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GREEN CHEEK WITH ENVY



Evan Price and Brian Rauso

Photo credit: @sargeantcreative

By Daniel Drennon

It is not very often in the warm and fuzzy world of craft beer that “breaking news” causes a palpable tremor. Ballast Point for a billion was such a moment. More local to Los Angeles and Orange County, the rumor that rock star brewer Evan Price was leaving Noble Ale Works has been the talk of the town, or shall I say, the talk of the second largest city in the United States for many months. (Read full story on page 12.)

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WISHFUL DRINKING

TRAD CASHER

Yorkshire Square to Bring a Taste of God's Own Country to Torrance

By Tomm Carroll

Gary Croft is a middle-aged Yorkshireman, born and bred in Northern England's largest county. His football team is Leeds United (and ManU fans can kiss his arse), and his beer was Tetley's English Ale, a pale ale traditionally conditioned in a cask, from which it is dispensed via handpump by gravity, made by the (now Carlsberg-owned) Tetley's Brewery, also based in his hometown of Leeds. He's since graduated up from that brand, but being a longtime expat in the US, still craves well-made, traditional cask ales.

C. Andy Black is a young New England homebrewer who was lucky enough to intern in the UK at Roosters Brewery in North Yorkshire, where he was able to indulge in his obsession with traditional English ales, and learn how to brew them. Not long after that, he got a gig at the new MacLeod Ales Brewery, a mostly cask-focused brewery in Van Nuys, and moved to L.A. Owners Alastair and Jennifer Boase made him head brewer, and he was further able to explore his passion and refine his technique in creating traditional British ales, including recreating a 1939 recipe for an English IPA from the legendary but long-gone London brewery Barclay Perkins, as well as his own recipes.

After parting ways with MacLeod, Black worked for a while as a shift brewer at American IPA masters El Segundo Brewing, where he also helped to enhance the cask program and even brewed Dad's Army, his own recipe for a British-style IPA (a nice change of pace, even if it was a keg beer), and further honed his skills. While doing some consulting work for area breweries, Black got a call from Croft (who was given the brewer's number by Jennifer Boase), who had finally found a space for his proposed cask brewery and was in need of a brewer's advice.

With their love of cask-conditioned ale, not to mention their Northern England connection, the pair hit it off famously. Black was hired as head brewer and made an equity partner in the brewery-to-be, which Croft's wife Amy and sons Charles and Sam will also help to run.

Located in downtown Torrance, not far from Strand Brewing's new facility (coincidentally, Croft originally looked at Strand's original digs on Telo Avenue,) but the owners didn't want to rent to a brewery again), Yorkshire Square Brewery (named for a traditional English fermentation vessel) should be soft-opening in April on Van Ness Avenue in a space that was formerly an American Legion Hall — and before that a car dealership — and was most recently considered as a home for Congregation Ale House's brewery. It's a stone's throw from Torrance's original, old-school brewpub, Red Car Brewery, which opened in 2000 and, ironically, makes vaguely English-style beers, only kegged, refrigerated and forced-carbonated; the modern method.

And therein lies the difference — and the appeal of Yorkshire Square. If you enjoyed the self-carbonated, cask beers stored and served at cellar temperature, and their permutations, at MacLeod's during Black's tenure, or fancy the ales of Northern England, or even just want to experience and learn about the long tradition of cask-conditioned beer (all beer was cask until the early 20th century, when pressurized containers were introduced), Yorkshire Square should be on your new-brewery-to-visit list.

For those unaware of this historic method of conditioning and serving beer, a tasting at Yorkshire Square will be an education — one that every self-described craft beer fan should experience. With possibly a few low-key exceptions, these will NOT be so-called "California Cask" beers, in which craft brewers put ingredients ranging from hops to fruit to coffee beans to bacon in a cask with (sometimes bright) beer for hours or days as a one-off variation on an existing beer for a unique drinking experience.

While some of these alterations can indeed be flavorful and popular (witness the recent Tiki-themed Firkfest in Anaheim, which sold out), the cask vessels — usually either a firkin (about 11 gallons) or a pin (about 5.5 gallons) — are really being used more like a glorified randall (a filter system in which draught beer from the tap is run through a chamber containing hops, herbs or other ingredients, thereby adding those flavors to the beer, en route to your glass). Tasty? Often. But use of a cask — proper or otherwise — does not a cask beer make.

"At Yorkshire Square, we plan to promote traditional cask ale as an everyday beer, with the ABV's ranging mainly from 3.5 to 6%," explains Black. "I really want to focus on English Bitters, since there aren't very many of them being made traditionally here, or made well. We will have four core beers, and three rotating handles." He's also interested in brewing Pale or Light Milds, a style rarely seen outside of the UK.

"Our beers will be served the traditional British way: in 20-ounce imperial pints and 10-ounce half pints," adds Croft. Tasters will also be available.

Education will happen when one orders at the bar as well, thanks to knowledgeable beer servers tutored by Black. "I expect that 90% of the conversations our bartenders will have with customers will be about the beer and the cask-conditioning and dispensing process," he says. Facilitating that exchange, the handpumps will be on the bar, facing the patrons, with the stillage (where the cask sits) along the bar's back wall.

With five years of professional brewing experience ("mostly building breweries"), Black is still inspired by his mentors and British breweries, and hopes to be doing collaboration beers with them. Guest cask beers will also be part of the line-up, as well as some keg beers, including nitro versions, for when the casks kick. There are two cold rooms: one for cask beer (54°) and one for keg (38°).

Given Black's perfectionist passion for his craft, Croft readily admits that he will not be telling his brewer what kind of beers to make. "I gave Andy only two rules," he reveals. "Make beer that people will drink, and make beer that we can sell at a reasonable price."

Yorkshire Square has a 10 bbl brewhouse, with a 20 bbl hot liquor tank and 60 bbl fermentation capacity. The 3,600-square-foot-space will be done up as a classic English Pub, albeit a spacious one. It will feature a lounge area off the bar, with club chairs before a fireplace, as well as indoor and outdoor tables and seating for 120 combined. In addition, a full kitchen, which should open about a month after the brewery does, will serve English Pub food, locally sourced, according to Croft.

And in case Yorkshire Square proves as popular as it should, given the legion of local craft beer fans, there is dedicated parking for 50 cars in the lot next door.

However, unlike an English Pub in Blighty, Yorkshire Square will not have to ring the bell for final orders (last call) at 11:00 p.m. It will be open till at least midnight.

In Wishful Drinking, Tomm Carroll opines and editorializes on trends, issues and general perceptions of the local craft beer movement and industry, as well as beer history. Feel free to let him know what you think (and drink); send comments, criticisms, kudos and even questions to beerscribe@earthlink.net.



C. Andy Black, left, and Gary Croft in brewery at Torrance's Yorkshire Square. Photo by Tomm Carroll

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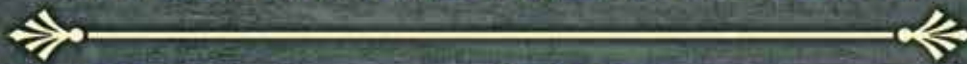
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LADYBEER

LETTER FROM ENSENADA: REMINISCING ON THREE CRAZY YEARS OF BAJA BEER

By Sarah Bennett

At my first Ensenada Beer Fest in March 2014, nearly all of the 50 or so young craft breweries from the Mexican states of Baja California were in attendance, pouring from under white tents on the grounds of the Riviera de Ensenada. For the entire duration of the 12-hour festival (yes, they're that long there), the manageable crowd was filled out by mostly locals who seemed more interested in having an excuse to drink beer than they were in exploring this new local phenomenon.

I know 2014 doesn't sound like that long ago, even in #LAbeer years, but in the land of Tecate, the concept of cerveza artesanal was a nascent one back then.

During the previous few years, intrepid homebrewers, inspired by the wealth of San Diego breweries just across the border, began opening their own small operations in Tijuana, Ensenada and Mexicali. There was Eugenio Romero's Ensenada brewpub Wendlandt, the Morales brothers' apartment balcony brewery Insurgente and Cerveceria 3B, inside a former mechanic shop in the parking lot of a Soriana in Mexicali, just to name a few. Ivan Maldonado, even kept his day job as a professional brewer in San Diego – first at Coronado, then Mission, then Belching Beaver and now at Fall – when he and some friends started the Tijuana brewery Silenus.

Taking advantage of their under-the-radar status and the lack of a three-tier system in Mexico, many of these breweries created beer-making systems out of whatever was available, put them wherever there was a spare room, purchased ingredients at homebrew shops in California then bottled and sold the results to the few new craft beer bars in town. It was a wild craft beer West unlike anything that could have ever happened in America.

The overall quality of what was being made was, honestly, hit or miss, but the passion was there and so was the potential – and there were enough bright stars to keep me coming back to check out what was new. Together, they built their own infrastructures, didn't much care about and did their part to wean Mexican palates off of the fizzy yellow stuff. Those intrepid early pioneers helped jumpstart the now burgeoning Baja craft beer revolution, which was on full display at this year's Ensenada Beer Fest, held March 18 at the same Riviera de Ensenada grounds.

The setting was familiar – white tents lining the perimeter, stages with music, food – but this time was different. This time, Baja had a solidified role as Mexico's de facto capital of craft beer. This time, Baja had the right to brag about several years of clean sweeps at Copa Cerveza, the coveted national beer competition held annually at the Cerveza Mexico conference that holds weight like GABF medals. This time, they had seen major brewery expansions from some of the best breweries in the state. This time, they had Plaza de Zapata (aka Plaza Fiesta), a one-time mall of nightclubs that is now entirely taken over by brewery tasting rooms and craft beer bars. This time, they had Baja Brews Colectivo, an ocean-view beer garden of local brewery tasting rooms outside Ensenada. This time, they had the growing community of home brewers, brewery owners, brewmasters, assistant brewers, chefs, bartenders, sales managers, tasting room managers and just genuine beer nerds, all of whom contributed to 2017's record-setting sell out crowd.

Over 120 breweries participated this year, with the majority of them no more than two years old. For the first time, this included a healthy dose of beer from outside the state of Baja – states and regions with their own burgeoning scenes.

In previous years, a few American guest breweries came down to pour (notably Coronado, Lagunitas and Green Flash), but those were absent this year, replaced by breweries from Baja California Sur (Mike Brewing – try all the stouts), Texcoco (Texcoco Mystic Ales), Colima (black lager, Guadalajara, Michoacan and more. A contingent of Mexico City breweries took over a 12-tap trailer (which usually operates as the additional taps for Tijuana beer bar BCB's fest setup) with interesting beers and silkscreened posters proclaiming "Invasion Chilanga." I even witnessed a dozen or so attendees wearing sleekly designed shirts emblazoned with the logo for what is essentially the Hermosillo Brewers Guild, a new development since the Sonora state capital had no breweries when I visited there a year and a half ago.

Also exciting were all the newer quality breweries from Tijuana, Ensenada and Mexicali that are finding their own voice in this booming time. Brands like Ludica, Amante, Urbana, Doble C and more poured everything from IPAs to amber ales to saisons to stouts and further validated Baja's reputation as a place that refuses to conform to just one style (*cough*SanDiego*cough).



The 2017 Ensenada Beer Fest was the largest yet with 120 breweries and a record-setting sell out crowd.
Photos by Sarah Bennett



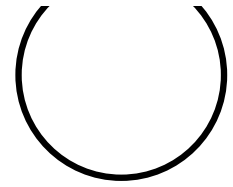
Wendlandt was one of only two breweries with sour beers at the fest, including their Flanders red, which won beer of the year at last year's Copa Cerveza.

And taking their rightful place at the center of it all -- encircling the main stage with double-wide tents and pouring up to a dozen specialty beers a piece -- were some of the old-guard names that helped launch this boom over a half-decade ago. Agua Mala had a beer made with native plant hierba santa. Insurgente's main draw was a chamoy-rimmed michelada gose brewed in collaboration with Modern Times. Silenus poured a doppelbock that was out of this world. Tierra Norte (formerly Peninsula) worked more wonders with hops on a session IPA called Junior. Across the festival, veterans Wendlandt and Fauna both pushed boundaries further with their mixed-fermentation sours, which are among the few currently being made in the region.

I truly thought that Baja was on the cusp of something great at my first Ensenada Beer Fest in 2014, but it's only gotten more promising since then. Instead of a bunch of bootstrap breweries trying to convince the puffy-vest-wearing types and their high-heeled girlfriends to try something besides a pilsner, the Baja breweries now have an eager, willing, if not thirsty, audience.

My only burning question: What will they be pouring by next year?

Sarah Bennett is a freelance journalist covering craft beer, food, music and more. She has covered L.A., O.C., I.E. and Baja beer for Beer Advocate Magazine, LA Weekly, OC Weekly, L.A. Times and more. Follow her on stuff and things: @thesarahbennett



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PINTS & QUOTES

HAZE, HOPS AND HYPE AT THE LOS ANGELES IPA FEST

By John M. Verive

At the annual L.A. IPA Fest last month, Highland Park Brewery took home a plaque to match their top award from 2016. Bad For Business IPA was voted the best representation of the IPA style from among 60 competing California-brewed IPAs, and it was an unexpected but largely unsurprising result. Brewer Bob Kunz has built a considerable reputation as an IPA maker. His vibrant West Coast-style IPAs quickly found an audience when Highland Park Brewery opened, and he's recently begun to explore IPA's hazy frontier with the trendy "juicy" IPAs. Kunz is also the second brewer to repeat at IPA Fest after Evan Price took top place with Noble Ale Works at the first and second IPA Fest.

This repeat demonstrates a certain consistency with the festival's judging — which is handled by two dozen celebrated brewers from across California (alongside three media correspondents, all of whom are represented in this publication: Sarah Bennett, Tomm Carroll and myself). The guidelines are simple: we're looking for the best expression of the IPA style, but the IPA waters have muddied of late. The so-called North East-style IPAs — fruit-forward, less bitter and distinctly hazy — challenge the dominance of the West Coast-style IPA. It's the inescapable trend in craft beer, and it was a much discussed topic during the rounds of IPA Fest judging.

Only one of the 12 beers that I saw in the early rounds was hazy, but I could see a few others around the room. It turns out that the five finalists were all very classic West Coast IPAs (and all nearly identical in pale gold color). Knee Deep Brewing from Auburn took second place at the festival with Lupulin River (the 3rd place winner last year), while Madewest Brewing (Ventura) rounded out the top three. Alpine Brewing and Altamont Beer Works were fourth and fifth place respectively with Highland Park's Bad for Biz also winning the people's choice award.

I did judge an IPA with haze in my round two flight however, and the table talk during this flight was fascinating. As the round two draw worked out, my table's flight was only two beers — one bright and golden, the other paler with a moderate haze. It wasn't opaquely turbid like the "juiciest" of NEIPAs, but it wasn't just chill-haze. It was attractively opalescent — like a well brewed witbier. Both beers were very fine, and both well liked by the judges seated with me, including both Kunz and Price. Societe's Teddy Gowan and Ting Su from Eagle Rock Brewery filled out the table, and our discussion quickly turned to how the NEIPA trend stacked up against the more established West Coast IPAs. Not that the hazy beer we were judging was a NEIPA — it was Bait Ball from Gunwale Ales in Costa Mesa, hazy due to oats and flaked barley in the grist and a lack of fining and filtration in the process, and is closer in flavor profile to a West Coast IPA — but it was hazy-enough to get us talking about the upstart IPA movement.

Specifically, we talked about why "haze" is such strange thing to get excited about in craft beer. Haze is, in most styles, a fault. Clarity has been synonymous with quality since the pilsner dawned on the European beer landscape in the 19th century. Many drinkers and brewers are conditioned to think bright is beautiful, and the brilliant clarity of sparkling glass of golden pilsner is inarguably attractive. It starts to slake your thirst before you even lift the glass to your lips. Perhaps humans have evolved to prefer a clear beverage, our ancient ancestors who searched for the clear spring surviving over others who opted to drink from the convenient, but murky and stagnant, pond. Some glasses of NEIPA are downright off putting, as murky as the stagnant pond and tinged grey with billions of yeast cells.

The theory behind the NEIPA is that a protein-heavy grist, a huge dose of late hops (and then more dry hops), an English-style ale yeast, and no fining or clarification produces a thick soup of suspended proteins, hop compounds, aromatic esters and dormant yeast. Unfiltered, the beer is alive with chemical reactions as yeast and hops continue to interact. The beer is low in bitterness but highly aromatic and with a full mouthfeel that underscores its visual resemblance to a glass of juice. Done well, it's quite delicious, and the flavor profile is more approachable to the new craft beer drinker than a traditional bright, dry and bitter West Coast IPA.

There's a common misconception that the IPA style became so dominant in craft beer because it is easy to brew. It masks a brewer's mistakes under a blanket of hop aroma and bitterness. It might be easy to brew shitty IPA, but brewing the kind of IPA that will carry a brewery and drive an industry is one of brewing's biggest challenges. Hops may cover up mistakes, but they don't undo them. The flaws and off flavors are always there just under that hoppy hit if you know to look for them. This is doubly true when you invite all the extra hop particles, suspended proteins and decaying yeast to the pool. NEIPAs have a high degree of brewing difficulty, and you have to stick the landing. Small mistakes in recipe or process are exaggerated into glaring, clashing flavors. Kunz calls the challenge exciting and rewarding, and exploring the hazy fringe has fueled his creativity and made him a better brewer. Many brewers I've spoken to about their hazy brewery experiences say that while they start out applying West Coast IPA skills and techniques to brewing NEIPAs, it's what they've learned by brewing in the new mode that's most valuable.



Bob Kunz and Ross Stephenson of Highland Park Brewing with Tony Yanow of Mohawk Bend
Photo by John Verive

At the end of the day of judging beers, the latest chapter in the East Coast / West Coast rivalry was settled with an all-West Coast final five, but the haze is creeping in. I would not be surprised to see many more NEIPA-style entries in next year's IPA Fest. I fully expect both Price and Kunz to bring their haze-game in 2018. NEIPAs may be here to stay, or they may be another craft-fad like the black IPAs before them, but they should keep growing in popularity with our local brewers as more drinkers discover the approachable and novel flavors they offer.

We certainly haven't reached peak IPA in America, as the NEIPA shows that capacity of brewers for innovation is limitless. I'm looking forward to the inevitable cross-pollination of West Coast and NEIPA genres — a best of both worlds hybrid with the vivid aroma of a NEIPA, the refined bitterness of a West Coast IPA and the pearlescent presence in the glass of a wit. I'm thirsty already.

John Verive is a Southern California native and freelance writer dedicated to growing the craft beer scene in Los Angeles. He's is a Certified Cicerone®, the founder of Beer of Tomorrow (www.BeerofTomorrow.com), and he covers the beer-beat for the Los Angeles Times. John loves lagers, session beers, finding perfect pairings, and telling the stories of the people behind the pints; you can follow him on Twitter and Instagram at [@octopushat](https://twitter.com/octopushat) and [@beeroftomorrow](https://twitter.com/beeroftomorrow).

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COVER STORY

GREEN CHEEK WITH ENVY

By Daniel Drennon



Evan Price

Photo credit: @sargeantcreative

It is not very often in the warm and fuzzy world of craft beer that “breaking news” causes a palpable tremor. Ballast Point for a billion was such a moment. More local to Los Angeles and Orange County, the rumor that rock star brewer Evan Price was leaving Noble Ale Works has been the talk of the town, or shall I say, the talk of the second largest city in the United States for many months.

One of my favorite mantras is that this crazy craft beer renaissance we are experiencing is a result of the artistry of the modern American brewer. These brewers are artists just like actors, musicians, painters and sculptors are artists. They are turning centuries old brewing traditions on end, sometimes upside down --- all while honoring the history of the art of brewing.

It takes a master craftsman to have honed their craft and attain the level of artist. Evan Price is such a brewer. The aforementioned reverberations of his imminent departure from Noble resulted from the legions of loyal fans he created in his ascendant five years as the master brewer there. To be fair, he was probably just a brewer when he arrived at Noble after having worked under brilliant brewmaster Victor Novak at TAPS for two and a half years as his head brewer. But make no mistake about it. Evan Price is now a brilliant brewmaster in his own right. He wouldn't admit it. When I pointed out this irrefutable fact, he smiled and responded with his signature smirk, “I'm humble as fuck.”

Another of my mantras is that word of mouth is failsafe. Word of mouth on Evan's increasingly excellent beers began to spread across Orange County and LA like a wildfire flamed by the Santa Ana winds. The unveiling of Naughty Sauce, his ingenious golden coffee stout, further fanned the flames and created even more loyal fans who sought out the beer whenever and wherever they could find it.

Price told me, “Brewers tend to get caught up on the need for their beers to be consistent. I always tell them, no. The beer needs to be getting consistently better.” Evan's beers did just that. In 2014 and 2015, he won back to back “Best IPA” awards at the nascent LA IPA Festival at Mohawk Bend, for Tongue Ticks, a sublime DIPA, followed a year later by I Love It!, a superb IPA. In 2015, he won his first Great American Beer Festival (GABF) medal, a bronze for his trailblazing session IPA, Nose Candy.

Then in 2016, at the World Beer Cup (WBC) awards in Philadelphia, among pretty much every brewer on the planet, Price culminated his rise to brewmaster status by winning the Gold medal for I Love It! in the most competitive category by far, IPA, the Silver medal for Gosebusters in the Contemporary Gose category and the Bronze medal for Nobility in the DIPA category. The three medals resulted in Noble Ale Works being named Best in the Small Brewery category and Price being named Best Brewmaster in the small brewery category...in the fucking world.

Later that year, Nobility DIPA also won the silver medal at GABF as Evan's run of success continued.

Less than a year ago, Noble Ale Works was literally sitting on top of the beer world. Evan Price is a rock star. What could possibly go wrong? The first sign of something amiss was the curious departure of Noble's CEO Brian Rauso mere months after the World Beer Cup triumph. While at Noble, Rauso helped reform and organize the Orange County Brewers Guild and served on their board of directors. He was well known and well liked within the fraternity of industry insiders. His sudden exodus was the initial tremor and eyebrow-raiser. But the shock wave hit full force when industry gossip started to spread that, in fact, Evan Price's departure from Noble was imminent. Common sense speculation, if that is not an oxymoron, began to form that the two friends would open their own brewery. Neither gentleman would confirm the gossip. Price had been away from Noble anyway on paternity leave as his wife Aubrey had delivered twin boys, Connor and Dylan.

The idle speculation had to remain idle. And unconfirmed.

But no longer. Beer Paper is proud to confirm that Evan Price and Brian Rauso will open Green Cheek Beer Company in Orange. Their lofty goal? To be nothing less than “Purveyors of Happiness” according to Rauso. I asked Price, why open his own brewery, and why now? He responded, “I had gotten as far as I could as an employee. I felt that it was time to jump into ownership where I could control my own destiny. It was a tough decision. We had hired all of the Noble staff. We laughed together, we cried together. We were family.”

“You have to figure out how to get the most magic out of the least amount of ingredients. The fewer the ingredients, the better.”

Evan Price



Brian Rauso

Photo credit: @sargeantcreative

Rauso echoed his pal and new partner's sentiment, “Green Cheek Beer will be a two-man show. This is a legacy play. It's the end of the cowboy movie where you get on the horse and ride off into the sunset. This is the last place we both ever wanna work.”

They aren't joking when they say they will be a two-man operation. Price will, of course, be the brewer. But Rauso, a successful businessman for over twenty years, will be Price's assistant brewer. Conversely, Price will apprentice in the art of business under Rauso. Their ambitious goal is a mid-May opening to coincide with OC Beer Week. Green Cheek Beer Company will be located at the former Valiant Brewing location which features a state-of-the-art Premier 20 bbl stainless steel system. Price stresses that it is, sadly, a case of Valiant deciding to close their doors and sell their brewery equipment and that it was not a case of Price and Rauso buying their brewery. The timing worked out for both parties.

I asked where they came up with the name for Green Cheek Beer Company. Price told me, “We named the brewery after the wild Green-Cheeked parrots that fly around Old Towne Orange where Brian and I both live. They're a lot like us...loud and social.”

I asked Price what his brewing philosophy will be at Green Cheek Beer Company. He offered, “The longer you're a brewer, the more you realize the importance of drinkability. Every beer should have the appropriate amount of drinkability and a lot of brewers don't seem to understand that. You have to figure out how to get the most magic out of the least amount of ingredients. The fewer the ingredients, the better. Also, with experience, the do's and don'ts list just gets longer and longer. But my biggest concern is continuing to stay relevant. I am constantly asking, how do I continue to reinvent myself?”

Price, as he stated at the outset, is constantly looking to brew better beers: Even in the face of the acclaim his beers have already received. I'm pretty damn sure that is his recipe to stay relevant.

And we craft beer fans will be the beneficiaries of that constant evolution of Evan Price as an artist. My final mantra is that California is the best craft brewing state in the country, bar none. We are rapidly approaching 800 craft breweries in the Golden State and the vast majority of them will be and should be jealous of the crazy bright future that lies ahead for Green Cheek Beer. You know what I call that?

Green Cheek Envy.



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HOMEBREWERS

BOOTLEGGER'S BREWERY MASHES IN WITH LOCAL HOMEBREW WINNERS

By Aaron Vieira



Robert Margalis, Gabriel Adler and Danny Kemp enjoy nutty the mash aroma

Photo credit: Aaron Vieira

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As beer geeks, we've never had beer of better quality and variety available to us locally as we do right now. It's easy to forget that the incredible craft beer scene in the United States started in garages, kitchens and patios with people who believed there was something better out there than the tasteless American lagers that were forced upon us from every direction. Many of the breweries that we adore were started by homebrewers who left their simple 9 to 5 lives to pursue the dream of sharing their love of beer with the community around them.

Bootlegger's Brewery remembers this and went so far as to host a competition for the OC Mash Ups Homebrew Club to brew a beer on their 7-barrel pilot system. The winning homebrew will ultimately be served to Bootlegger's customers, a huge reward for the beer-making enthusiast.

The competition was simple. Eight teams of brewers made their favorite recipes and were judged by a panel of Bootlegger's staff and BJCP judges. The competition was tight with several entries that fell into the excellent scoring range, but ultimately Gabriel Adler and Danny Kemp's Pecan Brown Ale with Vanilla called "Pi in the Sky" came out the victor.

Robert Margalis, head brewer at Bootlegger's Brewery, was excited to work with Gabriel and Danny. "Craft brewers get to brew some interesting things these days with the creativity in the industry. It's nice to get together with homebrewers and learn what they are up to. Experimentation is the most exciting part of homebrewing. We had the opportunity to share beer knowledge and sample a couple homebrew and commercial brews throughout the day."

Adler echoed Margalis' enthusiasm, saying, "It was a tremendous experience and opportunity. Robert pretty much just scaled our recipe to fit his system. I appreciated the fact

that he took his time to explain his process and involved us each step of the way."

Along with brewing on the big system, the winning team experienced the hard work of a professional brewer's life on brew day. Margalis offered praise for the homebrewers, saying, "The guys from OC Mash Ups were helpful. They did virtually all the pecan toasting, assisted in mashing in which is a very manual affair on our 7 barrel brewhouse, weighed out hops, and grained out. It was a good day and we can't wait to sample the beer."

These types of collaborations coordinated through the club are considered some of the most unique and engaging ways for breweries reach out to the beer community. OC Mash Ups President Sean O'Shea said, "Our brewery collaboration competitions help bridge the gap between homebrewers and professional brewers. We set the guidelines prior to announcing each upcoming competition in order to set the stage for which styles of beers will ultimately be reproduced in the brewery."

O'Shea added, "These collaborations drive awareness, not only for the OC Mash Ups, but the wider homebrewing community. The breweries also benefit by being able to offer something new for their customers to enjoy and the additional exposure also potentially brings new customers to the participating brewery."

Yeast was pitched on March 17th for "Pi in the Sky", so look for this special release in Bootlegger's taproom (130 S Highland Ave, Fullerton, CA 92832) during the first couple of weeks in April. Keep an eye on Bootlegger's Brewery (@bootleggersbrew) and OC Mash Ups (@ocmashups) Instagrams for the announcement of the exact release dates of this unique collaboration brew.



Gabriel Adler does the honors of labeling the "Pi in the Sky" Fermenter.

Photo credit: Aaron Vieira



OC Mash Ups members Danny Kemp empties the mash tun while Gabriel Adler monitors the boil level.

Photo credit: Aaron Vieira



Robert Margalis takes his turn with the heavy lifting while mashing in with Gabriel Adler.

Photo credit: Aaron Vieira



(left to right: Danny Kemp, Robert Margalis, and Gabriel Adler are all smiles after a well-executed brew day.)

Photo credit: Aaron Vieira

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DRINKING WITH DRENNON

By Daniel Drennon

March. In like a lion. Out like a lamb? Well. We did have more rain than I've seen in 28 years in L.A. And I suppose the sun we know and love so well is back to stay for a while. The only real constant is drinking great craft beer here in the Southland. Our breweries are straight up killing it!

Noble, the reigning best small brewery in the world according to World Beer Cup, held their always cool anniversary party on March 3. One week later, Monkish - another world class brewery - celebrated their 5th Anniversary. Our friends at Select Beer in Redondo Beach held their anniversary party the same day. New brewer Trevor Walls (formerly of Pizza Port San Clemente) is ripping out excellent beers at Riip in Huntington Beach. Absolution had their anniversary party on the 18th. Phantom Carriage turned two on the 25th...hey, maybe March comes in like a new brewery with all these anniversaries.



Devon Randall, Erik Huig and Scott Weigand at Barbara's at the Brewery



Joe Maggiore, Evan Price and Brian Rauso at Brew Kitchen Alehouse



Mike Schwalbach at Los Angeles Ale Works on St. Patty's Day



Brad Kominek of Noble and Ian McCall of Beachwood at Noble Anniversary Party



Sarah Foss at Riip Beer Company

An advertisement for Tortilla Cantina featuring a colorful illustration of the bar's exterior at night. A large lantern in the foreground holds several signs: '\$5 Pints Featured Brewery', 'Tortilla Cantina MEXICANO AND SPORTS BAR', 'Rue Bourbon', 'SARTORI', and 'MAISON POURBON'. Text at the top right says 'live music featuring Nasty Bad Habit'. At the bottom, it lists 'Blues & Brews every other Wednesday @ 7pm' and provides a list of featured breweries and the address: '1225 El Prado Ave, Old Torrance - www.TortillaCantina.com'.

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www.beerbellyla.com

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brewkitchenalehouse.com

City Tavern
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Monrovia CA
MonroviaHomebrewShop.com

Naja's Place
King Harbor Marina
Redondo Beach
najasplace.com

Pitfire Artisan Pizza
401 Manhattan Beach Blvd
Manhattan Beach
pitfirepizza.com

Provisions & Portola
143 N. Glassell St., Orange
provisionsmarkets.com

Public Beer Wine Shop
121 W. 4th Street, Long Beach
publicbeerwineshop.com

Ragin' Cajun Cafe
525 S. Pacific Coast Hwy
Redondo Beach
ragincajun.com

Richmond Bar & Grill El Segundo
145 Richmond St, El Segundo
richmondbarandgrill.com

Riley's
5331 E. 2nd St, Long Beach
rileyson2nd.com

Select Beer Store
1613 S. Pacific Coast Hwy,
Redondo Beach

Spring Street Smokehouse
640 N. Spring St, Los Angeles
sssmokehouse.com

Stout Burgers & Beers
1544 N. Cahuenga Blvd
Hollywood
stoutburgersandbeers.com

Stout Burgers & Beers
11262 Ventura Blvd
Studio City
stoutburgersandbeers.com

Stout Burgers & Beers
111 N. Santa Monica Blvd
Santa Monica
stoutburgersandbeers.com

The BrewHouse
31896 Plaza Dr #D
San Juan Capistrano
thebrewhousesjc.com

The Stuffed Sandwich
1145 E. Las Tunas Dr, San Gabriel, CA
stuffedsandwich.com

Tortilla Cantina
1225 El Prado Ave, Torrance
tortillacantina.com

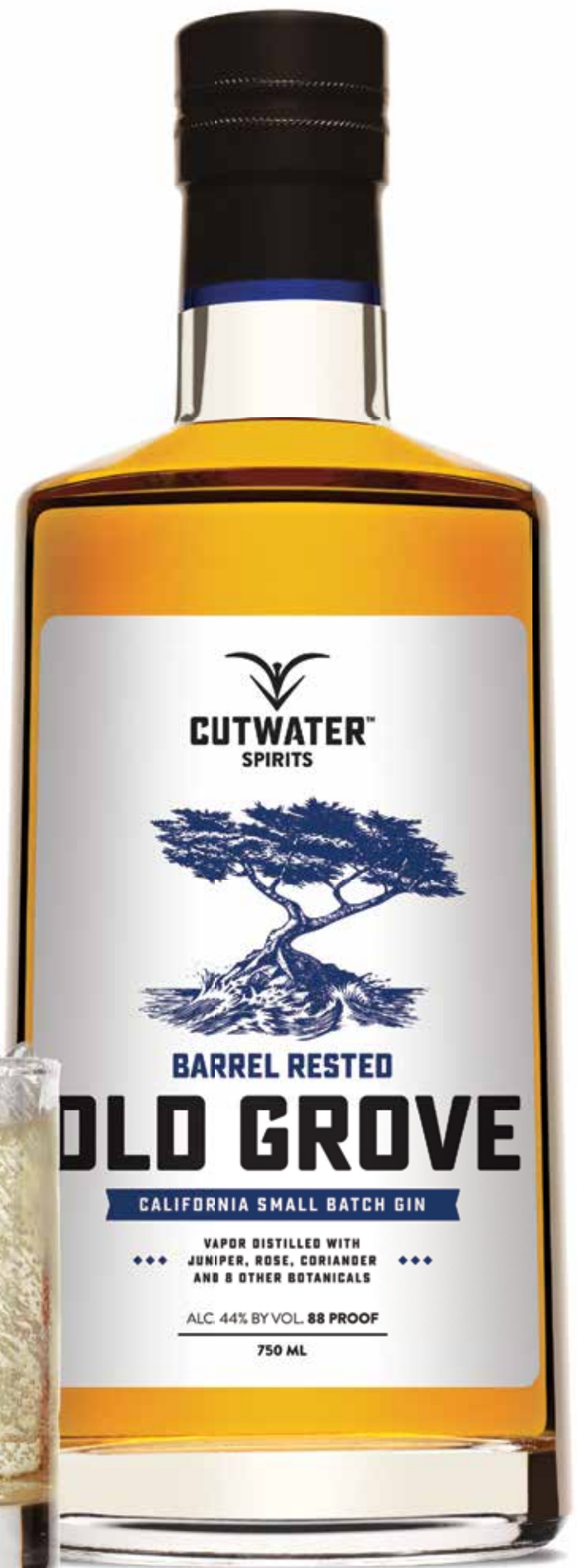
Zpizza Tap Room
5933 W. Century Blvd, Los Angeles
zpizza.com



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Early in our brewing tenure, curiosity and creativity drew us to explore the art of distilling. The result is a diverse and award-winning family of spirits that's become the foundation for Cutwater. Building on the tradition with our minds wide open to the unconventional, the Cutwater crew is committed to bringing quality, ingenuity and integrity to the world of spirits.



“THE EARLY RETIREMENT” BARREL RESTED OLD GROVE & SODA

2oz. **Old Grove Barrel Rested**
4-6oz. Soda Water
1 Slice of Lemon

Build in glass with ice and add squeeze of lemon.

More recipes at
cutwaterspirits.com

FUGU VODKA | OLD GROVE GIN | THREE SHEETS RUM | DEVIL'S SHARE WHISKEY | OPAH LIQUOR | PREMIUM MIXERS | READY-TO-ENJOY COCKTAILS

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