them organizing beer festivals, designing beverage menus, and exploring some of Europe's oldest breweries. Examples of their work can be found at [www.tandmworks.com](http://www.tandmworks.com).*



**Foie Gras with Captain Franc**



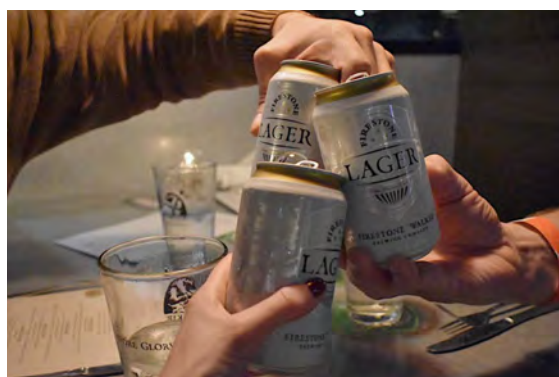
**Walker's Reserve Robust Porter & Cheese Course**



**Fireside Wookie (infused with smoke)**



**Parabajava and Coffee Cake**



**Can Cheers**

All Photos by Maggie Rosenberg

# BREWERY

## LOS ANGELES COUNTY

### BREWERIES

**Absolution Brewing Company**  
2878 Columbia St, Torrance  
[absolutionbrewingcompany.com](http://absolutionbrewingcompany.com)

**Alosta Brewing**  
692 Arrow Grand Cir, Covina  
[alostabrewing.com](http://alostabrewing.com)

**Angel City Brewery**  
216 S. Alameda St, Los Angeles  
[angelcitybrewing.com](http://angelcitybrewing.com)

**Angry Horse Brewing**  
603 W. Whittier Blvd, Montebello  
[angryhorsebrewing.com](http://angryhorsebrewing.com)

**Arrow Lodge Brewing**  
720 E. Arrow Hwy, Unit C, Covina  
[arrowlodgebrew.com](http://arrowlodgebrew.com)

**Arts District Brewing**  
828 Traction Ave, Los Angeles  
[artsdistrictbrewing.com](http://artsdistrictbrewing.com)

**Boomtown Brewery**  
700 Jackson St, Los Angeles  
[boomtownbrew.com](http://boomtownbrew.com)

**Bravery Brewing**  
42705 8th St W, Lancaster  
[braverybrewing.com](http://braverybrewing.com)

**Brewyard Beer Company**  
906 Western Ave, Glendale  
[brewyardbeercompany.com](http://brewyardbeercompany.com)

**Brouwerij West**  
110 E 22nd St, San Pedro  
[www.brouwerijwest.com](http://www.brouwerijwest.com)  
**Claremont Craft Ales**  
1420 N Claremont Blvd #204C, Claremont  
[claremontcraftales.com](http://claremontcraftales.com)

**Clayton Brewing Company**  
661 W Arrow Hwy, San Dimas  
[claytonbrewingco.com](http://claytonbrewingco.com)

**Common Space Brewery**  
3411 W El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne  
[commonspace.la](http://commonspace.la)

**Craftsman Brewing Co.**  
1270 Lincoln Ave #800, Pasadena  
[craftsmanbrewing.com](http://craftsmanbrewing.com)

**Dry River Brewing**  
671 S Anderson St, Los Angeles  
[www.dryriverbrewing.com](http://www.dryriverbrewing.com)

**Eagle Rock Brewery**  
3056 Roswell St, Los Angeles  
[eaglerockbrewery.com](http://eaglerockbrewery.com)

**El Segundo Brewing Company**  
140 Main St, El Segundo  
[elsegundobrewing.com](http://elsegundobrewing.com)

**Figuroa Mountain Brewing Co**  
30770 Russell Ranch Rd, Westlake Village  
[FigMtnBrew.com](http://FigMtnBrew.com)

**Five Threads Brewing Company**  
1133 Via Colinas #109, Westlake Village  
[fivethreadsbrewing.com](http://fivethreadsbrewing.com)

**Frogtown Brewery**  
2931 Gilroy St, Los Angeles  
[frogtownbrewery.com](http://frogtownbrewery.com)

**Highland Park Brewery**  
5127 York Blvd, Los Angeles  
[hpb.la](http://hpb.la)

**Homage Brewing**  
281 S Thomas St #101, Pomona  
[homagebrewing.com](http://homagebrewing.com)

**Indie Brewing Co.**  
2350 Sunrise St, Los Angeles  
[indiebrewco.com](http://indiebrewco.com)

**Iron Triangle Brewing Company**  
1581 Industrial St, Los Angeles  
[www.irontrianglebrewing.com](http://www.irontrianglebrewing.com)

**King Harbor Brewing Company**  
2907 182nd St, Redondo Beach  
[kingharborbrewing.com](http://kingharborbrewing.com)

**King Harbor Waterfront Tasting Room**  
132 International Boardwalk, Redondo Beach

**Long Beach Beer Lab**  
518 W Willow St, Long Beach  
[lbbeer.com](http://lbbeer.com)

**Los Angeles Ale Works**  
12918 Cerise Ave, Hawthorne  
[laaleworks.com](http://laaleworks.com)

**La Verne Brewing**  
2125 Wright Ave, La Verne  
[lavernebrewingco.com](http://lavernebrewingco.com)

**Lucky Luke Brewing**  
610 W Ave O #104, Palmdale  
[luckylukebrewing.com](http://luckylukebrewing.com)

**MacLeod Ale Brewing**  
14741 Calvert St, Van Nuys  
[macleodale.com](http://macleodale.com)

**Monkish Brewing Co.**  
20311 S Western Ave, Torrance  
[monkishbrewing.com](http://monkishbrewing.com)

**Mt. Lowe Brewing**  
150 E St Joseph St, Arcadia  
[mtlowebrewing.com](http://mtlowebrewing.com)

**Mumford Brewing**  
416 Boyd St, Los Angeles  
[mumfordbrewing.com](http://mumfordbrewing.com)

**Ohana Brewing Company**  
1756 E 23rd St, Los Angeles  
[ohanabrew.com](http://ohanabrew.com)

**Pacific Plate Brewing**  
1999 S Myrtle Ave, Monrovia  
[pacificplatebrewing.com](http://pacificplatebrewing.com)

**Phantom Carriage Brewing**  
18525 S Main St, Carson  
[phantomcarriage.com](http://phantomcarriage.com)

**Pocock Brewing Company**  
24907 Tibbitts Ave, Santa Clarita  
[pocockbrewing.com](http://pocockbrewing.com)

**Progress Brewing**  
1822 Chico Ave, South El Monte  
[progress-brewing.com](http://progress-brewing.com)

**REV Brewing**  
1580 W San Bernardino Ave, Ste H @ I, Covina  
[revbrewingco.com](http://revbrewingco.com)

# DIRECTORY

Sanctum Brewing Company  
560 E Commercial St #21, Pomona  
sanctumbrewing.com

San Fernando Brewing Company  
425 Park Ave, San Fernando  
sanfernandobrewingcompany.com

Scholb Premium Ales  
2964 Columbia St, Torrance  
drinkscholb.com

Santa Monica Brew Works  
1920 Colorado Ave, Santa Monica  
santamonicabrewworks.com

Smog City Brewing Co.  
1901 Del Amo Blvd #B, Torrance  
smogcitybrewing.com

Smog City Steelcraft  
3768 Long Beach Blvd, Long Beach  
steelcraftlb.com

State Brewing Co.  
1237 W 134th St, Gardena  
statebrewingco.com

Strand Brewing Co  
2201 Dominguez St, Torrance  
strandbrewing.com

Ten Mile Brewing  
1136 E Willow St, Signal Hill  
tenmilebrewing.com

The Dudes' Brewing Company  
1840 W 208th St, Torrance  
thedudesbrew.com

Timeless Pints  
3671 Industry Ave, Lakewood  
timelesspints.com

Three Weavers Brewing Co.  
1031 W Manchester Blvd Unit A-B,  
Inglewood  
threeweavers.la

Transplants Brewing Company  
40242 La Quinta Ln Unit 101, Palmdale  
transplantsbrewing.com

Verdugo West Brewing Co.  
156 W Verdugo Ave, Burbank  
verdugowestbrewing.com

Yorkshire Square Brewery  
1109 Van Ness Ave, Torrance  
yorkshiresquarebrewery.com

Zymurgy Brew Works and Tasting  
Room  
22755 Hawthorne Blvd, Torrance  
zymurgybrewworks.com

## BREW PUBS

Beachwood BBQ & Brewing  
210 E 3rd St, Long Beach  
beachwoodbbq.com

Belmont Brewing Company  
25 39th Pl, Long Beach  
belmontbrewing.com

Bonaventure Brewing  
404 S Figueroa St #418, Los Angeles  
bonaventurebrewing.com

Brewery at Abigaille  
1301 Manhattan Ave, Hermosa Beach  
abigailerestaurant.com

Congregation Ales  
Azusa Brewpub Chapter  
619 N Azusa Ave, Azusa  
congregationalehouse.com

Downey Brewing Company  
10924 Paramount Blvd, Downey  
thedowneybrewing.com

Firestone Walker - The Propagator  
3205 Washington Blvd, Marina Del  
Rey  
firestonebeer.com/visit/venice.php

HopSaint Brewing Company  
5160 W 190th St, Torrance  
www.hopsaint.com

Innovation Brew Works  
3650 W Temple Ave, Pomona  
ibrewworks.com

Karl Strauss Brewing Company  
600 Wilshire Blvd Ste 100, Los Angeles  
www.karlstrauss.com

Kinetic Brewing Company  
735 W Lancaster Blvd, Lancaster  
kineticbrewing.com

Ladyface Ale Companie  
29281 Agoura Rd, Agoura Hills  
ladyfaceale.com

Red Car Brewery and Restaurant  
1266 Sartori Ave, Torrance  
redcarbrewery.com

Rock Bottom Restaurant and Brewery  
1 Pine Ave, Long Beach  
rockbottom.com

San Pedro Brewing Company  
331 W 6th St, San Pedro  
sanpedrobrewing.com

The Lab Brewing Co.  
30105 Agoura Rd, Agoura Hills  
labbrewingco.com

Wolf Creek Restaurant & Brewing  
27746 McBean Pkwy, Santa Clarita  
wolfcreekbrewing.com

## ORANGE COUNTY

### BREWRIES

Anaheim Brewery  
336 S Anaheim Blvd, Anaheim  
anaheimbrew.com

Artifex Brewing  
919 Calle Amanacer, San Clemente  
artifexbrewing.com

Asylum Brewing  
2970 La Palma, Suite D, Anaheim  
asylumbrewingcompany.com

Back Street Brewery  
1884 S Santa Cruz St, Anaheim  
backstreetbrew.com

Barley Forge Brewing  
2957 Randolph Ave, Costa Mesa  
barleyforge.com

Beachwood Brewing Taproom  
7631 Woodwind Dr, Huntington Beach

Bootlegger's Brewery  
130 S Highland Ave, Fullerton  
bootleggersbrewery.com

Bottle Logic Brewing  
1072 N Armando St, Anaheim  
bottlelogic.com

Chapman Crafted Beer  
123 N Cypress St, Old Towne Orange  
chapmancrafted.beer

Cismontane Brewing Co. Tasting  
Room  
1409 E Warner Suite C, Santa Ana  
cismontanebrewing.com

Docent Brewing  
33049 Calle Aviador Suite C, San Juan  
Capistrano  
docentbrewing.com

Evans Brewing  
2000 Main St, Irvine  
evanslager.com

Four Sons Brewing  
18421 Gothard St, Huntington Beach  
foursonsbrewing.com

Green Cheek Beer Company  
2294 N Batavia St #C, Orange  
greencheekbeer.com

Gunwhale Ales  
2960 Randolph Ave a, Costa Mesa  
gunwhaleales.com

Hoparazzi Brewing Co.  
2910 E La Palma Ave, Anaheim

Laguna Beach Beer Co  
29851 Aventura Ste C-E, Rancho Santa  
Margarita  
lagunabeer.com

Left Coast Brewing Company  
1245 Puerta Del Sol, San Clemente  
leftcoastbrewing.com

Lost Winds Brewing Company  
924 Calle Negocio Suite C, San  
Clemente  
lostwindsbrewing.com

Network Brewery  
824 Carnegie Ave, Santa Ana  
networkbrewery.com

Noble Ale Works  
1621 S Sinclair St #B, Anaheim  
noblealeworks.com

Old Orange Brewing Co.  
1444 N Batavia St, Orange  
oldorangebrewing.com

Phantom Ales  
1211 Las Brisas St, Anaheim  
phantomales.com

Riip Beer Company  
17214 Pacific Coast Hwy, Huntington  
Beach  
riipbeer.com

Stereo Brewing  
950 S Via Rodeo, Placentia  
stereobrewing.com

The Bruery  
715 Dunn Way, Placentia  
thebruery.com

The Good Beer Co.  
309 W 4th St, Santa Ana  
thegoodbeerco.com

Towne Park Brewery  
1566 W Lincoln Ave, Anaheim  
towneparkbrew.com

Unsung Brewing Company  
500 S Anaheim Blvd, Anaheim  
unsungbrewing.com

## BREW PUBS

Huntington Beach Beer Company  
201 Main St, Huntington Beach  
hbbeerco.com

Newport Beach Brewing Company  
2920 Newport Blvd, Newport Beach  
newportbeachbrewingcompany.com

Ocean Avenue Brewery  
237 Ocean Ave, Laguna Beach  
oceanbrewing.com

Pizza Port San Clemente  
301 N El Camino Real, San Clemente  
pizzaport.com

Stadium Brewing  
26738 Aliso Creek Rd, Aliso Viejo  
stadiumbrewing.com

TAPS Fish House & Brewery  
101 E Imperial Hwy, Brea  
tapsfishhouse.com

TAPS Fish House & Brewery  
13390 Jamboree Rd, Irvine  
tapsfishhouse.com

Tustin Brewing Company  
13011 Newport Ave #100, Tustin  
tustinbrewery.com

## INLAND EMPIRE

### BREWRIES

Area 51 Craft Brewery  
7123 Arlington Ave #A, Riverside  
Area51craftbrewery.com

Black Market Brewing Co.  
41740 Enterprise Cir N #109, Temecula  
blackmarketbrew.com

Brew Crew Inc.  
11626 Sterling Ave #G, Riverside  
brewcrewinc.com

Brew Rebellion Brewing  
13444 California St, Yucaipa  
brewrebellion.com

Chino Valley Brewery  
1630 E Francis St #J, Ontario  
chinovalleybrewery.com

Coachella Valley Brewing Co.  
30-640 Gunther St, Thousand Palms  
cvbco.com

Dragon's Tale Brewery  
8920 Vernon Ave #122, Montclair  
www.dragonstalebrewery.com

Escape Craft Brewery  
721 Nevada St #401, Redlands  
escapecraftbrewery.com

Euryale Brewing Co  
2060 Chicago Ave #A-17, Riverside  
euryalebrewing.com

Garage Brewing Co  
29095 Old Towne Front St, Temecula  
garagebrewco.com

Hamilton Family Brewery  
9757 Seventh St #802, Rancho  
Cucamonga  
hamiltonfamilybrewery.com

Hangar 24 Brewery  
1710 Sessums Dr, Redlands  
hangar24brewery.com

Inland Empire Brewing Company  
1710 Palmyrita Ave #11, Riverside  
iebrew.com

Ironfire Brewing Co.  
42095 Zevo Dr #1, Temecula  
ironfirebrewing.com

Last Name Brewing  
2120 Porterfield Way, Upland  
lastnamebrewing.com

La Quinta Brewing Co.  
77917 Wildcat Dr, Palm Desert  
laquintabrewing.com

No Clue Brewing  
9037 #170 Arrow Rt, Rancho  
Cucamonga  
nocluebrew.com

Old Stump Brewing Co.  
2896 Metropolitan Pl, Pomona  
oldstumpbrewery.com

Packinghouse Brewery Co.  
6421 Central Ave #101-A, Riverside  
pbbeer.com

Refuge Brewery  
43040 Rancho Way, Temecula  
refugebrew.com

Ritual Brewing Co.  
1315 Research Dr, Redlands  
ritualbrewing.com

Rök House Brewing Company  
1939 W 11th St #A, Upland  
rokhousbrewing.com

Skyland Ale Works  
1869 Pomona Rd Unit E/F, Corona  
skylandaleworks.com

Solorio Brewing Company  
9395 Feron Blvd Suite K, Rancho  
Cucamonga  
soloriobrewing.com

Sour Cellars Brewery  
9495 E 9th St Unit B, Rancho  
Cucamonga  
www.sourcellars.com

Stone Church Brewing  
2785 Cabot Dr Suite 160, Corona  
stonechurchbrewing.com

Strum Brewing  
235 S Campus Ave, Ontario  
www.strumbrewing.com

Thompson Brewing  
9900 Indiana Ave Suite 7, Riverside  
thompsonbrewing.com

Wiens Brewing  
27941 Diaz Rd, Temecula  
Wiensbrewing.com

## BREW PUBS

TAPS Fish House & Brewery  
2745 Lakeshore Dr, Corona  
tapsfishhouse.com

Wicks Brewing Company  
11620 Sterling Ave, Riverside  
wicksbrewing.com

FOR A LIMITED TIME.

