



CRAFT

BEEER

GUIDE

Craft Beer Basics

The craft beer industry is brewing to heights of unprecedented popularity and is harder than ever to pigeonhole.

Craft connoisseurs use many terms to describe their favorite brews – specialty, artisan, gourmet, boutique and microbrew to name a few.

But no matter what you call it, craft beer's definition is based in how it is prepared.

Small, independent breweries are popping up across the country to meet the demand of a thirsty target audience. According to the Brewers Association, more than 400 breweries opened in 2012.

That number is expected to continue to rise in the future as craft beer fans flock to local liquor stores, festivals and wineries to find their favorite varieties.

INGREDIENTS

Craft beer makers take pride in their ability to mix simple ingredients into complex concoctions. They use a wide variety of ingredients to achieve their desired color, aroma, bitterness and finish.

Traditional beer ingredients such as yeast, water, malt and hops are being infused with new, diverse additions to change beer drinking as we know it.

This unique approach to brewing is what helps the craft beer industry carve out new niches of buyers and appreciators.

SIT BACK AND RELAX

Craft beers are not meant to be chugged.

Often packing a higher alcohol content than its lighter-fared competition, craft varieties are the perfect

complement for a laid-back evening of enjoying a sporting event or visiting with acquaintances.

From dark and bold to pale and citric-based, there is a craft beer for every taste.

PERSONALITY

What the craft beer industry lacks

in multimillion-dollar marketing budgets or famous celebrity spokespeople, it makes up for in the underdog, us-against-the-world mentalities.

Craft beer brewers will give you 100 reasons why their product is better than the mass-produced variety churned out by established power-

houses.

Their product packaging is unique, with bright colors, detailed ingredient lists and instructions on how to best enjoy them.

Infusing a little personality into their marketing plans is a big factor in craft beer makers' ability to win over audiences.



Craft Means Local

Besides their deliciousness, craft beers are drawing new customers every day because of the industry's reliance on local business owners.

Craft beer makers are, by definition, local and small. They produce relatively small batches of beer and are focused on exceeding customer expectations with every ounce.

That's because word of mouth is often the most important factor deciding the success or failure of a small, family-owned operation.

And with most small breweries falling under this category, you can expect to find knowledgeable, responsive professionals to help you along your craft beer journey.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

More money spent on local products means more money pumped into the local economy.

Local brewery owners often reinvest revenue into their schools and community projects. Surveys have found that small business owners are more likely than their chain or franchise counterparts to support local efforts, with both finances and time.

Buy your craft beer locally for a chance to win the ultimate prize – economic prosperity.

CAMARADERIE

Take a look inside your local brewpub or microbrewery. Within those walls are your neighbors, community partners and acquaintances trying to turn their entrepreneurial dreams into sustainable incomes for their families.

Much like any small business owner, they pour long hours and hard work into making a product for you to enjoy.

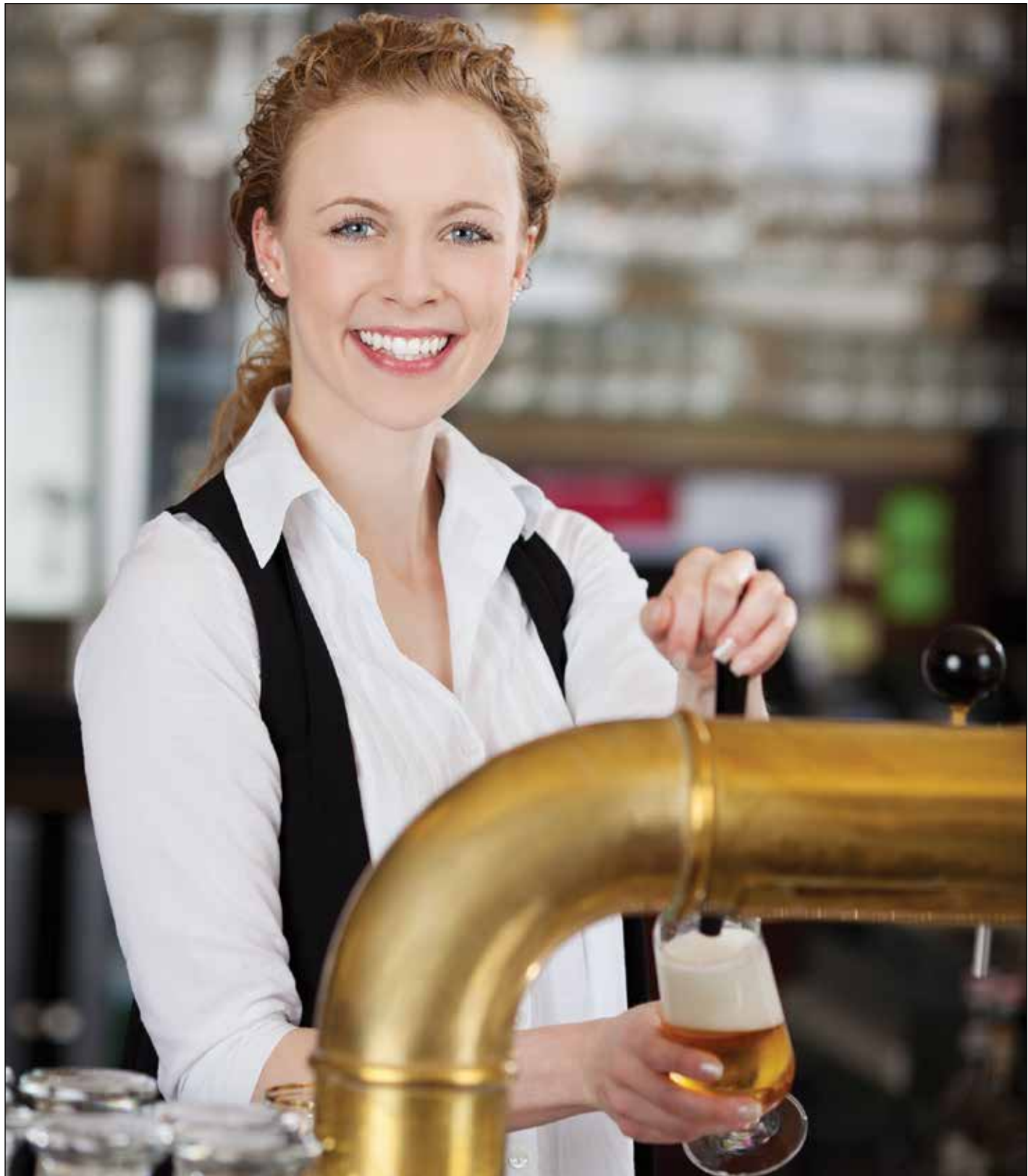
By supporting their efforts, you are helping them advance their goals, building quality local relationships and providing an economic boost to your area.

MAKE A STATEMENT

Staying local will help you in your quest to support your friends, family and neighbors.

And making a statement never tasted so good.

Local brewers stay on top of current consumer trends and flavor combinations to make sure they are on the cutting edge of an ever-changing industry. So the benefits are two-fold. You get to enjoy innovative local beer and they grow their business.



A Great Variety

Between the eclectic names and the varying colors, choosing a craft beer can be a tricky exercise.

There are light beers, dark beers and beers of every shade in between. There are smoke-flavored and wood-aged beers, as well as fruit beer and sour ales.

The most popular craft beers are described below, but feel free to reach out to your local vendors to find out more about their varieties. Brewers are known to experiment with seasonal offerings and local ingredients to set their beer apart from the competition.

INDIA PALE ALE

Brewed in a variety of ways, the color of an American IPA can range from pale golden to amber.

Generally bitter and high in citric content, IPAs offer a balance of brightness and bite. Their average content of alcohol content is higher than your standard beer.

LIGHT LAGER

Much lighter and very low in malt flavor, light lagers are brewed to satisfy the less adventurous beer drinker.

Brewers infuse high amounts of rice or corn to bring down the color. They are typically lower in alcohol content by volume, offering the perfect drink for casual drinking.

STOUTS

Stouts offer the exact opposite drinking experience than light lagers. Strong and meant to be enjoyed grad-



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ually, stouts are typically dark brown to pitch black and hard to see through when filling a glass.

The roasted barley used to create coffee or chocolate flavorings is the distinct ingredient in most stouts.

SEASONAL VARIETIES

From the fall to the spring, every season calls out creativity in local brewers. Pumpkins make their way into many craft beers in the fall months, while cherries and wheat

are integrated in the summer months.

Spring time is perfect for a honey beer and winter ales are generally made with higher alcohol contents to provide a warming kick.

Know Your Glasses

What's the difference between a snifter and a flute? No, this isn't the start to a bad joke. It's a legitimate question that you need to consider when deciding how to enjoy your favorite craft beer.

Different glasses yield different results, and when drinking beer, it's all about the results.

From traditional pints to specialty stemmed glasses, what you pour your craft beer into can have a major impact on the taste.

THE SNIFTER

Oddly shaped and best suited for strong beers, the snifter is a craft beer favorite. Its large round bottom curves into a narrow top to optimize beer flow and fluidity.

The short stem and cupped bottom make the snifter the perfect glass for serving brandy, which is how this glass is traditionally used. But it also serves as a fine home for your craft beer.

Turn your glass to about 30 degrees and start your pour down the inside of the narrow top, letting the beer swirl into the bottom. This helps release the rich flavor combinations of your favorite brew.

THE FLUTE

Comparable to, but a bit wider than

a champagne flute, the pilsner flute is a tall, slender glass most popular for the unique, ultra-tall view of beer that it conveys when full.

Fill it up and watch the bubbles take a long journey from the bottom to the top of this narrowly designed glassware.

Avoid pouring your craft beer directly to the center and instead take special care to use the tall sides and rotate the glass slightly as you pour.

THE HANDLED STEIN

If you've been to an Oktoberfest, you know that this glass and German beer make a great combination.

The dimpled sides and handy handle combine to provide a unique, convenient beer-drinking experience. Having a handle also helps reduce the amount of heat transferring from your hands that can quickly warm a beer.

The thickness of the stein's glass can withstand clinking and dropping, in most cases, while the wide mouth promotes effortless drinking.



Food and Beer Pairing

Many craft beer aficionados can rattle off not only their top five foamy favorites, but also the food that goes best with them.

It's no wonder so many craft beer makers open up shop inside restaurants and wineries. Drinking and eating go hand in hand – literally – and if paired correctly can make a good meal great.

If you're looking for a great spot on vacation to enjoy the perfect combination of craft beer and food, check in with the town's tourism board. Its members will be able to steer you in the right direction.

With many local brewers serving as proud sectors of the local economy, they should be easy to find and enjoy.

SALT AND ALE

Most sandwiches or beef you find in the restaurant will be salted, as will the chips or fries that go with it.

The perfect way to wash that sodium down is a medium-flavored IPA or American ale.

While a light lager won't fully cleanse your palette, a fuller body will work together with the food and your taste buds to enhance your dining pleasure.

GET SMOKEY

Not for everyone, smoked beer is a nearly perfect complement to any type of similarly smoked meat.

Whether you prefer barbecue, salmon or beef brisket from the smoker, the varying notes of barley and bitterness from a smoked beer provide quite a one-two punch.

GO SEASONAL WITH SEAFOOD

Summer is the perfect time to crack into a juicy lobster or bite into a plump shrimp. And with seasonal summer blondes or ales, you have the perfect partner to finish off a delicious seafood meal.

Staying light and seasonal instead of dark and overpowering will help your taste buds stay focused on the task at hand – enjoying that succulent feast.



Where to Find It

You've never tried craft beer? Don't worry, your secret is safe. Just be sure to be prepared for a mountain of options when trying to select your first venture into the craft beer world.

Local liquor stores and distributors will surely have an option or two for you to choose from, but why not go straight to the brewery?

One of the more unique aspects of the niche industry is that you can see it being produced from the hop to the glass – all while you're enjoying a juicy burger or steak.

MICROBREWERIES AND BREWPUBS

Catalyzed by the home breweries that helped turn a hobby into a tangible industry, microbreweries produce limited amounts of beer to the public in various methods. They are small operations focused on filling a specific segment of the population who demands its services.

Brewpubs are similar in scope but brew their beer for sale in their restaurant or bar.

Check in with your local craft brewers to schedule an intimate tour of their facilities. Most owners are usually willing to show off their stuff and give you a taste test in the process.

Grassroots community involvement is how small businesses of any kind – especially craft brewers – keep their doors open.



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FESTIVALS

Music, entertainment and beer have gone hand in hand for years, but craft brewers have found a customer demand for special festivals celebrating the industry's unique products.

Annual events are sprouting across the country and feature big-name artists, bands and performers.

There you can find your local brewers on site, vending their latest and greatest brews for all to enjoy.

WINERIES

Many wineries across the country are expanding from grapes to hops in an attempt to offer more variety to their customers.

While two very different production processes are

involved, wineries with the proper infrastructure can easily produce barrels of beer to diversify their services.

Their scenic environments and laid-back atmospheres serve as the perfect place to enjoy a full-flavored craft beer.

Craft Beer: By The Numbers



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As the craft beer movement continues to flow across the nation, the Brewers Association has tracked the numbers to prove it.

The organization is focused on promoting and protecting small and independent American brewers and their craft beers. The following numbers show that its efforts are working in attracting more craft beer fans to join its cause.

EMPLOYMENT

Craft brewers currently provide an estimated 108,440 jobs in the U.S.

GROWTH

Growth of the craft brewing industry in 2012 was 15 percent by volume and 17 percent by revenue.

VOLUME

Craft brewers sold an estimated 13.2 million barrels of beer in 2012, up from 11.4 million in 2011.

DOLLARS

Craft brewer retail dollar value in 2012 was an estimated \$10.2 billion, up from \$8.7 billion in 2011.

OPENINGS

The Brewers Association reported 409 brewery openings in 2012 (310 microbreweries and 99 brewpubs) and 43 brewery closings (18 microbreweries and 25 brewpubs).

INDUSTRY

A total of 2,347 craft breweries operated for some or all of 2012, comprised of 1,132 brewpubs, 1,118 microbreweries and 97 regional craft breweries.

SOURCE: Brewersassociation.org