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## FOR SINNERS & SAINTS ALIKE



*Tomme Arthur's name is synonymous with the craft beer movement. He is a true champion to all who have followed the evolution of craft beer.*

*Over his brewing career, Tomme has won numerous awards including twice being named Small Brewpub and Small Brewpub Brewer of the Year (GABF), also named Small Brewery and Small Brewery Brewer of the Year (GABF), and World Champion Small Brewpub and Brewer of the Year (World Beer Cup). In 2018, Tomme was awarded the prestigious Russell Scherer Award for Innovation in Craft Brewing.*

**By Ryan Sweeney**

**(FULL COVER STORY ON PAGE 12)**

Tomme Arthur

Photo Credit: Studio Schulz

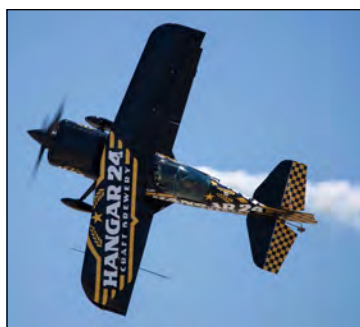
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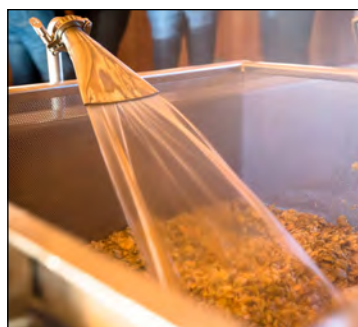
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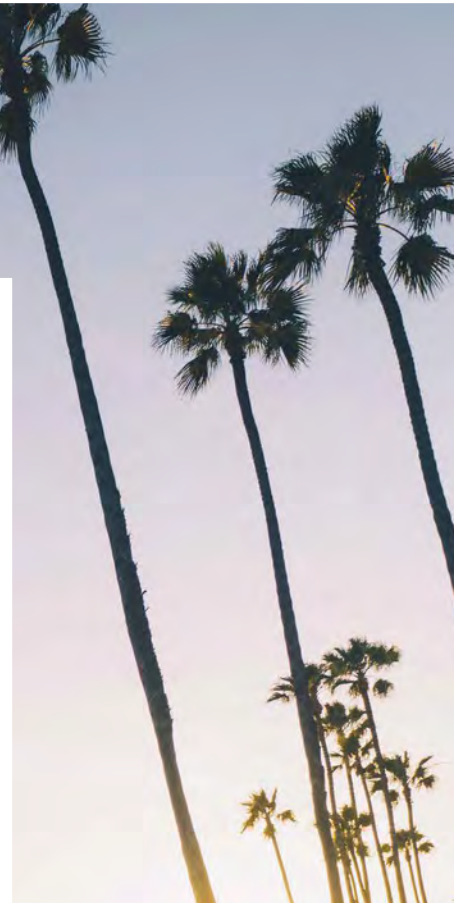


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## BOTTLECRAFT

## TEN QUESTIONS WITH BRIAN JENSEN

by DANIEL DRENNON



Bottlecraft Owner Brian Jensen

Photo Credit: Tim Stahl

The Long Beach beer scene continues to explode as surrounding areas seem to have slowed in the number of brewery and beer bar openings. The latest, greatest addition is Bottlecraft, situated in the very cool “The Hangar at LBX” facility adjacent to the Long Beach Airport. Featuring 27 rapidly-rotating and extremely well-curated taps, Bottlecraft’s opening created an immediate buzz among LBC beer fans.

This is owner Brian Jensen’s 6th Bottlecraft location. The other five critically-acclaimed locations are in San Diego. I sat down with Jensen to get his assessment of the current craft beer climate and ask why he chose Long Beach for his latest spot.

**DRENNON:** *How and when did you conceive of the bottle shop/bar concept?*

**JENSEN:** I wanted to work in the food and beverage industry but didn’t know what exactly I wanted to do, so after going to college in San Diego, I moved to New York to go to culinary school. After finishing, I bounced around between different hospitality jobs for about five years, including cooking, bartending, brewing, and sales. Nothing really felt right and I started to think that maybe I should do my own thing. I started to jot down notes on ideas I had and share them with people I trusted. One idea was for a bottle shop and bar.

I worked at great neighborhood wine shop in Brooklyn after culinary school and thought it would be cool to do something similar, but only focusing on beer. Some bottle shops had opened up around the country but San Diego didn’t really have one

that was truly dedicated to craft beer only. There were liquor stores with really good selections of beer, but the experience was nothing like I had seen at the wine shop I worked at, where every employee was passionate and knowledgeable about the product. I shared the idea with some friends and family and the response came back positive. It was relatively inexpensive to open, and at twenty-seven I didn’t have much money, so that was important.

When I opened, I was expecting it to be mostly a bottle shop but made sure I could serve beer too as I wanted to offer flights and opportunities for brewers to come in and chat about their beers. Customers loved to hang out and sample what we were offering so I started to add more and more draft

**DRENNON:** *You opened your first join in San Diego/Little Italy eight years ago. Seeing the shift from bottles to cans over that span, would you now have called it Cancraft?*

**JENSEN:** (laughing) I’m not sure. So many beers these days are in cans, that might’ve have been a good idea! But I like the sound of Bottlecraft. Maybe that’s just because I’m so used to saying and hearing it.

**DRENNON:** *What do you think of the cans versus bottle debate since it still rages on for the purists in each camp?*

**JENSEN:** I think cans are great and are here to stay. They’re great for the beer and great for the environment. It’s a win win!



Ryan Rowland, Bottlecraft Long Beach Manager

Photo Credit: Tony Betancourt

over the years and the concept evolved to be a bottle shop and bar, rather than just a bottle shop you can drink at.

At Long Beach the original concept has evolved as far as not including the bottle shop. This is due to some restrictions where we are at, but also because it was my first expansion here in California outside of San Diego and the The Hangar Food Hall was a perfect way for us to get situated in Long Beach without the complexities that come along with a bottle shop. The same objective persists though, to offer a highly rotating lineup of great beer.

**DRENNON:** *Speaking of divergent camps, what do you think of the wine versus beer juxtaposition now that you have opened Vino Carta in your original Bottlecraft location in Little Italy?*

**JENSEN:** I think there is more and more overlap happening these days. We’re seeing a lot of beer drinkers, especially brewers, interested in wine and coming into the wine shop. Vino Carta focuses a lot on natural wine, which has some interesting processes that we’re starting to see brewers utilize with funky and sour beers like aging in concrete eggs and amphoras.

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Culturally, wine has typically been more formal and beer informal, but that's changing with a lot of the wine industry loosening up and being casual, including fun wine bars that blast hip hop and rock, canned wine and witty labels reminiscent of beer labels.

**DRENNON: Why did you choose Long Beach for your latest location?**

JENSEN: Long Beach has been on my radar since I realized that the idea of Bottlecraft had legs. I was born in LB, my family still lives nearby and I come up often. Also, the beer scene up here is great and I wanted to be a part of it.

**DRENNON: How have you seen the landscape of craft beer evolve over the past eight years?**

JENSEN: It's definitely expanded in ways I would have never guessed. A couple of years ago the number of breweries opening and expanding was hard to keep up with. Since then it's slowed down and we've seen a lot of breweries sell out or close; I guess that just goes with the boom.

When breweries were opening practically daily, there was a lot of mediocre beer out there, but I believe

things have been getting better lately as things have mellowed out. That or I'm only tasting the good ones!

Some other changes have been that craft used to be all about selling in bombers, then shifted to 12 oz bottles and now to 16 oz cans. Beer styles have changed too, with breweries brewing beers they would have sworn against when I started eight years ago.

**DRENNON: Where do you think craft beer is headed?**

JENSEN: One thing I've learned over the years is that I really can't see the far future in this industry, it's just changing too fast. I know it'll continue to change. I just don't know how. Rather than trying to predict how it will change, I just try to react quickly when it does.

**DRENNON: Where do you see yourself and Bottlecraft in another eight years?**

JENSEN: Still here trying to bring in great beer for people to enjoy! We might have some more locations by that time, but who knows. I really just try to do things when cool opportunities arise, and these days, I am getting more and more picky about

where to expand. A part of me wants to keep opening new spots so our current team has more opportunity to grow, but I don't want to do anything too risky.

**DRENNON: Your tap lists are world class. What process do you use in the selection of the breweries and the beers?**

JENSEN: It's often a group decision amongst the Bottlecraft team. We try not to let reps or even our brewer friends influence our decisions, as much as they sometimes try (he laughs). We taste whenever we can, but sometimes that's not always possible. Some brewers and breweries are so good, we trust whatever they make to be good. Other breweries that we either don't know or have put out lesser quality beer in the past will be more scrutinized.

Then, once we put it on draft, we listen to our guests. If something is selling well, it indicates that customers are loving it. If it's moving slow, we think hard about why that is and if we should bring the beer or the brewery again. It's tough but with literally thousands of options out there and a finite number of taps, we have to have

a standard that we hold to and help us decide by.

**DRENNON: As the pie gets sliced thinner and thinner, what advice would you have for anyone wanting to open a brewery, beer bar or bottle shop?**

JENSEN: Don't make big bets that you're going to be the next big brewery. The chances of that are getting slim as more and more breweries are opening and putting out great beer. There is literally not enough draft lines or space on the shelves for all the great beer out there today. Pick a great neighborhood to be a part of that isn't highly saturated and focus on offering it great beer and atmosphere... then be prepared for change.

*Daniel Drennon is the publisher, editor and head writer of BEER PAPER. Like a million other dreamers, Drennon moved to LA to write screenplays. Like 999,000 of them, he was ultimately unsuccessful. In 2009, inspired by the artistry of American brewers, he became the first dedicated beer writer for the LA Weekly.*

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**HANGAR 24**

# HANGAR 24: RENAVIGATING THE EVOLVING CRAFT BEER SCENE

by ANDREW SMITH



Ben Cook - CEO/Owner  
Photo Credit: Collin Callahan

With its nineteenth century mansions and expansive orange groves, the city of Redlands evokes a rich sense of California heritage. Since it opened eleven years ago, Hangar 24 has drawn upon and thrived on that heritage. Situated on the outskirts of the city, adjacent to the municipal airport and against a backdrop of the San Bernardino mountains, you can't escape the feel of California history and the great outdoors as you sip on fresh taproom pours.

The story of Hangar 24 started with one man's passion for community, adventure, and great beer. As a homebrewer, Ben Cook would trade his beers for airplane rides and flying lessons. In the daytime, he would fly aircraft, then settle down with friends in a repurposed hangar for beers and barbecue. A job as a QA Manager preceded the Master Brewers Program at UC Davis, before he opened Hangar 24 in 2008.

Just as the local orange groves put Redlands on the map, Hangar 24's flagship Orange Wheat put the brewery on the map. At a time when Blue Moon and Shock Top were all the rage, Hangar 24 used

their surroundings to showcase local, natural flavor. As Ben Cook explained: "Our orange grower is 500 feet from our brewery. You can't replicate that authenticity." Rather than extracts, juice, or orange peel, Hangar 24 throws the whole orange into the blender. The result is a fresh earthiness, and even a little bitterness, that you'd be hard-pressed to find elsewhere. "We've invested heavily in specialized equipment, equipment that only makes sense if you're making a lot of the stuff." One example is the brewery's half-million dollar centrifuge.

As an early entrant on the scene, Hangar took off fast. "We had good beer and good branding. We were one of the few craft brewers in distributor portfolios and caught everyone's attention." Orange Wheat, alongside Betty IPA, spread rapidly on the, as then, underdeveloped markets of California, Nevada, and Arizona. They opened a second location in Lake Havasu. Not only did they ride in the slipstream of the craft beer wave, they led the way,

(HANGAR 24 continued on page 10)

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Hangar 24 Annual Air Fest

Photo Credit: Collin Callahan

(HANGAR 24 continued)

pushing close to 40,000 barrels. “For a couple of years, we were doubling output, making us the fastest growing brewer in the country.”

But around 2015, things started to slow. Craft beer continued to grow, but at a much slower pace. At the same time, there was a hugely disproportionate rise in new brewery openings. There were 1,500 breweries

in the United States in 2008, compared to over 7,000 today. Whereas the early 2000’s was a time of retail shelves and tap handles crying out for craft diversity, many today are speaking of market “saturation.”

Dr. Bart Watson, the Brewers Association’s chief economist, is more level-headed in dubbing the current situation, “normalcy.” What we’ve seen is a changing landscape, one where there’s now a brewery in almost

every neighborhood. New breweries are expected to continue opening, but it’s led to downgraded expectations for regional breweries. There’s an abundance of choice, as well as an affinity towards local, both from consumers and distributors. There’s also the factor of corporate macro breweries and their newly acquired “craft” portfolios, their national chain agreements, and other prohibitive practices.

As an early entrant, Hangar 24 still holds its own in non-local areas through brand awareness, reputation and uniqueness. But it’s not the open range of ten years ago. That’s led to a scaling back that Cook has labelled “rightsizing.” Recent headlines might scream of despair, but the changes have been much more measured. A drop from 140 employees to 80 employees was largely due to the separation of their distribution wing. “We started that out of necessity, but we felt that it had fulfilled its purpose. We wanted to focus our resources on the brewery.” The newly formed Co-Hop Beverage is owned by former Hangar 24 employee, Steve Garcia, and they remain the brewery’s largest distributor. Co-Hop also retained most of Hangar 24’s distribution employees.

The other big move was a partial shift in production to Gordon Biersch, under an “alternating proprietorship.” Hangar 24 leases equipment from Gordon Biersch with all product sourcing still happening in Redlands: “Same ingredients, same suppliers, same oranges from Redlands.” Prior to that, Hangar 24 had been struggling to meet demand, even while running 24/7 shifts. At that time, plans were drawn up for a second brewery. “If we’d gone that route, we’d be out of business now. The alternating proprietorship allows us to be more nimble, and gives us better economies of production.”

There’s also been a streamlining of products for distribution, while simultaneously expanding offerings at the brewery. “On the distribution side, we’re trying to focus on doing more with less, whereas our taprooms are the flipflop of that. We’ve never had the variety of beers that we have now in our own locations. We’re focusing on putting the right product in the right place.”

That strategy has led to investment in a newer pilot system and a Research & Development program. While quality assurance has “always been a massive priority” for Cook, this new investment places an emphasis on innovation. They’ve also enlisted a new Director of Brewing Operations. Sofonyas Cherinet, formerly of Karbach Brewing and New Glarus, “brings a level of expertise that we’ve never had before inside our company.”

As external markets become more challenging, Cook is looking towards expanding the company’s own retail outlets. He’s confident of opening a third (and possibly a fourth) location in 2019. “There are several locations running through the pipeline, but we want to be very strategic, ensure that each is special, represents us as a brand, and provides our customers with a unique experience.”

Echoing the words of Dr. Watson at last month’s Craft Brewers Conference, Cook sees community and cooperation as the way forward. “As craft brewers, we all need to work together.” That much is evident in Hangar 24’s annual AirFest, scheduled for May, an invitational that brings together 20 to 30 breweries. It was also evident in the recent Redlands Craft Beer Week, which saw Hangar 24 do a collaboration beer with neighbors Escape and Ritual, as well as their participation in the Resilience IPA fundraiser organized by Sierra Nevada

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The spirit of community and adventure that laid the foundation of the brewery feels as true today as it did eleven years ago. I'd heard that Cook was as equally committed to recruiting people to aviation as he was to craft beer, but got a much more passionate response than I envisaged:

“Aviation and anything adventurous. One of our goals is just to get people to expand their minds, push their own boundaries, be adventurous. That could be at the brewery and being adventurous with their beer selection and their palates. We also want people to get into aviation. At our American Light launch there were signups for hang gliding and paragliding lessons. ‘Adventures we share’ is our tagline. Let’s go through life and share an adventure together, then afterwards, let’s share a beer together. We believe the world would be a better place if people push their boundaries, share community, and have a beer together. It’s all about having fun and going through life together.”

And what about the rumors of Anheuser Busch sniffing around a few years ago? “A long time ago, yes. We weren’t interested then, and we’re not



Taps at Hangar 24

Photo Credit: Shelley Smith

interested now. We’ve gone through great effort to put the Independent Craft Brewers Seal on all of our packaging. So, it’s pretty clear where we stand on that.”

There have been layoffs due to restructuring of production schedules and reorganization of distribution routes. Cook admits that recent times

have been more challenging but insists he’s in this for the long haul. “We’ve had to restructure out of necessity. It sucks to lose people, but everything we’re doing is aimed towards a brighter future. Growing in a different direction, and adding more jobs, that is the absolute goal.”

May the spirit of independence,

authenticity, community, and adventure continue to prosper.

*Andrew Smith has been a craft beer employee and advocate for the past 20 years. Raised in England, he “thought” he knew everything about beer before moving to the United States. He runs a local Coachella Valley blog at CVBeerScene.com*

## TOMME ARTHUR

# FOR SINNERS & SAINTS ALIKE

by RYAN SWEENEY

Tomme Arthur's name is synonymous with the craft beer movement. He is a true champion to all who have followed the evolution of craft beer. Since 1996, Tomme has been professionally brewing in the San Diego area, starting with the Cerveceria La Cruda brewery. In 1997, he was named head brewer at Pizza Port in Solana Beach. A founding partner of Port/Lost Abbey Brewing (2006), he added Hop Concept in 2015. Over his brewing career, Tomme has won numerous awards including twice being named Small Brewpub and Small Brewpub Brewer of the Year (GABF), also named Small Brewery and Small Brewery Brewer of the Year (GABF), and World Champion Small Brewpub and Brewer of the Year (World Beer Cup). In 2018, Tomme was awarded the prestigious Russell Scherer Award for Innovation in Craft Brewing.

I first met Tomme in 2008 while on a San Diego beer run. When I stopped into Pizza Port Carlsbad, I accidentally ran into Tomme, and he invited me back to Port/Lost Abbey. After a tour of the brewery, he made sure I was fully loaded with beer to bring back to LA. After that, every time I went to San Diego, Lost Abbey was a mandatory stop. And every time I stopped in, Tomme would make sure to have a beer with me at the tasting room. More than a decade later, Tomme and I are still good friends, our relationship evolved from beers at Lost Abbey to beers also in Austria, Belgium, and Maui. One thing became clear over the years of our friendship: Tomme is the one of the most generous guys I know, always taking time to talk about beer with anyone, making sure you always have more than enough beer, and always willing to pick up the kebab tab. I was really honored to interview my friend for Beer Paper, and hopefully you get more than a few insights into what makes Tomme such a force in beer, but also what makes him an amazing person.

**SWEENEY: How did you first get into craft beer and brewing, and what was the draw to making beer at that time?**



Tomme Arthur

Photo Credit: Ryan Sweeney

**ARTHUR:** I was gifted a homebrew kit for my graduation from college in 1995. At that time I was a major enthusiast of craft beer but I knew squadoosh about sanitation and all grain brewing. Needless to say I was a crappy homebrewer. Interestingly for our second brew, we attempted a batch of watermelon wheat and using Jolly Rancher candy for the flavoring addition. So clearly I was bit with an experimental bug early on in the process.

**SWEENEY: While you were the head brewer at Pizza Port, the San Diego craft beer scene really exploded, growing from a local to nationally renowned scene, with the Pizza Port family being a major contributor to the growth. What was it like to be part of that scene as it grew in recognition?**

**ARTHUR:** First I was so incredibly lucky to land that job as the Head Brewer in Solana Beach at Pizza Port. I doubt many positions in San Diego would have been the same type of spring board. The location was ideal

(blocks from the beach) and it really suited me well. I was told to make kick as beers. I was handed some iconic recipes (Swamis IPA, Sharkbite Red and Old Boneyards Barleywine) which were heavily hopped and bad ass brews. And lastly the clientele was ready to embrace just about anything I could imagine. All told a very fertile environment to let my imagination run loose.

Pizza Port had been a fervent supporter for craft beer (locals especially) so that made it easy to grow the reputation of the space(s) as a great destination for flavors of beer you didn't see on tap at other locations. I feel very strongly the promotional and event work that Tom Nickel, Jeff Bagby and I pushed through the late 90's and early 2000's really ingrained Pizza Port even further into the community of great craft beer. We threw so many damn great festivals with epically curated beer lists. But you cannot think of Pizza Port without mentioning what an amazing place Gina and Vince were able to cultivate and all the talent laced liquid that has

run through those hoses.

**SWEENEY: You started brewing in the '90s, and the brewing scene has changed dramatically since you started. What was the biggest change and did this evolution of craft beer surprise you?**

**ARTHUR:** Everyone knows that these are interesting times we live in right now. So many of us that were part of the earliest San Diego Craft Community busted our butts to elevate this city's beer scene to one of prominence, it was a massive collective effort. One of the things I love the most about this community is that we nourished and fed it. And then we have passed the baton and others are continuing to ensure that the foundations we laid support an even longer term vision than I am sure many of us sought. Ultimately we have all wanted to tell the story of amazing beers being brewed in America's Finest City. And the fact that we continue to be an epicenter of craft beer speaks volumes to the work that continues even to this day.

**SWEENEY:** *At what point did you realize what you were doing in beer was different, that you were having an impact not just in the San Diego beer scene but nationally in craft beer.*

ARTHUR: This is not an easy question to answer. But if I had to drop a pin in the timeline, I would say when Cuvee de Tomme hit the scene. In 1999, it was named Malt Advocate Beer of the Year. It followed up that award with a silver medal at the 2003 Great American Beer Festival (in the first year of the Experimental Beer Category) and earned the same award again in 2004.

This led to Pizza Port Solana Beach being asked to participate in Michael Jackson's Rare Beer Club and his visit to Solana Beach to do some filming during the 2004 Craft Brewers Conference.

Cuvee de Tomme was a landmark beer in San Diego as there weren't many mixed culture beers being produced (if any). It has also made several legacy beer lists including Food and Wine's 25 Most Influential Beers of the modern Craft Brewing movement as it inspired a new generation of brewers.

**SWEENEY:** *Where did the moniker*

*Brett Pack come from, and what was it like to be part of the first super collaboration in craft beer?*

ARTHUR: Our good friend Dick Cantwell wrote a column for American Brewer Magazine. In it he called us the Brett Pack. To my knowledge no one had ever called us that before. It was a humorous way to label us and describe the trip we collectively took to Belgium back in 2006.

I think one of my favorite recollections about the collaboration was when it was announced. We had already spent a ton of time lining up the entire process. The beer had been decided, the location, the entire syllabus (if you will) of how it was going to come to fruition had been determined. I was perusing Beer Advocate.com one day and a member basically stated "there's no way in hell these five guys could ever agree on anything. This beer is going to suck..." We keep threatening to make another sucky batch of beer. But I think we're concerned no one will show up to buy it.

**SWEENEY:** *Isabelle Proximus was one of the first true whale beers and changed the landscape of how beer was bought, traded, and sold. When you first started to plan out this beer,*



Photo Courtesy of Lost Abbey

*did you have any idea the impact it would have?*

ARTHUR: I think we all secretly hoped it would be a legacy beer. I mean I certainly didn't want to be responsible for the stewardship of a sucky collaborative beer. Since the beer was made at our location and aged in our building, I was chiefly tasked with ensuring the beer wasn't released too early and that the blend

was spot on. We made 300 cases of this beer and it continues to amaze me every time I see one being popped open and let to breathe.

**SWEENEY:** *Tomme Arthur vs. The World was an early craft beer comic with you as the main subject, what do you think they got right, and what did you think they missed?*

(SINNERS & SAINTS continued on page 15)

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(SINNERS & SAINTS continued)

ARTHUR: They definitely had fun poking the bear with that one. It was part of a few years where we made some mistakes and the portrayal definitely threw shade our way. I never started making beer with the intent of being featured in a comic strip so that was novel. I think the story boards were funny- They certainly got that part right. But I think ultimately a 5-panel (vs 3) comic might have afforded more.

**SWEENEY: Being a legacy American sour beer brewery, where do you see the future of barrel aged sours?**

ARTHUR: Barrel aged sours are being tested and we certainly see it in the marketplace. With quick and kettle sours taking less time to bring acidity to the market, it's changed the landscape. That being said, we know there are consumers who still love the beers we make and appreciate the extra time and patience it requires to make some of the sour beers we produce. I think one of our biggest strengths in this regard is our house character and the true sense of Terroir that we're able to capture in our bottles.

**SWEENEY: You now have three beer brands; Port Brewing, Lost Abbey, and Hop Concept. Can you describe each brand and what makes each unique?**

ARTHUR: When we opened the brewery in 2006, we knew that the two original brands (The Lost Abbey and Port Brewing) would be a big part of our long-term plans. The Lost Abbey would be Belgian Inspired and rely on the heritage of Belgian Brewers while at the same time embracing our own artistic sense of beer. Port Brewing would be a nod to the beers and recipes from Pizza Port that we felt had real opportunities to excel in packaged formatting. The Hop Concept continues to be a bright spot for us. We imagined the beer in 2015 as a way of standing out in a very crowded IPA market. The goal for the brand was simply fresh IPA in an obvious manner. So we launched with beers based on taste and smell. First out of the gate was Dank and Sticky followed by Citrus and Piney and Tropical and Juicy. For the consumer, this meant you would know exactly what to expect without needing an app to tell you what the beer tasted like. We've added some new wrinkles over



Photo Courtesy of Lost Abbey

the years but this brand continues to grow and remains true to the roots of straightforward no gimmick brewing with crisp and bright hop flavors being the hallmarks.

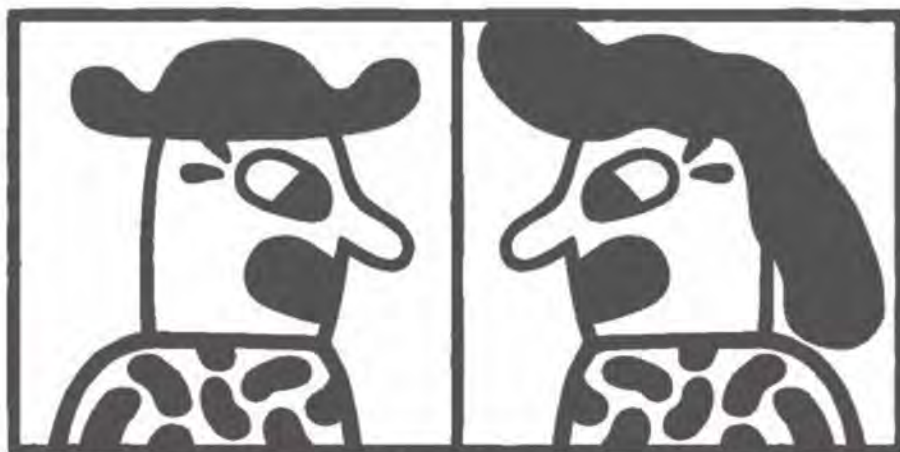
**SWEENEY: Religion plays a major theme in lost abbey beers, but how do you pick the artwork. Is it a collaborative decision? What is your favorite label and why?**

ARTHUR: The artwork is one of the three story telling components for The Lost Abbey brands. We have highly evocative images, vibrant back stories on the labels and of course the liquid in the bottle. If we have achieved our goal, all three of these will work in concerted harmony to deliver a great story. The artwork is the most collaborative of the three components as it involves our artist (Sean Dominguez) me acting as art director (framing the story) and marketing ensuring the story resonates and aligns with the beer name. It's one of my favorite processes that we employ at the brewery. I think in the 13 plus years we have been open, we have worked through over 60 unique pieces of art.

**SWEENEY: After traveling all over the world to different breweries, has there been a specific trip or location you learned the most from and/or were most impressed with?**

ARTHUR: You and I were lucky enough to travel together to Austria and Germany. I learned it's frigging cold in the dead of winter over there! But seriously on that trip we got to experience a brand new Trappist Brewery in Austria. That didn't suck as the Head Brewer announced he'd been at The Lost Abbey the week before. On that same trip we got to soak in a stein beer tradition with hot iron poker being quelled in our drinking glasses (can you say smokey)! And lastly we drank tons of Keller Pils in the bier halls of Munich. Perhaps you're surprised I didn't mention a trip to Belgium? Those have been off the charts unworldly as well. But what happens in Brussels stays in Brussels. You can look it up. It's a thing.

(SINNERS & SAINTS continued on page 17)



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## **Barbara's at the Brewery**

620 Moulton Ave #110, Los Angeles  
barbarasatthebrewery.com

## **Beachwood Brewing**

7631 Woodwind Dr, Huntington Beach  
beachwoodbbq.com

## **Beachwood BBQ & Brewing**

210 E 3rd St, Long Beach  
beachwoodbbq.com

## **Beachwood Blendery**

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

## **Bravery Brewing Company**

42705 8th St W, Lancaster  
braverybrewing.com

## **Brew Kitchen Ale House**

10708 Los Alamitos Blvd, Los Alamitos  
brewkitchenalehouse.com

## **Brewheim**

1931 E Wright Cir, Anaheim  
brewheim.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  
commonsapce.la

## **El Segundo Brewing**

140 Main St, El Segundo  
elsegundobrewing.com

## **ESBC The Slice & Pint**

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elsegundobrewing.com

## **Farmers Market Bar 326**

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fmbars.com

## **Firestone Walker - The Propagator**

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firestonebeer.com

## **Haven Craft Kitchen + Bar**

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## **HopSaint Brewing Company**

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hopsaint.com

## **Ironfire Brewing Co.**

42095 Zevo Dr Suite #1, Temecula  
ironfirebrewing.com

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3408 Via Oporto #103, Newport Beach  
lidobottleworks.com

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macleodale.com

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## **Zymurgy Brew Works & Tasting Room**

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Photo Courtesy of Lost Abbey

(SINNERS & SAINTS continued)

**SWEENEY:** *How does being a father and husband play into your career in beer, and have things changed as your daughters get older?*

**ARTHUR:** As the dad to two great daughters (Sydney and Lexi), I have an enormous responsibility to be present in their lives even though the brewery consumes a disproportionate amount of my time. I have been lucky enough to be home for every birthday and major milestone so far. Although this can mean crazy red eye style travels, in the end, it's always worth it. When I first started this career, I didn't have a wife or kids so free time was far more prevalent and longer days surfing after work, much more plentiful.

**SWEENEY:** *In the current climate, where do you see the future of craft beer? Can the market sustain the number of breweries now, or is this the new normal?*

**ARTHUR:** The number of breweries is quite staggering. When you consider where we came from. That being said, lots of them are very small in their makeup and I think as long as they understand their place and scale in this volatile market, they will be fine. If I were to open a brewery today, I would have a much different perspective on size and reach with respect to operations and real estate foot print. Competition is everywhere and while that usually is a good thing, consumers have a very short attention span and what have you done for me lately is a challenging churn we are currently swimming in.

**SWEENEY:** *What brewing trends/style are you excited about? And what trends/styles do you think need to go away?*

**ARTHUR:** I'm always excited by new things that move the proverbial needle. Anytime I see a brewer taking a calculated risk that rewards the consumer in new and exciting ways, I nod appreciatively. I've been a little bit flustered by the extreme sameness that the industry is gravitating towards. I think it's

problematic for all three tiers of the beer universe and, ultimately, we need to break that cycle (just don't ask me to prognosticate when or how that will occur).

**SWEENEY:** *Throughout our European travels and kebab tasting, what was in your experience, the best kebab spot and why? What factors are in this decision?*

**ARTHUR:** I have searched high and low and, as of today, I am sticking to my guns. The Sultans of Kebap on Rue Auguste Orts just behind the Grand Place in Brussels gets my vote (and Euros).

It's likely a combination of perfectly cooked chicken and knowing I can stumble to my hotel from there.

**SWEENEY:** *When you are not dealing with beer or kebab hunting, what do you do to keep yourself busy?*

**ARTHUR:** The bulk of my free time is spent close to home. That being said, I have been prepping for the 2019 Belgian Waffle Ride (which features the start and finish of the ride taking place at The Lost Abbey). Occasionally I get to swim which I love because no one can bother me in the pool and my iPhone is worthless there. But as you can imagine, having a family, a business and all the responsibilities that come with both are a large commitment in many ways so not too much free time.

**SWEENEY:** *What one word best describes you?*

**ARTHUR:** After 23 years of being a brewer, I'm not retiring anytime soon. So, my one word would be motivated.

*Ryan Sweeney is one of the pioneers of the craft beer revolution in Los Angeles. He owns Verdugo Bar, Surly Goat, Blind Donkey and Dirty Monkey among other world class bars. He was LA's first-ever certified Cicerone. He enjoys craft Pilsners, late night kebabs, and obsessing over fruit trees.*



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## WISHFUL DRINKING

## GOT WEIRD BEER?

CANARCHY CUP COMPETITION WANTS YOUR OFFBEAT HOMEBREW  
by TOMM CARROLL

There are plenty of craft breweries that help to sponsor already existing official homebrew competitions and also create a commercial version of the winning beer to enter into the Pro-Am competition every year at the Great American Beer Festival in Denver.

What's much less common is for a brewery to launch its own Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP)-sanctioned contest for homebrewers, with the express intent of scaling up the recipe of the Best of Show champion to brew on its commercial system (with the assistance of the winning homebrewer), and packaging, releasing and distributing the beer, as well as entering it into the GABF Pro-Am and other beer contests.

But that's exactly what Three Weavers Brewing Company is doing. The popular four-and-a-half-year-old Inglewood-based brewery and taproom amply demonstrated its motto ("It's more than beer, it's community") by announcing — on April 11, the final day of the annual Craft Brewers Conference, held this year in Denver — the first-ever CANarchy Cup Competition.

Named for the Fireman Capital Partners-funded brewery collective that Three Weavers became a part of last year, the CANarchy Cup is accepting entries from American Homebrew Association (AHA) members only, delivered to the Inglewood brewery by Saturday, June 15. Judging will take place at the



Three Weavers owners Lynne Weaver, left, and Alexandra Nowell

Photo Courtesy of Three Weavers

brewery on Saturday, June 22 and the winning categories, including Best of Show, will be announced Sunday, June 23 during Three Weavers' 2nd annual Brewmo Sumo Pseudo Showdown, the closing day of the 10th annual LA Beer Week. The BoS winner will also receive a one-time royalty of \$333.

"I'm really excited about this competition," Three Weavers co-owner and brewmaster Alexandra Nowell tells *Beer Paper*. "It's something that Lynne [Weaver, co-owner] has wanted to do for a long time. And finally, we said, 'Let's do it.'"

"Our goal really is to engage a little bit of my background, where I started," explains Weaver, who was a longtime member of the Woodland Hills-based Maltose Falcons, the country's oldest homebrew club, before founding Three Weavers. "Also, there are not very many opportunities for folks to brew on a large [30bbl] system, and it's worthwhile."

Nowell agrees, adding, "There really isn't any sort of homebrew-focused event for LA Beer Week and this helps involve beer drinkers and enthusiasts — and most homebrewers are super-enthusiastic about what they're doing. It just ties things together a little bit more."

But it wouldn't be a Three Weavers event without a clever little twist. Instead of being open to all 34 BJCP-recognized beer styles, the CANarchy Cup is limited to entries in only five style categories (and particular subcategories thereof) — and they are rather unconventional ones:

- 23. European Sour Ale Beer (subcategory A: Berliner Weisse)

- 27. Historical Beer (subcategory A: Gose)
- 29. Fruit Beer (subcategories A: Fruit, B: Fruit and Spice, C: Fruit and Additional Ingredients)
- 31. Alternative Fermentables Beer (subcategories A: Alternative Grain, B: Alternative Sugar)
- 34. Specialty Beer (subcategory C: Experimental)

"Honestly, it's a good excuse to get weird," Nowell responds with a laugh when queried about the categories. "Homebrewers can get super-innovative and think of ideas that really don't work on a commercial scale. And obviously, if something is so outlandish that it doesn't scale commercially, that's part of my job — working with the homebrewer to make it something that can be scaled up."

The brewmaster admits that she wants the entries to be intentionally offbeat. "I chose some pretty obscure — though not real obscure — categories, but they leave a lot of room for creativity on the part of the homebrewer," she maintains. "I picked

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Lynne Weaver (front row, center left) and Alexandra Nowell (center right) with the Three Weavers team at the Inglewood taproom Photo Courtesy of Three Weavers

these styles based on what I want to enter; it's the Pro-Am category, where I think we could get more success."

Regarding the Experimental beers, she comments, "That catch-all category is a lot of fun to judge. There are things in those beers that you'd never think of... I remember judging that category at GABF. You get that description of what the brewer intended, and you think, 'I don't know...' Then you try it, and go, 'Wow, I was really caught off-guard, and pleasantly surprised.' I'm really hoping we get those kind of beers entered."

As the winning beer will be entered into this year's GABF (October 3-5), for which the submission deadline

is in August, it will be commercially brewed and released with a launch party at the brewery's taproom this summer. "And if it wins the Pro-Am, we'll brew it again and have another party!" Nowell enthuses.

The CANarchy Cup competition is intended to be an annual event, with the judging and the announcement of the winners at the Sumo Showdown anchoring the final weekend of LA Beer Week each year. But will the accepted style categories change for future contests? "I think so," Nowell posits. "Although there may be some repeats next year."

For more information, and to register for the CANarchy Cup Competition, please visit [www.threeweavers.la/canarchy-cup-competition](http://www.threeweavers.la/canarchy-cup-competition).

Award-winning beer writer Tomm Carroll, a longtime contributor to *Celebrator Beer News*, was shortlisted for a British Guild of Beer Writers Award in 2018. He feels fortunate that Three Weavers is his local brewery, less than two miles from home. Contact him at [beerscribe@earthlink.net](mailto:beerscribe@earthlink.net).



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## YAEGER SHOTS

# COOLSHIP, BRO

by BRIAN YAEGER

If you've never seen a coolship, and even most diehard beer geeks haven't, it's less exhilarating to look at when empty than the name implies. Instead of being some cool-looking ship, it's an overgrown baking pan. The name, derived from the Flemish koelschip, is essentially that super huge pan but instead of being used to make brownies, it makes Lambics. Well, in Belgium's Senne Valley and nearby it makes Lambics; when utilized in America they make lambic-style ales.

The coolship is filled with hot wort and its shallow depth and large surface area allows it to cool quicker. Then, rather than pitching domesticated yeasts, the liquid is in this large, open tray doesn't just dare but encourages microorganisms wafting through the atmosphere to come in and make themselves comfortable, which they do once the wort cools down in the (hopefully chilly) night air. Then and

only then can the airborne yeasts and bacteria survive in this primordial ooze and spontaneously ferment it into beer.

Despite the popularity and demand for outstanding wild ales, few of these coolships exist in the US. Now, joining the ranks of Allagash (the first stateside), Jester King, and Russian River, Firestone Walker Barrelworks has one. And master blender Jim Crooks is darn tootin' excited about it.

Obviously, this doesn't mean it's Barrelworks' first sour rodeo. Crooks and company had been making sour beers at the brewery in Paso Robles long before they opened Barrelworks in Buellton in 2013. There's a fear when a brewery has a "clean" side and a "wild" side that the critters in the sour ales will get into the clean ones and infect all that beer. Having Barrelworks nearly 100 miles south alleviated that concern.



Jim Crooks, David Walker & Beau Sorensen with the coolship  
Photo Credit: Colin Nearman





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What started with over 50 barrels grew to more than 1,800—mostly used wine casks made of French oak, which isn't to say American and even Hungarian oak isn't represented, as well as emptied spirits barrels and all manner of vessels from foeders to puncheons—but this coolship represents the next step of maturity, if not growth. A total of 16 barrels worth of wort, over two batches, have basked in Buellton's cool, night air this season.

Crooks had been lobbying for a coolship “almost from the beginning,” he says. “It's what drew me to mixed fermentation.” He cites the classics—Cantillon, Drie Fonteinen, Rodenbach—as his inspirations. But like a Lambic itself, the project could not be rushed. And one of the main logistical keys to pulling it off was the opening of Firestone Walker's Propagator brewpub in Venice. “Prior to Venice, we didn't have anything to pull off hot wort,” says Crooks. Unsurprisingly, Evan Partridge, the Propagator's “Research & Development Brewer,” was down for the cause. Now they just needed somewhere to put the dang thing.

It was at this point that co-founder David Walker fortuitously spoke up about a barn he planned on raising on his property—one designed for hosting events rather than his horses. This took place in 2017. The following January, Crooks and Partridge had designed the recipe using a turbid mash that would become Coolship One, Batch 1 (this is the brewing company, after all, that brought us Feral One). All they needed now was a brusque 40-degree night. From the biting-off-too-much-to-chew department, Lambics are said to require this temperature to optimize wort cooling as well as to give the

bacteria a healthy environment. Climate change is said to be imperiling global Lambic production since the traditional winter and spring months are yielding fewer 40-degree temps. For Barrelworks' part, time will tell what becomes of Batch 1 and Batch 2 and if they'll be destined for a gueuze-like blend or any level of drinkability at all.

“Best case scenario, the first release will be three years from now,” says Crooks. “I'd love to do a traditional Lambic blending of one, two, and three year gueuze.”

Asked if any of the liquid is destined for fruited Lambic-style beers, in the vein of a traditional krik a la Coolship Krieky Bones, Crooks demures. “I prefer unfruited over fruited.” He points to the continuing and improving success of Feral One, which is presently a blend of barrels from the last four years. “They have more depth as the project evolves. Because the bacterial essence of certain barrels have more depth, that beer is a quintessential blend for us. In my brain there's an imprint of Belgian gueuze and I'm not saying that Feral One is that, but it's my interpretation of it.” Those who've imbibed it are unlikely to disagree.

But again, this is all a best-case scenario. Crooks is renowned for his sour beers in which he attempts to control all aspects of a style or technique of brewing that is marked by its “uncontrollableness.”

Crooks explains, “There's no real assurance in terms of what might happen in the next year, let alone the next three years. It's a primal experiment with more uncontrolled variables than coordinated ones. I'm fine with it. If we're not happy with



Coolship One, Batch 1 in the making

Photo Credit: Colin Nearman

the results, there's nothing on anyone's production schedule for this beer. No guarantee that it becomes something. If it happens with the first couple of batches, I'll be ecstatic. But the point is to continually learn from what we've done. I try to stay a learner and stay a child.” For “Sour Jim,” this new coolship is akin to his own personal STEM lab (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). What's more, we all stand to benefit from

these experiments. But only circa 2022, if all goes according to nature's plan.

*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, where he's teaching UCSB's first beer-tasting class.*



Firestone Walker Barrelworks

Photo Credit: Colin Nearman

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**FOOD PAIRINGS**

# HEATING THE GRILL AND COOLING DOWN WITH LA CRAFT BEER

by **TREVOR HAGSTROM & MAGGIE ROSENBERG**

Beer and BBQ go together like chops and applesauce. Salty, smoky meat is ideal with beer. It's harder to mess this one up than it is to get it right. Most any beer you try will mellow the salt and smoke of BBQ. Primarily, we think that BBQ, being such a strong flavor, either requires a strongly flavored beer or beer that you don't mind playing a background role.

Spicy accents get kind of lost under the weight of BBQ, so Belgian styles and Hefeweizen aren't our first choice. Dark beers are popular with BBQ because the astringency in roasted malt helps cut through the fat on the meat. The chocolate flavors of dark ales complement the charred ends of the meat. Barrel-aged stouts are appropriate for gatherings and special occasions this summer. Lager is great with BBQ suited towards cuts that

are lower on smoke and fat, like tri-tip. Hopy beers are great to balance sweeter, saucier BBQ, like a heavily dressed pulled pork or Kansas City style ribs, but only if they're full-bodied and malty enough. Double IPA is better than session IPA for this. Smoked beers can be great with bbq, but we don't like very smoky beer with very smoky meat. Unless you have a pack-a-day palate, the result match can be overwhelming. Scotch-style ales are just the right amount of smoke for most BBQ.

The most common style of grilled BBQ that you see around the United States is inspired by the Kansas City tradition of smoking ribs and finishing them with a thick molasses sauce. This is the style most practiced by home cooks and BBQ places that don't have a specific specialty. Our all-time



Jocko's Pit

Photo Credit: Maggie Rosenberg

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favorite style of beer to match with Kansas City style BBQ is Schwarzbier, or black lager, which combines the dark roast of a stout with the refreshing qualities of a lighter-lager. The Night Hawk Black Lager from Enegren Brewing Company in Moorpark is a fine choice.

The dominant BBQ style in the Los Angeles area is Texas style. This BBQ is smoky, salty and more beef-based than other American styles. In Los Angeles, many focus on brisket and beef ribs such as Horse Thief in the Grand Central Market, Bludso's BBQ, and Dr. Hogly Wogly's Tyler Texas BBQ. Being the strongest wood flavor, Texas-style requires a beer without smoke or aggressive bitterness. We like something light with a delicate fruitiness. Saturday is BBQ day at Hop Saint Brewing Company, and their brisket is excellent with their award-winning "Kolsch Enough."

North and South Carolina feature a diversity of BBQ styles and sauces, ranging from tangy to thick mustard-based to the more famous Eastern Carolina variation which features a mild smoked and then chopped (not pulled) pork, which is then paired with a vinegar-based slaw. Sauces with more vinegar and pork with chopped cracklins fits best with a soft malty brew.

Given our position on the Pacific, Southern California features a wealth of Asian-influenced BBQ styles, such as Hawaiian and Korean (which purists will tell you isn't really barbecue, because it isn't smoked, merely grilled). For a Kalua pig plate lunch, take your styrofoam container to the nearest Hazy IPA. Our favorite Hawaiian BBQ is Matiki Island BBQ in Anaheim. Korean BBQ feasts are usually downed with characterless feather-weight lager. Sura Korean BBQ and Tofu House in Long Beach is one of the few Korean BBQ places that offers a selection of local craft beer.

California's native BBQ comes in the form of tri-tip and rib-eye steaks cooked over oak logs. This Santa-Maria style is beloved by at-home grill-masters statewide. Tri-tip works well with milder West Coast styles like American Pale Ale or a slightly hoppy Golden or Amber Ale. For our home-cooked tri-tip, Strand's 24th St. Pale Ale is a great choice because it has a higher alcohol and more malt-forward balance

than most APAs. These qualities allow it to stand up to BBQ. The Resolution American Red IPA from Santa Maria Brewing Co. is a bold match brewed right in tri-tip town if you're up there for the real deal. Our favorite tri-tip in California is at one of the oldest restaurants in the state, the Cold Springs Tavern on the San Marcos Pass. Their beer selection is stellar.

When in doubt there's always Beachwood BBQ and Brewing in Long Beach. A dedicated smokehouse and celebrated brewery all in one. It is the best place to experiment with all sorts of combinations of freshly brewed beer and house-smoked meats. Our favorite BBQ match here is smoked chicken with their piney Melrose IPA. The original location is in Seal Beach.

Summer is upon us and so are many opportunities to celebrate the glorious match of charred meat and beer in the coming months. This month is the Los Angeles Times Food Bowl, which has a BBQ Night on May 12th. Next month ride into Norco on June 1st for the Horse Town Brew n' Cue Festival. August will see the Long Beach BBQ Festival return to Rainbow Lagoon Park on the weekend of May 16th.

BBQ still always tastes best when you make it. Whatever beer you decide to pair your BBQ with, make sure to stock some cold cans of easy drinking lager to entertain the pitmaster, like Firestone Walker Brewing Co's Lager or Eagle Rock Brewery's AM Wolf Pilsner. Toiling over smoke makes you thirsty, and having beer around keeps them from fidgeting with the meat too much while it's infusing with smoke. The unofficial kick-off to BBQ season happens on Memorial Day Weekend. We don't see any reason to wait. The best time to smoke some meat is whenever the weather is nice and wherever there's a sale on ribs.

*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).*



**Maitiki Island BBQ Beef Rib**  
Photo Credit: Maggie Rosenberg

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