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THE CLAREMONT "COLLEGE OF CRAFT"



Brian Seffer and Simon Brown of Claremont Craft Ales

Photo by Daniel Drennon

By Daniel Drennon

The Claremont Colleges are an American consortium of five undergraduate and two graduate schools of higher education located in Claremont, 35 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. I might add these are world class colleges. Over the (college) course of the past five years, Simon Brown, himself an alum of a world class university based in New Haven, Connecticut that fittingly rhymes with ale, and his brewing partner Brian Seffer, have been providing the Claremont community with a master class in the art of craft brewing.

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LADYBEER

EXTREME BEER FEST: TODD ALSTROM AND BEER ADVOCATE'S WESTWARD EXPANSION

By Sarah Bennett



Bob Kunz of Highland Park Brewery

All photos by Julie Verive



Burial Beer Company from Asheville, NC

There were stouts aged in bourbon barrels, beers funkier than a middle school gym locker and genre-defying sours infused with coffee grounds, dried crickets and pickle juice. Local breweries like Highland Park, Monkish and The Bruery mingled alongside breweries that don't even have California distribution, like Short's, Finback and Civil Society.

When Beer Advocate's Extreme Beer Fest landed on the 13th floor of the California Market Center on Dec. 9, it marked the first time so many experimental brews were being poured at once in Los Angeles, a city whose own beer scene is being increasingly recognized for its rejection of traditional styles and tropes.

With over 60 breweries from around the country pouring nearly 250 weird beers, Extreme Beer Festival: Los Angeles also marked the first fest that seminal beer-rating and forum website Beer Advocate has ever held outside of the Northeast, its original home base.

"Extreme Beer Fest is perfect for L.A. because it's all about raising fists at the norm and celebrating beers and breweries that push the boundaries of brewing," says Todd Alström, who founded the Boston-based Beer Advocate with his brother Jason in 1996. "It ties into the L.A. beer scene so well."

Alstrom isn't just saying this as flattery to sell tickets to Angelenos accustomed to getting snubbed by East Coast traditionalists. In fact, as of earlier this year, the legendary East Coast beer vanguard is now an Angeleno himself.

Like fellow Bostonian Will Shelton before him, Alström moved to L.A. after decades of instrumental work helping grow the rest of America's love affair with craft beer. Shelton, along with his brother was an importer of rare European breweries (Cantillon, et al.) and now owns Concrete Jungle Brewing Project. Alström coded the entirety of beeradvocate.com -- from account authentications to the venerated custom reviewing system -- from scratch and still runs his half of the Beer Advocate operations (which includes a monthly

magazine and events like Extreme Beer Fest) from his new Westside digs, where he and his wife and young child moved in February.

But Alström's move was not at all inspired by Shelton, nor is he interested in starting his own brewery. His move to L.A. was precipitated, he says, by an urge for a change of scenery, a near necessity to escape the jaded, sometimes-surly Boston beer community, and a chance to bring some of Beer Advocate's signature events to fans in other parts of the country.

"L.A. gave us the opportunity for both business and pleasure," he says.

Born and raised in western Massachusetts, Alström spent over 20 years living in Cambridge, where he worked as a website coder in the early days of the internet and was making six figures when he quit the tech industry for good to run Beer Advocate full time in 2003.

The fledgling company's festivals were at the core of this decision; the brothers had organized a few in Boston, but they weren't selling out.

Alström and his wife moved into one of the oldest buildings in the city -- where they lived for free in exchange for fulfilling caretaker duties -- and ate through their savings as Alström attempted to build the brand's fests. In January 2004, his career change paid off. The first Extreme Beer Festival sold out.

"Someone needed to dedicate themselves to this full time if we were going to do this for real," he remembers thinking.

Within a few short years, the leader in online craft beer ratings -- whose slogan of "Respect Beer" speaks to the brothers' interest in facilitating education and exploration -- expanded its event lineup, with the flagship American Craft Beer Fest flanked by more niche ones like the Belgian Beer Fest, Night of the Funk, Night of the Barrels and more.

Then, the need for a scene change. Alström and his wife uprooted themselves moved from Cambridge and moved first to Denver, home of the Great American Beer Festival, where they had a kid and watched as rents skyrocketed underneath them. After four years, they headed farther west, always with Beer Advocate's festivals in mind.

"We were scouting another location for Extreme Beer Fest," Alström says. "We've been doing it for 13 or so years at the time and were looking for another place to bring it. The demand for bringing it to California was high and we ran the numbers and Los Angeles was always in the top user base and top subscription base for the magazine."

Last month's L.A. incarnation of the Extreme Beer Fest was not only the culmination of Alström's efforts to draw the West Coast into Beer Advocate's historically East Coast lilt, it was also a taste of what happens when craft beer's old guard vouches for our local scene, entrusting it to host such a significant, hopefully annual event.

More than 3000 people wandered around the 13th floor at the California Market Center over the fest's two 3.5-hour sessions, drinking beers from around the country that push boundaries just as L.A. brewers have been doing since our humble scene began less than a decade ago.

"Moving to L.A., it was nice to have diversity -- of people, of food. The culture's very different from what I was used to in both Boston and Denver," Alström says. "The brewers here are not tied to traditions. They're coming up with their own traditions, coming up with their own ways of doing things. The diversity of the people and the approaches to brewing out here is what I love the most."

Sarah Bennett is a freelance journalist and educator living in Long Beach. She was named Food/Culture Critic of 2017 by the L.A. Press Club. Follow her on Twitter @thesarahbennett.



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MORE BREWERIES TO COME (AND PERHAPS A FEW WILL GO) IN 2018

By John M. Verive



Modern Times DTLA Dankness Dojo



Staff Training at Modern Times DTLA

Photos courtesy of Modern Times

I've been asking local brewers and industry professionals what they think 2018 will hold for L.A.'s thriving beer scene, and instead of the positive outlook and rosy predictions of years past, I've heard a lot more uncertainty in their responses. In the face of a fragmenting market and shrinking beer sales it's easy to understand their anxiety. In contrast to the ground-level viewpoint of local brewers, the California Craft Brewers Association sent a press release at the tail end of 2017 touting that the Golden State is now home to some 900 breweries (up from 300 in 2012) and that over 90% of Californians now live within 10-miles of a craft brewery. Will 2018 continue the trend of more, more, more; or will it be the year that the proverbial bubble begins to deflate?

Nobody is going to call me prescient for predicting the continued popularity of beer's biggest trend but, if I had a crystal ball that let me see into the near future of L.A.'s beer culture, the future would be hazy. Excuse me if I've used that line before, but the flood of new-look IPAs that has inundated seemingly every brewery and bar in the land has me talking about these beers a lot. There is no escaping conversations about the nascent style, even among drinkers and brewers resistant to its charms. 2018 is going to mean more fuel for the "juice bros"; more murky, astringent misfires; and more examples that will win over even the most resistant of the traditionalists (this writer included).

There are, of course, some brewers-in-progress targeting an opening in 2018, but I'd rather not start laying odds on who is opening where before a brewery is all permitted and ready to run. Bureaucratic delays and cost overruns make those predictions dicey. A pair of openings planned for the beginning year are close enough to warrant a mention.

Possibly already open by the time this issue hits the streets is the long simmering Downtown outpost of beloved Modern Times Beer. Dubbed in the brand's typical hyperbolic braggadocio as the "Dankness Dojo," the experimental brewery and tasting room joins a pair of other out-of-town brands (Karl Strauss and Mikkeller Bar) who've put down roots in the South Park neighborhood. It's the latest Los Angeles toehold carved out by extralocal companies, but it certainly won't be the last.

A local favorite also expanding into the downtown area is Highland Park Brewery, and the production-scale brewery and tasting room is staffing up now and should be brewing and pouring beer in early 2018. Expect more mixed-fermentation experiments, more lagers, and of course plenty more hoppy ales, both west coast-y and the New England-y. (And my money is on HPB for cracking the code of crafting a hybrid next-level IPA that pleases both NEIPA lovers and west coast purists. Their recent New Data hazy IPA wasn't far off.)

The other side of the coin is a little more bleak. We've seen a few breweries shutter in Southern California recently, and there are murmurs about a few Los Angeles companies on the rocks. I don't think we'll make it through 2018 without someone closing their doors. Just a couple of years ago, a brewery could open with sub-standard beer and tough it out for a couple years while they got things figured out. Today, the market is too competitive and the drinkers too sophisticated for that kind of slow ramp up. New breweries need to open strong, or get good quick, to have a shot at success.

Finally, the big wildcard for 2018 is the legalization of recreational marijuana. What will even more plentiful pot mean for the craft beer scene in California? Many analysts are claiming beer sales will suffer as people turn their fun money into smoke instead of brew, but the craft breweries in Colorado, Washington and Oregon are still going strong and expanding. Lots of money will pour into California as cannabis brands stake claims in the green rush, and those brands will see craft beer drinkers as potential crossover customers. Will we also see crossover businesses launch?

2018 will also see the 10th installment of L.A. Beer Week and, after a decade of frenetic activity, the Los Angeles beer community isn't just growing, it's maturing. Even if the bubble starts to sag, craft beer is no longer simply a fad. Craft beer culture is crossing over into the mainstream in Los Angeles, and there's no going back.

John Verive is 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. Find him on Twitter and Instagram at @octopushat and @beeroftomorrow.

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BREWER'S CORNER

ALCOHOL WITHOUT CONTENT

By C. Andy Black

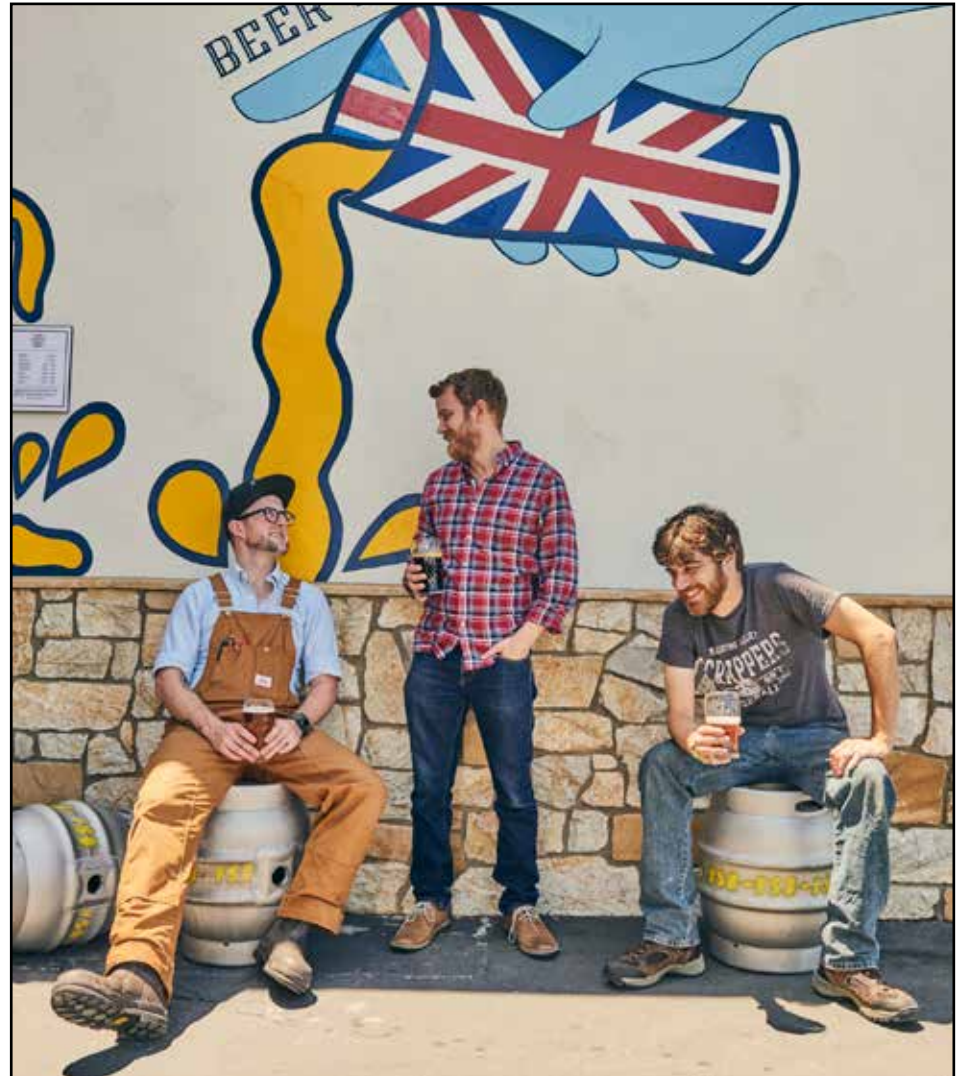


Gary Croft and C. Andy Black

It is a widely held belief that more alcohol in a beer means more flavor. When assessing new beers, my own or otherwise, I like to ask the question, “Does this beer justify its alcohol content, but more importantly has the brewer maximized the aroma and flavor potential of ingredients and process?” For me at least, this should be the primary consideration when considering ABV (Alcohol by Volume, measured as a percentage), especially when pushing out of the range of sessionable ABV. A beer that does not meet my expectations for ABV is flawed and therefore unnecessarily strong. Imperial stouts are a common disappointment, but watery Brown Ale (American or English) and hesitant Extra Special Bitter (ESB) are particularly irksome.

Yorkshire Square mostly makes beers that are typically under 5%, and I regularly espouse a portfolio concept that centers on brewing modern British beer. My focus on what is commonly referred to as ‘session beer’ means that maximizing flavor is, among other reasons, hugely important for avoiding the cliché misunderstanding that lower strength beers lack the substance and complexity of higher strength beer. However, while I like to brew and drink sub-5% beers (I’ve griped that my own 4.8% oat stout is too strong), I’m no bigot and will happily venture over 5% for the right beer. But again, those muddled DIPAs and one-trick pastry stouts have me regretting my decisions too often.

In a beer book whose title and author I can’t recall (I really did try, scouring my books for hours), the mysterious author asserts that we as lovers of beer must acknowledge that alcohol presupposes the socio-cultural longevity of beer. For beer to not have alcohol and its familiar psychoactive properties would be to reduce beer to a novelty beverage tasting similar to Goya/Pony Malta and not be the spark of sedentary civilization we know it to be from archaeological record. As a beer professional and a craft beer fan, this is an uncomfortable concept to accept - I love beer, but is that because of the alcohol? In my understanding the early days of US craft beer were



C. Andy Black, Charles Croft and Sam Croft

all about asserting the primacy of flavor and aroma, whereas the homogenous big brewers seemed willing to sacrifice character in their beer simply so it would be cheaper to produce and retain its ABV.

So, we’ve established that beer requires alcohol as beer’s ‘sociability’ is a bit psychoactive in origin... and because the Tax & Trade Bureau mandates it. Our intentions, as brewers, with that alcohol requirement is what interests me. What is the purpose, and how do we justify that a beer necessitates a particular ABV? I could easily get drawn into a predictably combative piece about session beer and the merits of one’s own personal drinking habits, but I’ll sideline that banality as long as we can presume that most of us are drinking beer because we like the flavors and aromas rather than simply getting blathered. Arguments about ABV informed by style guidelines are missing the point - Why does a beer need to be a certain ABV? Why was this decision made? How do you justify the ABV?

What is the brewer’s purpose in making a 4% stout or an 8% stout? A stronger beer should have more aroma and flavor, right? Because it has more material, right? I’d like respond with how dissatisfied I’ve been, as a beer consumer, with stronger beers that lack flavor. As a brewer, my inkling is that too many of my peers draw a direct line between alcohol and flavor. Not only is this used as excuse for low ABV beer lacking flavor but also to substantiate marketing for higher ABV beers as ‘massive, full-frontal flavor’. Classic examples would be Dark Mild fermented too cold, Bitter (Pub Ale) without crystal malt and fermented too cold, boring one note barrel aged something-or-others, triple IPAs that are all alcohol and bitterness once the hops drop out after two days, or the worst offender in my book - the American Brown Ale with barely perceptible malt character. Perhaps it’s the stingy use of specialty malt, too much dextrose (seriously there is too much dextrose, admit it, your mash tun isn’t big enough), and using California Ale/001/Chico strain in every damn beer.



C. Andy Black

Photos courtesy of Yorkshire Square

I'm not looking to single anyone out or get preachy about recipe formulation, simply wondering - why bother restraining flavor?

When designing a beer there are minimal concrete rules to establish ABV. Aside from state-by-state restrictions in ABV, the Code of Federal Regulations requires a beer be above 0.5% ABV and that it be +/-0.3% of its posted percentage. There are also the various style guidelines out there, but ABV is a very loosely regarded subject when it comes to the big competitions. Case in point is GABF 2017 where the 5.8% Rose City IPA from Brew Hub (Lakeland, FL) took gold in SIPA despite the style guideline explicitly stating that no beer in category should exceed 5.0%. Aside from those considerations ABV can be entirely arbitrary. When I consider the ABV of a new batch I consider two things, "How is my intended aroma and flavor profile bettered through manipulating fermentability and therefore the ABV," and "How does the resulting beer sit within the portfolio with regard to ABV." For those unfamiliar with the most noble art of brewing (aka making malt-based yeast food), the potential alcohol in beer is basically set during the brew day with the amount of grain (minimum 51% malted barley) and optional additional sugar (invert sugar, molasses, dextrose, et cetera). In simplistic terms, the finale is that this substrate is

then turned into alcohol and CO₂ over several days, and what is left is now beer. The amount of sugar turned into alcohol, or rather what is left over, can affect all sorts of details about the beer - aroma, flavor, body/texture, dryness or sweetness, et cetera. There are myriad details in that process, but alcohol is a fairly straightforward.

I intentionally have a good spread of what I call Everyday Beers (5% ABV and below) with a smattering of Special Occasion Beers (over 5%), all showcasing Yorkshire Square's vision. The Special Occasion Beers are there for those particular times when a stronger beer is justified or for the drinker who prefers to sip and spend more time with a beer. Moreover, while I value portfolio diversity in ABV, if you're not brewing for flavor, who are you brewing for? End scene.

C. Andy Black is the Head Brewer and a co-owner of Yorkshire Square Brewery. The brewery and Cask Marque accredited tasting room is located in the exuberant brewing metropolis of Torrance. Andy trained in Yorkshire at Roosters Brewing before starting as the founding brewer of MacLeod Ale, followed by a brief but well-hopped stint at El Segundo Brewing, then finding his forever home with Yorkshire Square.

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COVER STORY

THE CLAREMONT “COLLEGE OF CRAFT”

By Daniel Drennon



Natalie and Brian Seffer, Simon Brown and Emily Moultrie

Photo by Daniel Drennon

The Claremont Colleges are an American consortium of five undergraduate and two graduate schools of higher education located in Claremont, 35 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. I might add these are world class colleges.

Over the (college) course of the past five years, Simon Brown, himself an alum of a world class university based in New Haven, Connecticut that fittingly rhymes with ale, and his brewing partner Brian Seffer, have been providing the Claremont community with a master class in the art of craft brewing. Brown founded Claremont Craft Ales with his wife and business partner Emily Moultrie and they were subsequently joined by cousins Brian and Natalie Seffer.

Seffer now handles the majority of the brewing while Brown handles, well, everything else. I sat down with Brown, one of my favorite folks in the beer world, in one of my favorite tasting rooms in LA county, to assess the evolution of Claremont Craft Ales.

DRENNON: *You are five-plus years old, making you one of the oldest breweries in greater LA. What lessons have you learned?*

BROWN: That's a tough question to answer, because we've learned everything. It's shocking to think back and realize how little we actually knew about running a business or brewing professional-quality beer. I didn't understand how time-consuming and multi-layered the bureaucracy of running a brewery would be. ABC, TTB, FDA, CRV, EDD, BOE, IRS, FTB – the number of three-letter government agencies we have to deal with makes my head spin!

On the beer side, my greatest advice for new brewers is that quality matters. The marketplace is too crowded for anyone to be putting out sub-par beer. So, what this means practically is that you need to be super anal about your product and how it's produced: set up a lab, buy expensive test equipment, taste and evaluate every batch of beer at every step of the process, and most importantly, dump beer that doesn't put your best foot forward. And I suppose I should also add: learn what good beer is! That may sound silly, but my palate has grown a lot over the last five years when it comes to detecting off-flavors and evaluating beer flavor. In one regard, I didn't have enough beer-drinking experience five years ago to know whether the beer we were

putting out was flawed or not. I'm fortunate to have a brewing partner in Brian that has a strong palate and commitment to quality!

You and Brian were homebrewers. For many years, I said it was a risky gamble for homebrewers to jump straight into their own (professional) brewery without gaining some experience in a pro brewery first. I have since retracted that opinion because so many of you have made that jump successfully. How did you pull it off and what would your advice be to homebrewers who want to make that leap?

Yes, I agree that professional brewing experience (or schooling) is not necessary to open a brewery, but it is increasingly helpful as the market gets more crowded. Back when we opened, we were one of only two breweries in a 25-mile radius, and the general LA public was just starting their love affair with craft beer, so we could get away with a lot when it came to the quality of the beer. That's not true anymore: the beer must be good to get people into your tasting room. Our brewing team is continually working to improve our beer quality.

My advice to homebrewers-going-pro is that if you want to accelerate your growth and gain market acceptance outside your tasting room, then yes, you should learn how a successful professional brewery operates. That doesn't necessarily mean working in a brewery, but at least having a successful pro-brewer that you can get advice from. This is still a very cooperative and collegial group, so it's not hard to find someone who will coach you. We have provided personal advice to dozens of new breweries over the last five years.

You have grown from a three-barrel system on opening day to a 15-barrel system now. How have you orchestrated the growth of Claremont Craft Ales? What role does planning play?

We have a specific strategy when it comes to growth: slow and steady wins the race. In other words, it's all about deliberate, sustainable growth, as opposed to using huge injections of cash to flood the market with product and hoping the demand builds to meet that supply. That also means that the physical brewery grows very slowly. We started with a small and cheap brew system, a crappy homebrew-style mill, and a

joke of a glycol system. But that allowed us to generate revenue quickly and reinvest it back into the business over the last five years to slowly build the awesome brewing operation we have now. If we had started the brewery with the same equipment we have now, we would have needed a lot of investment dollars or debt, and that's a level of risk that we were not comfortable with. So now we are a mature good-sized brewery with no outside investors and zero debt – we wouldn't have it any other way!

Where do you see yourselves in ten years? Do you plan to expand? Do you have an end game?

No, we do not have an end game. Even though we are all about slow and measured growth, I have no upper limit to my ambition. I will never stop trying to expand our brand, improve the beer, learn new things, etc. We like to be challenged and like to move forward, albeit at our own pace and on our terms. Hopefully in ten years our brand will still be going strong and available in multiple states. Our reach outside of LA is growing every day, and hopefully that continues at a greater rate for years to come.

We talked in your very cool tasting room, located in the very cool Claremont Colleges community, about the proliferation of breweries and losing beer fans who tend to explore. What are the pros of going from seven to seventy breweries in Los Angeles County over the last six years? And what are the cons?

As you said, craft beer fans are a curious bunch who love to experiment and try new flavors. So yes, as more and more breweries open in the area, our customers will spend more of their time elsewhere. I think our quality is strong enough that we won't lose those customers permanently, but now they'll be spending some percentage of their beer-drinking-time at other breweries, instead of 100% at our brewery, like they did a few years ago. So that's the con ... a loss of some tasting room revenue. But the pros far outweigh this cost. More craft breweries translate into a greater overall awareness of craft beer, greater demand for local beer, and hopefully less demand for corporate beer. Plus, the community of brewers is invaluable! The rise of the LA Brewers Guild has been such a boon for LA brewers – from industry promotion to collaborative problem solving, it's an amazing resource!

I always say that if you worry about brewing world class beer, building a loyal local fan base, and being smart about growth, your brewery will survive any critical mass implosion on the horizon. Agree or disagree?

Agree 100%. I think you just summarized all of my points from above! In an increasingly crowded market, you absolutely must make top-quality beer and be very thoughtful about how you spend your money. Carelessness on either of these fronts will put you at risk of getting squeezed out as the market gets more saturated. We talked about the haze craze. I had your 35 Miles NE IPA and it was delicious. You eloquently expressed your take on the decision to make your foray into hazies, the artistic challenge, and how they relate to West Coast style IPAs. Please expound upon your assessment for our readers.

Despite urgings from Brian and our sales team, I was very hesitant to jump on the hazy IPA bandwagon, and so we were very late to the party. Basically, I did not agree with intentionally making a cloudy beer just for the sake of appearance. I've never been hung up on beer clarity (we don't filter any of our beers), but I think that the characteristics of a beer should be driven exclusively by flavor and aroma. Make the best tasting beer that you can, and if it happens to be cloudy or brilliantly clear, so be it. But for the love of God, do not artificially cloud up a beer just to satisfy a trend! Having said that though, I now realize that I didn't understand the style. I was having a knee-jerk reaction to the hype. Once Brian educated me on the technical challenges of the style, I was intrigued. Hop flavor and aroma have always been my favorite aspects of a good beer, and so I appreciated the innovation of the Northeast IPA – maximizing hop flavor while keeping bitterness as low as possible, and really thinking outside the box in terms of brewing process. I don't think brewers should be tied down by tradition, and the greatest trait of the American craft brewing industry is its spirit of innovation, so the new processes required by this style were exciting to me: zero hops added on the hot side, dry-hopping at the height of fermentation, etc. ... it's all so crazy, but it works! It also helps that Brian created an amazing beer. I guess I'm a convert now.

You just won a bronze medal at the 2017 Great American Beer Festival for one of your flagship beers, the Jacaranda Rye IPA. Do you get validation from that and how much importance do you place on competitions?

Winning that medal was so surreal and awesome! It was surprising and heart-warming how many people pay attention to GABF. The congratulations came from such a wide range of people ... it definitely felt validating. It's a high point of the last five years for sure! At the same time, we recognize what a crapshoot it is – tasting beer is so subjective! So, we don't get hung up on competitions, but it certainly doesn't hurt to win!



Cheers to local beer!

Photo by Daniel Drennon

Building and establishing a successful brewery in a state with 800 breweries is no mean feat. Do you think talent or work ethic is more important to achieving that success?

Work ethic for sure! Honestly, making beer is not hard. If you can follow a recipe, you can make beer, and most of the time, that beer will be good. But to be a successful brewery, you need to be good at business and marketing and human resources. You need to be meticulous and detail-oriented and focused on quality. You need to be disciplined with your money and your time. Don't get me wrong, talent is important and will help set you apart from the crowd (and I feel fortunate to have the talent that we do), but first and foremost, a brewery is a business.

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

Deliberate.



WISHFUL DRINKING

PLAY BEER!

CRAFT SHOWS UP EARLY FOR SPRING TRAINING

By Tomm Carroll



Samuel Adams founder Jim Koch, left, and Boston Red Sox president and CEO Sam Kennedy. Photo by Billie Weiss/Boston Red Sox

I can't believe I'm actually writing about baseball and beer again in the off-season. Last issue's column, about the Los Angeles Dodgers' loss in the 2017 World Series — and LA craft beer's embarrassment by the traditional mayoral bet in which the losing city sends its beer to the winner — may have stunk of stale news by appearing in December, but when Big Blue ultimately choked in Game 7 on November 1, that month's Beer Paper was already in distribution.

And in this publication's defense, LA's baseball and craft beer fans deserved to know that we sent the World Champion Houston Astros (I know, it hurts) beer from multinational conglomerate AB InBev's wholly owned Golden Road Brewing (sorry, Meg, NOT fake news), instead of truly LA craft beer.

Okay, new year, new beer and baseball story. On the eve of this issue's deadline in mid-December, Boston Beer Company, the makers of the Samuel Adams line of beers (among other alcoholic beverages), announced that it had secured an eight-year deal with the Boston Red Sox, making Samuel Adams the official beer of that team through the 2025 baseball season.

Starting in April, Sam Adams' beers, as well as its brand, will receive prominent exposure at Beantown's historic Fenway Park, including its logo on the right field sponsor sign, a branded rooftop deck and a dedicated bar under the third base stands. As well, the team's spring training venue, JetBlue Park in Florida, will be similarly branded. Aside from featuring the established Boston Beer products at the facilities, the beer maker plans to launch new brews during the 2018 baseball season, including Sam '76, a session-strength lager-ale hybrid, and a New England IPA.

This is some increasingly rare good news for craft beer — and a blow to Big Beer — as Sam bounced Bud from its BoSox sponsorship. AB InBev's flagship Budweiser was the brand sign over right field since 1976. Before that, the sponsors included Schaeffer Brewing (now owned by Pabst Brewing) and original beer sponsor Narragansett Brewing of Rhode Island, which began its association with the team in 1944.

Boston Beer's press release sent out to announce the deal states, "Sam Adams is the first American craft brewer to enter into a partnership with a Major League Baseball franchise, for this length of time and at this level." Assuming that the word "American" in that statement means "American-owned," is that claim true? Let's find out by take a look at the recent deals and collaborations between craft beer and Major League Baseball teams.

Right off the bat (no pun intended), craft beer progenitor Anchor Brewing of San Francisco was arguably the first American craft brewery to partner with a ball club — unsurprisingly the San Francisco Giants — when it came on board as a sponsor in 2012 (though not as the "official beer," nor for as long an initial term as the Boston deal). That season saw the opening of the Anchor Plaza Taproom and Beer Garden at AT&T Park.

In subsequent years, the brewery introduced Anchor Suites at the park, as well as the Anchor Corral at Scottsdale Stadium in Arizona, the team's spring training home. There have also been collaboration beers: Orange Splash and last year's Los Gigantes. There were even plans for the partnership to build a second brewing facility on Pier 48 in the Embarcadero Historic District as part of a huge development project, but delays ensued last spring.

And when the surprise sale of Anchor to a different kind of giant — Japanese Big Beer's Sapporo Holdings Ltd. — was announced this past August, those expansion plans were all but scuttled. Also, Anchor's sponsorship with the Giants and AT&T Park, which had been renewed through last year, now seem decidedly uncertain with Sapporo in charge. But whether or not that relationship continues, it's a moot point; Anchor is no longer American-owned — nor is it now considered a craft brewery by the Brewers Association.

Elsewhere on the craft beer and baseball front, earlier this year Boulevard Brewing inked a five-year deal with its hometown team, the Kansas City Royals, to become the franchise's "official craft beer" at Kauffman Stadium (apparently the first ever such designation, according to the MLB). But Boulevard is owned entirely by Belgium's Duvel Moortgat USA (which the Brewers Association does classify as a craft brewery). Craft darling Mikkeller is building a brewery/restaurant at the New York Mets' Citi Field in Flushing, with plans to open this year. But it is a Danish craft brewer, despite its San Diego brewery.

Baseball team partnerships have been prevalent recently in the pseudo-craft arena too. Athens, Georgia's Terrapin Brewing opened a satellite brewery and taproom in the Atlanta Braves' new ballpark, SunTrust Park, for the 2017 baseball season. However, MillerCoors (the U.S. business unit of Molson Coors) owns a majority stake in Terrapin — as it does in Granbury, Texas' Revolver Brewing. Revolver plans a brewery/taproom in the Texas Live! dining and entertainment district abutting Globe Life Park in Arlington, Texas, where the Texas Rangers play, due to open for the 2018 baseball season.

And don't forget the original — and only — ballpark brewpub, dating back to 1995, the Sandlot Brewery in Denver's Coors Field, home to the Colorado Rockies. It is where (pre-Molson and -Miller) Coors' popular-but-not-craft Blue Moon (originally called Bellyslide Belgian White) was birthed.



Photo Courtesy of Samuel Adams

The big guys, of course, have long been associated with MLB teams. The newest member of Big Beer to get into the baseball game is the New York-based international beverage giant Constellation Brands. Constellation, which bought San Diego's Ballast Point Brewing in 2015 for \$1 billion and, just last summer, acquired Florida's Funky Buddha, and brews and markets Mexico's Grupo Modelo beer brands in the U.S., is a double threat thanks to partnerships with a pair of MLB franchises, as well as other sports teams.

The 2017 season was the first of a three-year agreement with the Chicago White Sox in which Modelo Especial became the team's "official import beer," and a new bar called Casa Modelo was opened in Guaranteed Rate Field. Constellation has a similar arrangement with the Anaheim Angels, whose stadium this past season featured not only a Casa Modelo, but a Pacifico Cantina, a Corona Beach House and a Ballast Point stand in the third base food court.

Too bad about that, Angels fans. But at least you guys get Japanese besu-bōru rock star pitcher/hitter Shohei Otani this upcoming season. Maybe he'll demand that Sapporo beer be served at the Big A, since that's the town in which his previous team, the Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters, was based.

And Dodger Stadium? Well, for better or worse, LA doesn't seem to have an official beer sponsor — craft or otherwise — but it sure appears to be Budweiser, and its ABI brethren, which are ubiquitous throughout the property.

Sadly, given its increased dominance and two branded bars at Chavez Ravine (as mentioned last issue), not to mention its wares being the filthy lucre used to pay our mayor's World Series losing bet, I'm afraid Golden Road would be a good bet for that sponsorship if its overlord ABI takes a hint from the aforementioned examples of its competitors, MillerCoors and Constellation. Even before its buyout, GRB proved itself an invasive species: the first LA brewery to get its beers in Dodger Stadium, as well as at LAX bars and Whole Foods and Trader Joe's.

Speaking of which, AB InBev's 38-year run as the official beer sponsor of all of Major League Baseball (allowing the brewer to use the MLB logo exclusively, as well as the logos of all of its teams) concludes after this season. Wouldn't it be nice if, like in Boston, it could be succeeded by a craft brewer — or a consortium of them? Or how about by the Brewers Association, representing ALL American independent craft breweries, which could then pour their wares at their local ballparks? Now THAT'S a bit more realistic than trying to buy AB InBev outright!

Then ABI could concentrate on its recently stated goal: To make Budweiser the first beer on Mars. Good luck with that, guys.

Award-winning beer writer Tomm Carroll is a longtime contributor to Celebrator Beer News, has written about beer for the Los Angeles Times, among other publications, and is working on a book about the early days of LA breweries. He is also a BJCP-schooled international beer judge and teaches a craft beer class at UCLA Extension. Contact him at beerscribe@earthlink.net.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

FIVE YEARS AND A FERMENTER FULL OF GRATITUDE

By Daniel Drennon



Couple sharing Beer Paper at Chapman Crafted

Photo by Daniel Drennon

Welcome to 2018. Man, does time fly. This year will see Beer Paper hit the five-year mark. So much has happened in the wonderful world of craft beer over that span. No place more so than greater Los Angeles, where we have gone from wasteland to world class...from seven breweries to seventy breweries and counting. Our beer scene now matches up nicely with any city anywhere.

We have our artistic, innovative brewers to thank for this remarkable transformation. We also have you, some of the best damn beer fans on the planet to thank for embracing the revolution and supporting local, independently made beer. And on that topic of gratitude, I would like to thank all of you who read, love and support Beer Paper! I cannot tell you how much it means to me as I visit breweries, brewpubs, and beer bars all over South California and see you reading the paper. Many of you take the time to come up to me and thank me for the paper and to express how much you enjoy reading it as part of your beer experience. And that is what makes it all worthwhile, so thank you for sharing that with me. It warms my heart.

I would also like to thank my team of exceptional writers – The Sarah Bennett, Tomm Carroll, and John Verive along with the many brewers who have taken time from their busy brew schedules to pen Brewer’s Corners. I appreciate the freelancers who pop in and out, too many to name. As writers, I am not saying we are able to agree that a photo is worth a thousand words, but I do thank the photographers who bring beer and beer people to life in our pages.

There is a gentleman by the name of Matt Combs, a long-time professional graphic designer and an artist in every sense of the word – musician, painter, God knows what else – who does the lay out every issue. He has as much pride in Beer Paper as I do, and I thank him for that.

Beer Paper is self-distributed. I do most of LA County and Mr. Brian Navarro does all of Orange County by himself. So, if you see Brian at your local brewery, please buy that man a beer! Paul Brauner assists me in the South Bay and a noble network of friends and volunteers does the rest...again too many to name but you know who you are and you know how much you mean to Beer Paper and to me.

Last, but never least, my brothers in beer and the founding fathers of Beer Paper – Aaron Carroll and Rob Wallace. It was their vision, their dream...their baby. They had the faith to allow me the privilege of being its caretaker. I never take that honor for granted and I love both of those guys. They embody integrity in journalism and the spirit of being “true to beer.”

There is a lot to look forward to in the coming year in beer. If you have not travelled the USA in search of great beer, believe me when I tell you that we are spoiled by an embarrassment of riches when it comes to California breweries. We have many of the best breweries in the world here.

Finally, Beer Paper is 100% advertiser supported so if you want to support Beer Paper, please support them. And please let them know you saw them in Beer Paper. The paper is a passion project that reflects our adoration of local, independent breweries and the beer they make.

I wish each and every one of you a Happy New Year and hope that is the best year of your lives. It definitely will be when it comes to your options for drinking beer.

Cheers!

Daniel Drennon



Winslow Sawyer, bad ass brewmaster at Pure Project, one of my favorite breweries

SOME OF OUR FAVORITES PICS FROM 2017



Jonny Fullpint and Peter Mumford with Daniel Drennon



Tom Nickel of Nickel Beer and O'Briens



Rich of Strand Brewing Co. with Daniel Drennon



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angelcitybrewing.com

Angry Horse Brewing
603 W. Whittier Blvd., Montebello
angryhorsebrewing.com

Arrow Lodge Brewing
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Covina, CA 91722
arrowlodgebrew.com

Arts District Brewing
828 Traction Ave, Los Angeles
artsdistrictbrewing.com

Boomtown Brewery
700 Jackson St, Los Angeles
boomtownbrew.com

Bravery Brewing
42705 8th St. W., Lancaster
braverybrewing.com

Brewyard Beer Company
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brewyardbeercompany.com

Brouwerij West
110 E. 22nd St, San Pedro
www.brouwerijwest.com

Claremont Craft Ales
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Claremont
claremontcraftales.com

Clayton Brewing Company
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claytonbrewingco.com

Cosmic Brewery
20316 Gramercy Place, Torrance
www.cosmicbrewery.com

Craftsman Brewing Co.
1270 Lincoln Ave #800, Pasadena
craftsmanbrewing.com

Dry River Brewing
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www.dryriverbrewing.com

Eagle Rock Brewery
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eaglerockbrewery.com

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FigMtnBrew.com

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fivethreadsbrewing.com

Frogtown Brewery
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frogtownbrewery.com

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hpb.la

Homage Brewing
281 S. Thomas St. #101, Pomona
homagebrewing.com

Indie Brewing Co.
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indiebrewco.com

Iron Triangle Brewing Company
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www.irontrianglebrewing.com

King Harbor Brewing Company
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King Harbor Waterfront Tasting Room
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lbbeer.com

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monkishbrewing.com

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mtlowebrewing.com

Mumford Brewing
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mumfordbrewing.com

Ohana Brewing Company
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ohanabrew.com

Pacific Plate Brewing
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Phantom Carriage Brewing
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phantomcarriage.com

Pocock Brewing Company
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Scholb Premium Ales
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drinkscholb.com

Santa Monica Brew Works
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santamonicabrewworks.com

Smog City Brewing Co.
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smogcitybrewing.com

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Long Beach
steelcraftlb.com

State Brewing Co.
1237 W. 134th St.
Gardena, CA 90247
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

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Beachwood BBQ & Brewing
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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 Abigaile
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
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firestonebeer.com/visit/venice.php

HopSaint Brewing Company
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Artifex Brewing
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backstreetbrew.com

Barley Forge Brewing
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barleyforge.com

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Bootlegger's Brewery
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bootleggersbrewery.com

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

Chapman Crafted Beer
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Old Towne Orange, CA
chapmancrafted.beer

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Tasting Room
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cismontanebrewing.com

Docent Brewing
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Evans Brewing
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evanslager.com

Four Sons Brewing
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Green Cheek Beer Company
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greencheekbeer.com

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gunwhaleales.com

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Left Coast Brewing Company
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leftcoastbrewing.com

Lost Winds Brewing Company
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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 Highway
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
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towneparkbrew.com

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

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brewbakers1.com

Huntington Beach Beer Company
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newportbeachbrewingcompany.com

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www.dragonstalebrewery.com

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

Euryale Brewing Co
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euryalebrewing.com

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garagebrewco.com

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iebrew.com

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ironfirebrewing.com

Last Name Brewing
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lastnamebrewing.com

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

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

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

Packinghouse Brewing 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
rokhousebrewing.com

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

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

Stone Church Brewing
2785 Cabot Drive, 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, CA
tapsfishhouse.com

Wicks Brewing Company
11620 Sterling Ave, Riverside
wicksbrewing.com



Old Towne Orange, California

NOW OPEN

| Tasting Room Hours of Operation | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Sun | Noon - 8pm |
| Mon - Thurs | 4pm - 10pm |
| Fri & Sat | Noon - Midnight |

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FEATURED LISTINGS

Barbara's at the Brewery
620 Moulton Ave #110, Los Angeles
barbarasatthebrewery.com

Beachwood BBQ
131 1/2 Main Seal Beach
BeachwoodBBQ.com

Beer Belly
532 S. Western Ave, Los Angeles
www.beerbellyla.com

Beer Belly
255 Long Beach Blvd, Long Beach
www.beerbellyla.com

Bierstube German Pub & Restaurant
1340 S. Sanderson Ave, Anaheim
thephoenixclub.com

Blue Palms Brewhouse
6124 Hollywood Blvd, Los Angeles
bluepalmsbrewhouse.com

Brew Kitchen Ale House
10708 Los Alamitos Blvd, Los Alamitos
brewkitchenalehouse.com

Far Bar
347 E. 1st St, Los Angeles
farbarla.com

Flights Beer Bar
5119 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne
flightsbeerbar.com

Haven Gastropub
190 S. Glassell St, Orange
havengastropub.com

The Hermosillo
5127 York Blvd., Los Angeles
thehermosillo.com

La Sirena Grill
3931 Portola Parkway, Irvine
www.lasirenagrill.com

Linx Artisan Sausage and Craft Beer
238 Chapman Ave Orange
linxdogs.com

Monrovia Homebrew Shop
1945 S. Myrtle Ave
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

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 Public House by Evans Brewing
138 W. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton
evansbrewco.com

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

Tortilla Cantina
1225 El Prado Ave, Torrance
tortillacantina.com

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

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

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- 1.1.18** Closed for New Year's Day
- 1.4.18** Open Brewhouse with Brewer Evan Partridge
6pm-8pm
- 1.17.18** Beer Seminar- Beer 101 with
Certified Cicerone® Ryan 6pm-8pm



NEW PACKAGED BEER

- LEO V. URSUS: WOOKUS IMPERIAL BLACK IPA**
Available **12.16.18**
- NITRO MERLIN MILK STOUT CANS!**
Available **early January**

UPCOMING BEER RELEASES

- 1.2.18** Pinthouse Pizza Collaboration – Electric Union IPA
- 1.5.18** Generation 1 - Unfiltered IPA
- 1.12.18** Hefeweizen – Bavarian Hefeweizen
- 1.26.18** Single Hop Series: Roy Farms Amarillo Pale Ale



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