



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 **35 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 2016 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: Asheville's Newest Breweries

JUST OPENED: ▶ **Wedge Brewing's** second River Arts District location in a former tannery at The Foundation. This unique property, known for its street-art-covered exteriors, is also home to 12 Bones' (barbeque) new River Arts District home. ▶ **Ginger's Revenge**, specializing in ginger beer, in the new RAMP studios. ▶ **Archetype Brewing** joined the up-and-coming Beacham's Curve area in West Asheville. ▶ Small farmhouse brewery **Turgua Brewing** in Fairview uses locally sourced ingredients.

COMING SOON: ▶ Set in buildings that once housed the young workers who built the Blue Ridge Parkway, **Burial Beer's Forestry Camp**, will include a production brewery, taproom and restaurant. The historic property, located near Biltmore Village, will give new life to elements like the original wood and cubbies in the former Civilian Conservation Corps' sleeping quarters. ▶ **White Labs**, the largest source of brewing yeast, recently opened an Asheville outpost. An onsite brewery opens this fall.

Slip Over to the Slope

Once an automotive dealership zone, Asheville's South Slope district (on and off Coxe Ave.) is now filled with nine breweries: Green Man, Asheville Brewing, Hi-Wire, Ben's Tune-Up, 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.



Beer To-Go: Bottle Spots, A Growler Drive-Thru & Beer Souvenirs

► Many local beers can be found at bottle shops Brusin' Ales and Tasty Beverage. ► **NEW:** Get a refillable growler and a bite at AVL Tacos & Taps drive-thru. ► For something different, look for Asheville's BROO shampoo and conditioner made with craft beer, Crooked Condiments beer mustard, beer-flavored ice cream from The Hop and beer barbeque sauces from Smoking J's Fiery Foods.

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 fewer than 30 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.



Beer Festivals: ► Brewgrass held in September at Memorial Stadium ► The springtime Beer City Festival at Pack Square Park, the highlight of Asheville Beer Week ► Winter Warmer at the U.S. Cellular Center ► Burn Pile 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 just 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. ► **NEW:** Fairview's Turgua Brewing, uses locally sourced ingredients from the five-acre farm it sits on.

The Perfect Pair: Breweries with Food Options

A number of local breweries also 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 Ben's Tune-Up (Asian), 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:** ► Salt & Smoke at Burial Beer, serving up super creative small bites ► 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: The nation's fifth American-owned saké company serves its own unique take on the Japanese classic. Ben's also brews beer!

Mead: The newest drink in Asheville is 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: Noble Cider, Urban Orchard, Bold Rock and Black Mountain Ciderworks have opened in the last couple of years featuring Western N.C.'s apple crop.

Moonshine: "Moonshine Mom" Troy Ball and Asheville Distilling Company released Keeper Bourbon in 2016, a remarkably smooth pure hearts bourbon. Check out Ball's new memoir *Pure Heart, A Spirited Tale of Grace, Grit and Whiskey*.

Rum: H&H Distillery in Fairview now makes Hazel 63 Rum, the only rum produced in Western N.C. The East Asian-inspired Gan Shan Station uses it in their Smoky Mountain Daiquiri.

Gin: Oak & Grist, a new distillery in Black Mountain, has recently opened.

Wine: Asheville is home to a number of wineries from smaller family operations like Addison Farms to the most visited winery in the country at Biltmore. Recently, 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.