



## 2025 Visit Loudoun Media Sheet

# LoCo Ale Trail

Loudoun may be DC's Wine Country®, but it's also home to one of the most dynamic craft brewing scenes in the United States. 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 Mountains out west.

### The LoCo Ale Trail Passport

The LoCo Ale Trail is more than a guide – it's a game. Visitors to Loudoun breweries can rack up points – digital stamps – by marking their visit in a Digital Passport called up via a QR code. Once they've hit a rewards milestone, they can claim prizes - anything from koozies to bottle openers. Conquer the trail and they earn the right to proudly wear the ale trail logo on their choice of t-shirt or sweatshirt.



## Beer Personalities

### 1 Going Local

At Wheatland Spring Farm + Brewery the Branding family channel the German 'Land Beer' ethos by using local and estate-grown ingredients in their brews. They also host the Mid-Atlantic Grain Fair for farmers, millers, bakers, and brewers reviving the region's grain heritage.

### 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.

# 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.



### Bear Chase Brewing Company's "Gertrude's Ghost"

Local fruit is a common addition to Loudoun beers but this IPA, named for the phantom they claim appears in the manor house on the property, features tropical pineapples, tangerines and papaya. Squint just right and you may see Gertrude in the glass.



### Flying Ace Farm Distillery & Brewery's Bloody Butcher Cream Ale

This creamy hops-forward ale is juiced with tangerines and Amarillo hops on a base of rare Bloody Butcher Corn – a near-extinct heirloom grain, which grows in a 40-acre field on the farm.



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