

# CRAFT BEER GUIDE



# The Perfect Pour

If you drink craft beer straight from the bottle, you can only appreciate a part of the experience. This specially brewed beer is meant to be enjoyed from suitable glassware.

Learning how to achieve the perfect pour will enhance the flavors and scents that brewers intended.

## WHY POUR?

A craft beer is much more enjoyable once its enigma (or “head”) is present. This tasty part of a drink is made up of proteins and hops residue that is carried to the top of a drink thanks to carbonation. This is where you will find the delicious aromas and flavors that set craft beers apart.

Without a proper pouring technique, it is difficult to achieve these results you desire. You might end up with a beer that tastes flat and leaves you feeling unimpressed.

Don't judge a drink too harshly before you take a taste after a perfect pour. The difference is incredible and will open your eyes to a whole new way to enjoy craft beer.

## GLASSWARE

The Brewer's Association recommends comparing the effect of glassware by pouring beers into different shaped glasses. Take note of whether you see any difference in aroma and flavor. You'll find the proper glass that enhances the

beer after just a few tries.

Even the perfect glass can make an incredible beer taste foul if it isn't “beer clean.” According to the Brewer's Association, a beer clean glass is one that:

“Forms a proper foam head, allows lacing during consumption and never shows patches of bubbles stuck to the side of the glass in the liquid beer.”

That's easy, right? You wouldn't eat from a dirty plate, so why attempt to drink out of a less-than-clean glass?

## THE POUR

There are different techniques depending on a pour from a tap, can or bottle.

Here is how the Brewer's Association recommends perfection from a bottle:

1. Lift the glass at a 45-degree angle and begin pouring.
2. The beer should slide down the side of the glass until about three-quarters of an inch full
3. For the remaining contents, pour straight into the center of the glass.
4. You should have about 1 inch of foam.

Now you can enjoy craft beer the way it was intended.





# IPA Breakdown

Craft beer expires, but not in the same way as other liquids, such as milk, expire.

Chances are, you won't crack a bottle open to be met with an overwhelming odor or disgusting lumps. Instead, the flavors and aromas will diminish and you will be left with a less-than-intriguing experience.

If you are at all familiar with craft beer, you might have heard the term IPA. Do you

know what it means? It's an acronym for India Pale Ale, and it has evolved into one of the most popular hopped-beer styles.

## IPA FRESHNESS

According to the experts at [vinepair.com](http://vinepair.com), IPA is often divided into two geographic categories: East Coast and West Coast. Eastern IPA is commonly brewed to create a balanced taste with stronger malt components. On the other side of the spectrum, Western IPA is considered aggressively hoppy and showcases a powerfully bitter pro-

file.

Regardless of which IPA you prefer, it will slowly begin losing its freshness as soon as it leaves the brewery. Experts state that you get the most flavor out of a craft beer by consuming it within three weeks from the date of production.

However, a lot of the freshness will remain for around three months, and an IPA usually will retain most of its flavor for this amount of time.

## WHY CRAFT BEER EXPIRES

A main component of what makes an IPA so delicious are

hops. They add bitterness, flavor and the aroma that we know and love. Hops also are the main reason IPA has such a limited shelf life.

As bottles are exposed to time, light, heat and oxygen, the hops inside begin losing their flavor-enhancing ability. Once their rich flavor begins fading, the beer is on its way out of commission.

Don't be afraid to ask the experts at your local craft-beer store about the freshness of their inventory.

## PRODUCTION DATE

According to the United

States Food & Drug Administration, the events of Sept. 11, 2001 reinforced the need to enhance the security of the US. This brought on the Bioterrorism Act which was signed into law in 2002.

What the law means for brewers is that they are required to make each batch of beer traceable. One way this is achieved is by stamping a unique code or lot number on their products. With a little research, you might be able to decode a brewer's code, which can help you find the actual production date right from the store.

# Tour a Craft Brewery

Whether you are looking for a jumping off point into everything craft beer or are a veteran looking to learn more, touring a brewery is a beneficial experience. Seeing how your favorite beers are actually brewed can pique your interest and help you appreciate their amazing flavors.

According to the Brewer's Association, there are more breweries operating now than at any time since the 1870s. This means if you live in or around a sizable city, you are probably close to a craft-beer brewery. They can be easily located by a quick online search or by talking to locals.

Do yourself a favor and book a tour today.

## A NEW HOBBY

When you see a brewer passionately explain his brewing process, don't be surprised if you feel an urge to try it yourself. The American Homebrewers Association states that there are already more than 1.2 million people who brew their own beer at home in the United States.

Homebrewing safely can require a bit of an investment. However, once you have the proper equipment, ingredients and other costs can be rather inexpensive. Learn from the pros and tweak their recipes to obtain your own brand of brew to impress your friends and family.

## LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Most brewery tours offer a fun and educational experience to immerse their guests in the craft-beer community. Learning the history and roots of your local breweries is an



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interesting and rewarding experience.

Another benefit to taking a tour is being exposed to like-minded people who share the same interests. Networking

can open your eyes to a whole new perspective on the craft-beer community. You can even build relationships with these peers to bounce ideas off each other and share advice about

brewing.

## SUPPORT LOCAL BREWERIES

A lot of brewery tours are free. Brewers know impressing

their consumers with their story and brewing process will provide exposure and help their brand. Even if a tour is free, consider donating to help a local brewery keep brewing.

# Giving Back

Craft breweries know the competition is stiff and they need to make an impression on a community to succeed. One way they are doing this is by giving back to those who need help.

Take a look at some charitable breweries that are changing lives while crafting their delicious beers for us to enjoy.

These incredible breweries are just a handful covered by the All About Beer Magazine in 2016.

## **STONE'S THROW Little Rock, Ark.**

Since its opening in 2013, Stone's Throw has been an awesome partner for the community of Little Rock. Thanks to its #HOPSandHOPE campaign, local charities have

received \$1 from every pint sold on Tuesdays. This charitable program has benefited epilepsy patients, a community garden and an LGBTQ youth support group.

Stone's Throw even hosts an annual block party called Block on the Rock to help raise funds for the Preserve Arkansas program.

## **14TH STAR Saint Albans, Vt.**

During his tour in Afghanistan in 2010, founder Steve Gagner came up with the business plan for 14th Star Brewing Co. People travel to experience a popular house brand known as Valor, and a portion of each sale goes to the Purple Hearts Reunited fund.

This foundation reunites missing medals with their soldiers or families. On top of that, 14th Star has donated nearly \$130,000 to the Vermont National Guard Charitable Foundation, Veterans Count and the Josh Pallotta Fund.

## **CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE Ashland, Va.**

Former major-league pitcher Chris Ray began home-brewing while playing for the Baltimore Orioles. His mission statement was opening a brewery that tied into baseball, the military and beer. Is there a more American trifecta?

He succeeded by creating a popular IPA called Homefront. This special craft beer is infused with orange zest and is aged with the wood of real Louisville Sluggers.

Any guess on what happens to the bats when they are done creating this unique IPA? These beer-stained baseball bats are then auctioned off to raise money for Operation Homefront, which assists military troops and their families.

If you happen to live near or ever find yourself at one of these breweries, be sure to stop in and thank them for all they do.

# Defining Craft Brewers

Craft brewers rely on innovation to make their beers stand apart. Due to the unique tastes, enthusiasts can sometimes determine a brand by taste alone. In order to make it in the craft beer industry, brewers must add innovative twists and develop new brewing styles that differentiate them from a crowded marketplace.

The Brewer's Association defines an American craft brewer as small, independent and traditional. Here is a breakdown of the criteria used to determine a brewer's status.

## SMALL

A brewer is considered small when it annually produces 6 million or less barrels. That's about 3 percent of America's annual sales. Production must also be attributed to the rules of alteration proprietorships.

## INDEPENDENT

Craft breweries are independent because their owners or decision-makers are themselves, craft brewers. Independent brewers are typically in charge of less than 25 percent of their respective craft breweries.

## TRADITIONAL

American brewers have most of their total alcohol volume in beers that feature flavors derived from traditional or innovative brewing ingredients and fermentation processes. While they may have malt beverages in their inventory, the majority must be classified as beer.

## WHAT ELSE MAKES A CRAFT BREWER?

Here are even more facts



Most Americans live within 10 miles of a craft brewer.

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from the Brewer's Association related to craft-beer brewers and their enthusiasts:

- Craft brewers maintain integrity by what they brew and their general independence, free from substantial

interest by a non-craft brewer.

- Most Americans live within 10 miles of a craft brewer.
- Craft beer is generally made with traditional ingredients including malted barley. Brewers take chances by add-

ing traditional and non-traditional ingredients to add a uniqueness that certain flavors may become known for.

- Craft brewers are usually involved in their communities through philanthropy, product

donations, volunteering and sponsoring local events.

- Brewers have their own ways of going about connecting with their customers that don't require big-budget commercial allowances.

# Millennials and Craft Beer

Generation Y is classified as those who were born in the 1980s through the early 2000s. Another way to refer to this group is millennials. With the quick advancements in technology, this group has a new way of supporting the products they believe in.

Advertisements are much different today than they were decades ago. This is due to companies taking a new approach to reach their target audiences. Craft beer brewers understand what it takes to draw attention from this crowd that is not easily impressed.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

The Brewer's Association reports that millennials are more apt to support a company that uses social media. That shouldn't be a surprise as the Pew Research Center discovered that 79 percent of internet users have a Facebook account.

Craft beer brewers who advertise their latest products on social media can easily build a relationship with millennials who follow them on their accounts. The Brewer's Association also reports that 62 percent of millennials who have been engaged with a company on social media are more likely to become loyal customers.

## VALUE OVER COST

The American economy is slowly rebuilding, which means lower unemployment rates and more disposable income. Millennials are taking advantage of larger salaries by getting behind companies they appreciate rather than sacrificing value.

When choosing the perfect



craft beer, the two factors millennials focus on are flavor and freshness.

## MAKING MEMORIES

Millennials are choosing experiences over physical goods, and that reflects their craft-beer consumption.

Rather than buying strictly on advertising, they find value in the experiences they co-create with the brand.

They also are enthusiasts of pairing the beer they drink with the foods they dine on. In fact, according to a recent Nielsen study, 61 percent of

females ages 21 to 34 drink craft beer with food more now than they did the last few years.

## TAKING ADVENTURES

The same Nielsen study showed that 69 percent of millennials consider themselves adventurous. This makes them

loyal to brands that offer them a unique experience.

It was discovered that 15 percent of millennials try up to 10 different brands of craft beer per month. That is driving brewers to create new and exciting products to maintain an interest in their beers.



# Top 20 Craft Breweries

The results for the Brewer's Association Top Breweries of 2016 are in. Brewers anticipate this list each year and hope to find their name gracing one of the top spots.

To land a coveted spot on this list, breweries were judged on their beer sales volume.

The Brewer's Association is excited to announce that of the top 50 brewing companies, 40 were craft brewers.

You can view the full list at [www.brewersassociation.org](http://www.brewersassociation.org). Here are the top 20.

## TOP 20 U.S. CRAFT BREWING COMPANIES

- **D.G. Yuengling & Son, Inc** — Pottsville, Pa.
- **Boston Beer Co.** — Boston
- **Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.** — Chico, Calif.
- **New Belgium Brewing Co.** — Fort Collins, Colo.
- **Gambrinus** — San Antonio, Texas
- **Duvel Moortgat** — Cooperstown, N.Y.
- **Bell's Brewery, Inc.** — Comstock, Mich.
- **Deschutes Brewery, Inc.** — Bend, Ore.
- **Stone Brewing Co.** — Escondido, Calif.
- **Oskar Blues Brewing Holding Co.** — Longmont, Colo.
- **Brooklyn Brewery** — Brooklyn, N.Y.
- **Minhas Craft Brewery** — Monroe, Wisc.
- **Artisanal Brewing Ventures** — Downingtown, Pa.
- **Dogfish Head Craft Brewery** — Milton, Del.
- **SweetWater Brewing Co.** — Atlanta, Ga.
- **New Glarus Brewing Co.** — New Glarus, Wisc.
- **Matt Brewing Co.** — Utica, N.Y.
- **Harpoon Brewery** — Boston
- **Alaskan Brewing** — Jeneau, Ak.
- **Abita Brewing Co.** — Abita Springs, La.