



2022 Visit Loudoun Media Sheet: LoCo Ale Trail

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Overview

Loudoun may be [DC's Wine Country®](#), but it's also home to one of the most dynamic craft brewing scenes in the U.S. Loudoun's first brewery opened in 1989, but it was more than 20 years later when [Lost Rhino](#) served its first IPA, that beer culture really started to bubble. Today there are 30 breweries and counting, in a diversity of settings no other region can match. [The LoCo Ale Trail](#) connects them all, linking the trendy urban breweries of eastern Loudoun, to the scenic farm taprooms and mountain top beerhalls of the Piedmont and Blue Ridge out west.

The LoCo Ale Trail Passport

[The LoCo Ale Trail](#) is more than a guide – it's a game. The pocketbook map, available at breweries and the [Loudoun Visitor Center](#), features more than 30 breweries, each represented by a bottle cap icon on the map. After ordering a beer at a brewery, get a stamp on the corresponding cap on your passport. When you've filled out one of the four clusters (Farm Breweries, Purcellville Gateway, Downtown Leesburg and the Dulles Corridor) – or, conquered the whole trail – mail your passport to the Visitor Center to win a prize.

You Drank What?

Bizzare Ingredients That Have Appeared in Loudoun Brews

Adroit Theory's "The Death of Cthulhu"

The [esoteric Purcellville nano brewery's](#) Russian Imperial Milk Stout contained espresso coffee, toasted coconut, macadamia nuts and Scotch Bonnet Pepper, infused with a bourbon honey.

Crooked Run's "Merrang!"

Innovative [Crooked Run Brewing](#) caused a stir with this Berliner infused with lemons, Mexican vanilla, milk sugar and er, Graham Crackers. A liquid Lemon Meringue Pie.

Belly Love's "The Duke"

The names of the beers at this [Purcellville brewery](#) are bizarre enough – Son of A Dicktator anyone? Then there's The Duke, a purple hued Belgian-style Tripel, brewed with orange peel and blue starflower petals. Hold it up to light and it changes from purple to red and orange.

Wheatland Spring Farm + Brewery's "Terrain Brett Grisette"

The [popular farm brewery](#) of the Branding family used freshly bailed hay from land half a mile away in this yeasty, blue-collar beer.

Beer Personalities

① *Going Local*

[Twinpanzee Brewing Company](#) in Sterling takes 'local' to the next level: the nano brewery uses all local water, ingredients and micro flora – never any flavoring – to make what they call "Land Beer", a tribute to the agricultural roots of Loudoun. We'll drink to that.

② *All in the Family*

Bob Zurschmeide started out in Loudoun as a "dirt farmer" in the 1950s. Seventy years later and his son Bruce oversees [Dirt Farm Brewing](#) on steep slopes of the Blue Ridge, famous for its craft ales and stunning views. [Bluemont Vineyard](#) next door, and [Henway Hard Cider](#) and [Great Country Farms](#) below it, are also outposts of the Zurschmeide empire.

③ *The Beer Scientist*

Jasper Akerboom was a microbiologist at Loudoun's world-renowned Janelia Research labs when he quit to focus on his real love: beer. At [Lost Rhino Brewing Co.](#) he helped make the famous Bone Dusters amber ale, using yeast from protocetid whale fossils. Today he and business partner Travis Tedrow run Jasper Yeast, a local yeast propagation lab serving the mid-Atlantic area. They specialize in providing pure liquid cultures of the most popular strains, as well as the isolation of unique strains sourced from local farms and breweries.