



Inspiring Mountain Backdrop | Local Flavors | Collaborative Spirit

It is no secret that Asheville has grown into the eastern U.S. craft beer destination. The story began in 1994 when retired engineer Oscar Wong opened Highland Brewing Company, Asheville's first craft brewery. Wong's insistence on high-quality product made Highland a success and led to a new wave of local breweries - Green Man, Asheville Brewing, French Broad, Pisgah and more. Today, there are **44 breweries in the Asheville area** and that number is continually growing. National breweries Oskar Blues, Sierra Nevada and New Belgium have started East Coast operations here, boosting Asheville's reputation.

Beer City USA Backstory

Asheville's beer scene got a major boost in 2009 when noted brew writer Charlie Papazian conducted his first Beer City USA poll. Asheville tied with much bigger Portland, Ore., to share the title and went on to win or tie the poll the next three years. The poll was retired in 2014, but the city's craft beer scene was firmly established. The numbers tell the story - a 2018 *SmartAsset.com* story on "The Best Cities for Beer Drinkers" found that Asheville has the most breweries per 100,000 residents of any U.S. city.

Beer Scene News: New Breweries, Bierbrand + Luxury Beer Tour

NEW: ► **B&B Brews: 12 Bones Smokehouse** is opening a new restaurant and brewery in South Asheville, serving up barbecue-friendly brews and offering ample seating for the Obama-approved restaurant. ► **Wicked Weed Brewing** is offering an afternoon **chauffeured tour** including behind-the-scenes experiences at all four Asheville-area facilities, demonstrations of the brewing process, generous samples and tastings of rare batches poured straight from the barrels. ► **Beer & Cider Spirits:** New South Slope gin distillery **The Chemist** unveiled their **bierbrand collaboration with Burial Beer**. With origins in Germany and a relatively new concept in the U.S., this sprit-beer collaboration is unique in that the beer used is fully finished, it is made with corn in the mash bill and aged in former bourbon barrels. **COMING SOON:** ► **Forestry Camp:** Set in historic buildings that once housed young forestry workers of the Civilian Conservation Corps, **Burial Beer's Forestry Camp** will include a production brewery, taproom and restaurant. Brian Canipelli, James Beard-nominated chef and owner of Cucina 24, will oversee the restaurant. ► Two more breweries planned are **DSSØLVR**, from two former Burial Beer Co. brewers, and **CANarchy Collaboratory**, run by a group of independent brewers headlined by Oskar Blues and focusing on cutting-edge flavors and brewing methods.

Slip Over to the Slope

Once an auto-dealership zone, Asheville's South Slope district (on and off Coxe Ave.) is now filled with eight breweries: Green Man, Asheville Brewing, Hi-Wire, Burial Beer, Bhramari, Twin Leaf, Catawba and the Funkatorium, the first funky beer taproom on the East Coast. The famed Wicked Weed brewery, restaurant and taproom is just a few streets over on Biltmore Ave. This cluster of breweries provides a walkable beer experience, and if you get hungry, check out Buxton Hall Barbeque or grab something sweet at Vortex Doughnuts.

Asheville's Must-Try Beers

On any given day, hundreds of locally brewed beers are on tap around Asheville. Here are some suggestions:

- **Highland Brewing | Gaelic Ale** - the first craft brew made in Asheville.
- **Asheville Brewing | Shiva IPA** - enormously popular beer bursting with smooth hoppy flavor.
- **Wicked Weed | Black Angel Cherry Sour** - this puckery delight is loaded with tart cherry notes.
- **Wedge Brewing | Pilsner** - a smooth and golden Asheville favorite.
- **Greenman Brewing | IPA** - lots of hops and floral notes are the hallmarks of this English-style brew.

Surprising Pints

Expect the unexpected at local breweries with some flavorful ingredients. Some to look for:

- **Twin Leaf | Elevensies** - made with the Asheville Tea Company's Wild Earl tea and lavender bergamot flowers.
- **Sierra Nevada | Beer Camp Tropicuzu** - with Japanese grapefruit and pineapple.
- **Wicked Weed | Aicha Sour Ale** - fermented with green tea, toasted oolong tea and jasmine from local teahouse Dobra Tea.
- **Burial Beer | The Root of Our Addiction** - includes roasted dandelion root and roasted carob, and is bittered with mugwort.
- **Bhramari | Rise of the Spruce** - small batch IPA made with local honey and foraged spruce.



Cruise, Cycle or Ride with a Band: Ways to Experience Asheville's Beer Scene

With more and more people traveling to Asheville to explore the beer scene, tours like brews cruises, Asheville Brewery Tours and the Amazing Pubcycle are becoming more and more frequent. **Uber Expert:** Also on the scene is

BREW-ed Brewery and History Walking Tours. Cliff Mori, BREW-ed owner, recently passed the Advance Cicerone program, making him one of very few folks in the world with the designation. **Rockin' Brews:**

LaZoom's Band & Brew Tour hits a couple of Asheville breweries with a live band on the big purple bus. ▶

White Duck Taco Shop's new riverfront restaurant opens its **Beer Bus** this spring with draft and canned beers, adult slushies, wine and cocktails. The property will also soon offer a beach along the French Broad River, perfect for a tubing pit stop. ▶ **Hop-Infused**

Body Treatment: Especially for men at Spa Theology

is their Burial Beer Treatment, a therapeutic massage treatment with a pint of brew. ▶ **Painting with Beer** joins the palette of uniquely Asheville art immersion experiences via Asheville Art Studio Tours. Explore studios across the Asheville art scene and end with a beer painting lesson at a local brewery.

▶ **Beer Festivals:** Brewgrass held in September at Memorial Stadium ▶ The springtime Beer City Festival at Pack Square Park, the highlight of Asheville Beer Week ▶ Burnpile at Burial Beer ▶ Small Batch Festival at Hi-Wire Brewing.



Local Flavor: Asheville-Inspired Ingredients

Classically, beer was made with just four ingredients - grain, yeast, hops and water. Asheville provides them all and more. The water is mountain pure and hops are grown in the area. **Riverbend Malt House** provides breweries with high-quality grains, and **White Labs** yeast facility recently opened its Asheville outpost. Some breweries are also adding **ingredients that serve up a taste of Appalachia.** Rayburn Farm in Barnardsville provides ingredients like herbs, spices, pumpkins, strawberries and carrots to breweries such as Wicked Weed, Twin Leaf, One World and Whistle Hop. Other breweries like Bhramari utilize local honey in some of their brews, while others tap into the area's high volume of wild berries in spring and summer.

The Perfect Pair: Breweries with Food Options

Local breweries provide phenomenal options for folks wanting a bite with their beer. Wicked Weed and their sour-beer taproom the Funkatorium both serve up food, as does Bhramari Brewhouse and others. Asheville Brewing's North Asheville location even has an arcade and discount movie theater to go along with their pizzeria-style menu. **Be sure to check out:** ▶ Burial Beer's new food menu by James Beard-nominated Chef Brian Canipelli, serving up creative, seasonal dishes and elevated bar food (think gruyere grilled cheese served French-dip-style) ▶ Sierra Nevada's huge tasting room and restaurant ▶ Foothills Meats' permanent food truck at Hi-Wire's Big Top facility. The butcher shop and brewery even collaborate for Butcher's Table feasts during the warmer months. ▶ Local favorites Highland Brewing and The Wedge have rotating food-truck service.

Beyond Beer City: Beverage News

Saké: Ben's Tune Up, the nation's fifth American-owned saké company serves a unique take on the Japanese classic. The brewery hired brewer Patrick Shearer, formerly of the famed Saké One in Portland, Ore., and opened a saké tasting room.

Mead: Honey wine made with Appalachian honey, local fruits and clean mountain water. Bee & Bramble offers a dry, crisp flavor made by a former engineer turned brew-hobbyist.

Hard Cider: Local cider powerhouse Urban Orchard, has expanded to a second location. The new space features 30 taps and serves up an Old Europe vibe. Try a sip of their chili series, lagered series, or their line of fruit and herb ciders.

Moonshine: "Moonshine Mom" Troy Ball and Asheville Distilling Company offers Moonshine, a Blonde Whiskey and whiskey variations like Nectarine and Honey. Check out Ball's memoir *Pure Heart, A Spirited Tale of Grace, Grit and Whiskey.*

Rum: Known for their Hazel 63 Rum, the only rum produced in Western N.C., they now also produce Asheville's first gin, called Hwy 9. The East Asian-inspired Gan Shan Station uses Hazel 63 in their Smoky Mountain Daiquiri.

Gin: The Chemist, a South Slope distillery with a tasting room outfitted as a Prohibition-era apothecary, has flavor profiles riffing off local Appalachian medicinal herbs and foods. Oak & Grist is a newer distillery in Black Mountain.

Wine: Asheville is home to smaller family operations like Addison Farms and Plēb Urban Winery to the most visited winery in the country at Biltmore. A tasting with American Wine Society judges found N.C. wines to stand on their own against California and European wines. French Broad Vignerons leads wine tours around the area.