

What's Brewing

THE JOURNAL OF BC'S CRAFT BEER MOVEMENT

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VIRTUAL BEERABILITY

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a world with reduced contact

VOL.30 ISSUE 4 WINTER 2020

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What's Brewing

WINTER
2020

VOL.30 ISSUE 4

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CONTENTS

05 **OPENING REMARKS:** IT'S (ALMOST) OVER

COVER

- 06 **VIRTUAL BEERLITY:** OUR INDUSTRY PANEL
- 10 **ULLAGE & SPILLAGE:** THE FUTURE OF CRAFT BEER IN BC
- 11 **BUSINESS OF BEER:** MEASURING THE IMPACT OF 2020
- 12 **VANCITY CRAFT BROS.:** LIVING WITHIN A SOCIAL BUBBLE
- 15 **VIRTUAL CONFERENCING:** MAJOR BEER EVENTS GO ONLINE
- 37 **THE STATE OF EVENTS IN 2020:** EVENTS PANEL

COMMUNITY

- 22 **WOMEN OF BEER:** SAMANTHA LINDEMAN OF WILDEYE BREWING
- 28 **LIVING HERE:** WEST KOOTENAY BREWERS CRAFT FOR COMMUNITY

TRAVEL & REGIONAL REPORTS

- 24 **HAVE CAMERA WILL TRAVEL:** BREWERIES OF THE FAR WEST
- 27 **NORTHERN NOTES:** NORTHERN CRAFT IN CHANGING TIMES
- 31 **BEERS, BEACHES & BREWERIES:** WINTER IN THE OKANAGAN

BEER IQ

- 16 **WHAT'S BREWING TASTING PANEL:** DESSERT BEERS
- 32 **A VIEW FROM THE CELLAR:** CREAM (ALE) OF THE CROP
- 33 **HOMEBREW HAPPENIN'S:** UORREN'S IMPERIAL STOUT
- 33 **BREW CLUB CORNER:** BC HOMEBREW CLUB LISTING
- 38 **BOOKS IN REVIEW:** A NATURAL HISTORY OF BEER

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*Snowmen gather to celebrate the end of 2020 by sharing beers.
They lament for we humans who can't do the same*

It's (almost) over

Finally, we are in the home stretch and the end is near. The end of 2020, that is. I'm confident you share my sense of relief that there'll be a return to a happier world, just over the horizon.

Welcome to our Winter Issue. For the first time since 2016, it contains no Holiday Gift Guide. Sadly, that feature has become one more COVID casualty as there just wasn't a market for it this time around. That's OK; simply support your local brewery and patronize independent businesses, and its mission will be accomplished.

I'm pleased to say that our current team of editors and contributors has reached a milestone: five years of service since we relaunched this publication in its current format. I'm indebted to the dozens of unselfish friends and beer fans who have put time into *What's Brewing* (and, more recently, *Beer Me BC*). One cannot name them, but one day maybe I'll publish a special WB Team Awards in which they get their due. It might be called the *Whabbies*.

If the *Whabbies* existed, Stewart (Scottie) McLellan would win Longest Serving Writer. This magazine you're reading is one of the few issues since the early '90s in which he didn't have something to say.

Brian K. Smith is a leading candidate for Longest Article Submission. Editing his 5825-word Merridale Cider cover story for our Spring 2020 issue was a major undertaking. It beats my subsequent 5750-word Fall cover story by a nose. 'Course, Brian didn't also have to edit *my* stuff.

Mike Ansley would probably win a Humour award for Most Outspoken Tasting Panelist. Not that he hasn't had stiff competition from Adam Chatburn, Carnell Turton and the like. But he has a way with words and he's outdone himself again in this issue; look closely.

(On that note, be sure to check out the Monday Dec 14th episode of *Pacific Beer Chat* to hear Mike and the rest of our Panel get into their beers. Also, listen in to TSN 1040AM on the weekend of Dec 12th-13th as *Just Here For The Beer Radio* presents our quarterly appearance.)

There are many more *Whabbies* to award, but now that I've unwisely opened Pandora's growler I'll quit while I'm behind. Thanks for following along for some or all of the past five years of *What's Brewing*. It's been a privilege to serve the beer community during this golden age of BC craft beer.

Now it's time to turn the page. With that, we present a closer look at the way we're drinking in the 2020s.

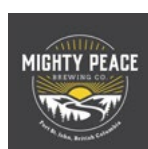
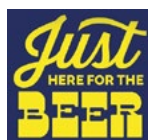
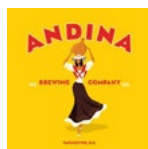
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Dave Smith
editor@whatsbrewing.ca

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Here's a tip of the hat to the corporate supporters who've helped bring this magazine to you.





VIRTUAL BEERABILITY

VIEWING THE FUTURE OF CRAFT BEER IN A WORLD WITH REDUCED CONTACT

BC's 200 craft breweries were built to be community gathering places, forgoing TV screens in favour of long, shared tables and mingling. Now, that particular advantage they held over Big Beer has become a liability as these fledgling businesses take their battle for survival to unfriendlier territory: the retail store floor.

In our last issue, an industry panel discussed the seemingly cataclysmic onset of COVID and the subsequent massive pivot to packaged sales. Now, we deal with the aftermath.

How will craft breweries survive hospitality's harshest ever winter with slashed capacity, frozen patios and a raging virus? What awaits them in 2021 if a wary public continues to stay home?

This issue's thoughtful panel tended to frame their expectations realistically. More than one used the term "all things considered" when evaluating this year.

Our thanks go out to these participants, some of whom supplied a generous amount of feedback. As a privileged reader, we're pleased to present to you selected excerpts from our full interviews in this special *What's Brewing* virtual chat room.

PART I: COPING WITH CHANGE

At this point, COVID is such an established part of life, it's easy to forget how much we've adapted. We asked the panel how they and their businesses are holding up.



Ben: I'm pooped. I could use a vacation, but where would I go? A staycation is out of the question. There are two four-year-olds in my house, how would staying there help anything? Might as well go to work.

As for Dageraad, it's doing well; partly because of blind luck and partly because we've done a good job of leaning into the changes.

In the blind luck category, we happened to get a BC Liquor listing for *Burnabarian* cans right before the pandemic started, and that really helped take the sting out of losing every single draught account and closing our tasting room for months.



Lara: The initial shutdown wasn't a huge shock; we saw it coming. But the shock was how long it lasted. I'm really proud that we've been able to retain all of our staff.



Tim: We opened only days before the pandemic was declared. We had high hopes, but that was not to be. Unfortunately our opening date means we didn't qualify for most of the available government programs, so we've had to hustle like crazy every day.



Michael: I traveled to Idaho the week before the lockdown to buy our new boiler from a brewery down there. It's been sitting in U.S. storage so far.









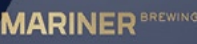









Cole & Kellie: We are holding up well. However, our wedding [this past summer] didn't quite look the way we expected!



Mike: I'm genuinely worried about local breweries and cideries. But you know, I don't know what to do next. But I don't think that I'm alone in thinking that in the industry. I'm really looking forward to reading this article and seeing what other people have to say.

Continued on page 8

Meet The Panel...

 Sean White Copper Brewing copperbrewing.com	 Ben Coli Dageraad Brewing dageraadbrewing.com	 Brendan Bonfield Darby's Public House www.darbys.pub	
 Cole & Kellie Dead Frog Brewery deadfrog.ca	 Tim Vandergrift Fraser Mills Fermentation frasermillsfc.com	 Byron Vallis Mariner Brewing marinerbrewing.ca	
 Lara Beardsell Red Collar Brewing redcollar.ca	 Kevin & Brandi Silver Valley Brewing silvervalleybrewing.com	 Nicholas Nazarec Strathcona Brewing strathconabeer.com	
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Will society's behaviour changes become permanent?

We asked the panel whether COVID will permanently make society less trusting of close face-to-face interactions with strangers, even after vaccines emerge, and if they think craft beer drinkers are more likely or less likely to be mindful of keeping their distance than the general public.



Hannah: It's crazy to think we once went to beer festivals with 5000+ people, or would sit next to complete strangers at community tables in Tasting Rooms. We don't think people will just 'forget' [about being careful] when there's a vaccine.



Ben: There might be some changes in our social customs. I hope that mask-wearing on transit during flu season becomes the norm. I hope it becomes normal to stay home from work when you have a cough. I really hope that we don't lose hugs and handshakes, though, because I like them.



Brendan: The craft beer fans that I know are very social people that want to get out and support the local businesses they love in person. I don't see COVID changing that.



Tim: We're all washing our hands a lot more often, and more thoroughly these days. Biggest COVID takeaway: we've been under-washing our thumbs our whole lives!



Lara: Dealing with staff getting sick (a cough or something minor) and having to treat that like a potential threat requiring a two week quarantine period has been distressing for all team members.



Ben: Almost as bad as the pandemic is the mental health crisis that's quietly unfolding through all of this. I think some people are going to be totally traumatized by this and never go back to how they were before.

I worry about my kids growing up in this. Are these formative social interactions going to make them permanently socially weird?

I think most people are going to bounce back to something like normal, though. We are a gregarious species and most of us love being around other people.



Kevin & Brandi: It will absolutely change behaviour moving forward, but to what degree is hard to predict. We think people will be more willing to stay home or wear a mask while sick. Once vaccines are widely distributed, we believe most people will return to tasting rooms but there won't be a sudden spike overnight.



Nick: There are those that are immune compromised, or have close family who are, but I don't think people's behaviour will permanently be changed.



Michael: I don't think it will permanently change people. Beer is a great medium for social interaction.



Byron: Regardless of what happens, we can never go back to the Before Times. But if we're all careful for a bit longer and smart about vaccines, the second half of 2021 might shape up to be a tremendously fun time!

Are craft beer fans more likely or less likely to be COVID mindful?



Brendan: I don't want to generalize about a group of people, but the majority of craft beer fans I know are more likely to be mindful of keeping a respectful distance in public.



Kellie: We're really grateful and happy with how our customers have embraced our COVID policy.



Nick: I think craft beer drinkers are smart people, although it does become more difficult to keep your distance once you've had a few.



Michael: The challenge we see is that with more beer, sometimes there is less mindfulness of the restrictions. We sometimes have to be the bad guys when everyone is having too good of a time. It's a challenge, and I can see where it bothers our staff to be the fun police.

PART II: IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY HUB

For years, the premise of craft brewing was that it was on premises, like the traditional "local" pub at the centre of English life. Now that carefully-cultivated brick-and-mortar setting is more than likely just a stopoff for beer takeout on the way home to spend the weekend cocooning.

The shift to offsite consumption



Sean: I'm hopeful that our industry will continue to be centered around human interaction. But we have been moving more product in the wholesale market, which has helped for sure.



Ben: With draught way down and bottles and cans way up, we're making about the same amount of beer as last year.

Canning has become so important for us that we took the leap and bought our own canner, which has given us a lot more control over our production schedule.



Cole: Just before the pandemic started we purchased a brand new canning machine from CASK, and it's been running overtime. There was a major shift from draught to cans and bottles, so we've adjusted what we package quite a bit.



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Lara: We developed a home delivery service and an online store.



Byron: The brewhouse isn't any busier than last year but all things considered, we're really happy with how things are going for us this year.



Nick: To be honest it would be kind of nice not being balls to the wall crazy busy [packaging beer], because that would let me focus on specialty one-offs rather than just trying to keep up with the large demand for our core beers (in cans).

Reopening to a smaller crowd



Lara: In the summer, we reopened and ran with beers and small snacks, "old school tasting room" style. A large part of the Kamloops tourism scene is the Rocky Mountaineer train, which did not run this year, so we certainly saw a slowdown there.



Michael: Our normal taproom capacity is 51, but with the restrictions and our safety protocols in place we're down to 20 seats inside.



Nick: Traffic is steady most days and we even get a line on Fridays, but going down from 66 to 26 does hurt quite a bit.



Sean: Our capacity was reduced by about 35%.



Brendan: Traffic was good in the summer and early fall. We were able to maintain a large number of seats on our patio and still maintain proper distancing, which helped a lot. We are now making the best of a reduced capacity (74 patrons) and liquor service stopping at 10:00 pm.



Ben: I think inside and out we can theoretically seat about 40 people, but only if they all happen to arrive in groups of six, which as you can imagine, has never once happened.



Kellie: We've managed to maintain steady traffic through the pandemic. However our capacity inside has been reduced from 65 to 43.



Byron: We were working on a taproom and patio expansion last Winter that finished up right as COVID hit, so even with distancing measures our capacity stayed around 50 people.



Hannah: Earlier this year we converted the parking lot at our Fort Langley Eatery into an outdoor patio for 50 additional seats.



Cole/Kellie: We've put up plexiglass inside, and fortunately we have a pretty big Tasting Room that gives our customers lots of room for social distancing.

We've done a lot of work on COVID safety additions to the tasting room that actually enhance its look and feel. We're so happy with how things turned out that we'll probably leave them up after this is all over.

Continued on page 34

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THE FUTURE OF CRAFT BEER IN BC

>> J. RANDOM

First, let's deal with the obvious: current trends are likely to continue. Cans will get bigger, low-alcohol/high-flavour beers will proliferate, legal drinking in parks will expand, slowly, and old ideas will get recycled. (As proof of the first and last of these, **Watneys** has brought back the **Party Seven in the UK**.)

Second, I believe the craft has woven itself so deeply in the fabric of BC that nothing, certainly not COVID-19, can unravel it. We will forever be able to find great beer across this great province, in liquor stores, bars, restaurants, and brewery tasting rooms. The "tasting lounge as community hub" has only been a big part of BC's industry for seven years. While this did accelerate growth, it is not essential for viability, thanks to the advent of small-scale canning lines. There is no reason why on-site consumption should not come back after effective vaccines and treatments are widely available. Natural calamities, initially a setback, typically add momentum to revolution and to evolution.

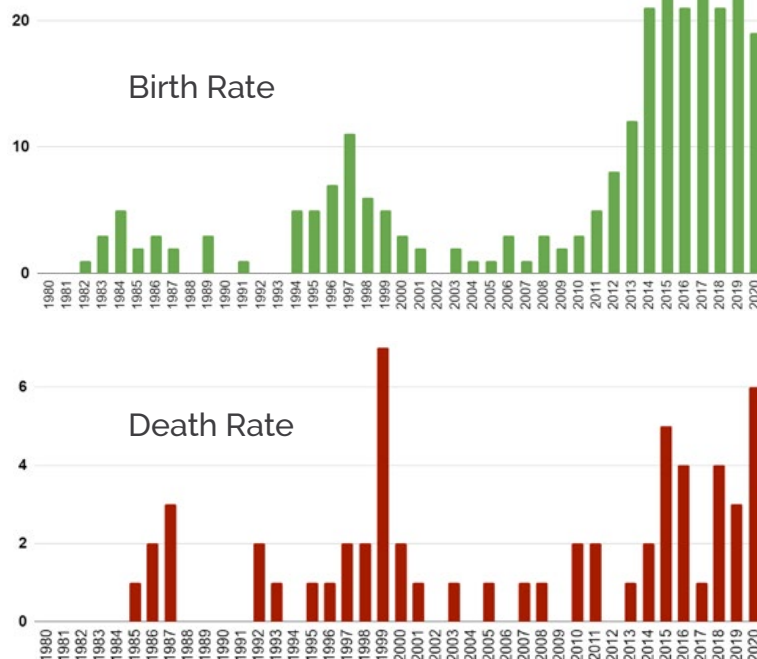
Human progress is characterised by brief periods of social, economic, political, or industrial revolution, then consolidation and retrenchment. Such upheavals are separated by longer spells of gradual transformation as the next revolution foment (or maybe ferments). BC's craft beer revolution was documented in our **Summer 2020** issue: the late-80s ripple, late-90s wave, and tsunami of the 2010s. The Birth Rate chart shows some indication that the tsunami was already cresting as we approached decade's end.

The 2020 pandemic has not caused the wave of closures some of us worried about. However, many small breweries can barely make ends meet and their financial reserves are depleted. Under-capitalization plus lack of business acumen, or a few bad beer batches down the drain, has spelled the end for several ventures in BC's relatively short craft beer history. With the examples that come to mind, the facility was shuttered and the equipment scrapped or sold on. However, those were during the years of struggle, before craft beer became so widely known and loved. More recently, the facilities of failing businesses have been snapped up by new ventures. Generally, these have been one-for-one replacements, but **R&B Brewing's** incorporation into **Howe Sound Brewing** in 2015 may prove the model for future industry consolidation.

Leaving aside the Mark James Group brewpubs, down from five to three, BC has not seen the development of brewery chains along the lines of **Rogue Ales** and **McMenamins** in Oregon. With the maturation of the BC's industry, I see the potential for growth of such chains by consolidation among our current crop of small, independent businesses. One only needs to look at the UK for examples of this phenomenon; like Oregon, a culture with longer recent history of small breweries than BC. Consolidation need not be a bad thing, if each brewery is kept open, with its own branding, culture and signature beers, as **Howe Sound** did with **R&B Brewing**. Good times in one small town can offset tough times in another, and best practices are more readily shared. More upsetting would be the big breweries gobbling up the little guys. This seems unlikely, since they seem to be interested only in the medium-sized operations. My nightmare lies at the other end of the

BC Craft Breweries

1980 – 2020



scale, with craft brewing being franchised (No. Don't force me on the **McDonAles** traveler).

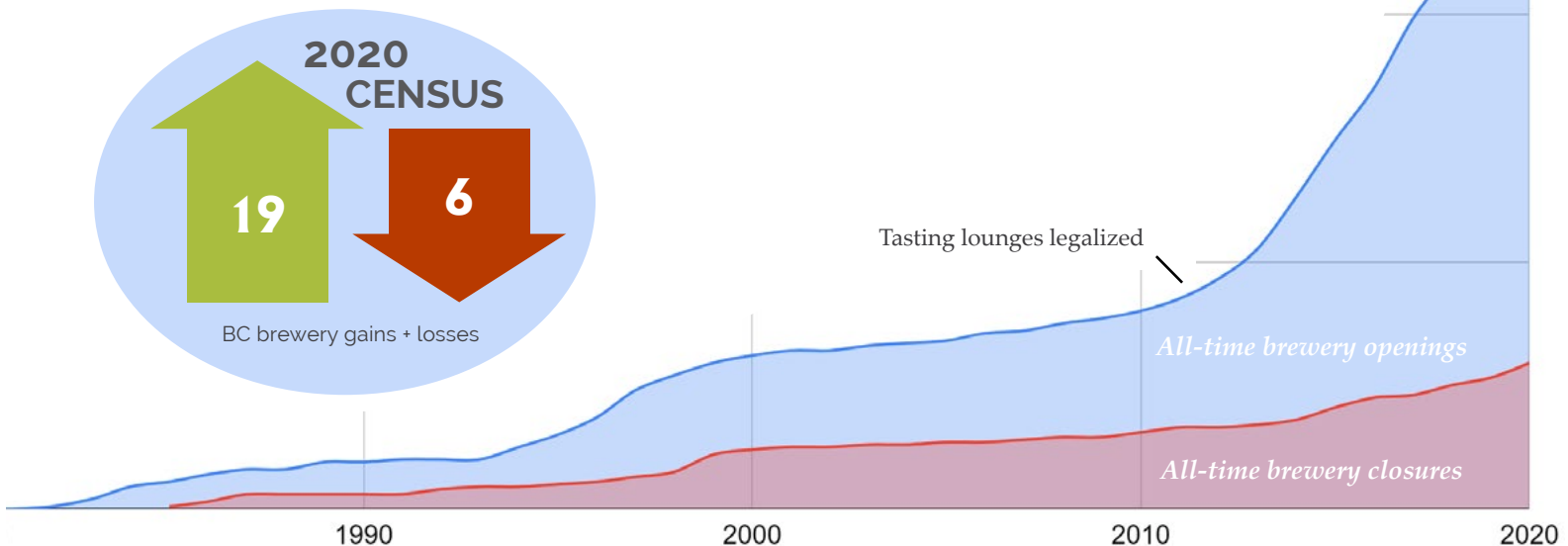
Evolution involves diversification followed by rationalization. Survival of the fittest—the best suited to their current environment or most adaptable to other environments—leads to their proliferation at the expense of others. We have seen massive diversification in the variety of beer as BC breweries adopt and adapt styles from across the world. It is tough to produce a lot of these really well.

While some have suggested that seasonals-only is the way of the future and core brands may be a thing of the past (**What's Brewing Summer 2019**), an understanding of biological systems suggests quite the reverse: a focus on distinctive competence. Specialization in the beer styles that each outfit does well seems a logical move at this point. Not to say the range of beers available in craft beer bars and restaurants will become depleted. You just won't see a row of four hazy IPAs, or four West Coast IPAs, for that matter.

These two trends could readily complement each other with exchange of beers across the various breweries in a business group, as Rogue has done for many years in Oregon.

In terms of ingredients, we already know climate change could cause a worldwide **barley shortage**, unless moving to plant-based diets reduces the proportion going for animal feed. Alberta's ability to **irrigate barley** will dry up if their rivers from the Rockies run out of snowpack and glacier-melt. Drought in the Willamette valley may also affect the supply of hops, since they grow, and resist disease, best in deep soil with a good supply of groundwater. If arbitrary tariffs hadn't already, pandemic nationalism has taught us not to rely too heavily on imports from the USA.

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF 2020



>> J. THUNDERFOOT

The questions are out there: *Did COVID kill BC craft beer's momentum? Is this wave of the craft beer revolution over?*

The returns are in. 2020 could have been a lot worse.

By the end of the year, nineteen new breweries had opened in BC. Four of those were direct replacements for breweries that closed; the swaps included **V2V Black Hops Brewing** for **Axe & Barrel**, **Welton Brewery** for **Boundary Brewing Company** and **Settlement Brewing** for **Postmark**. We're also counting Postmark's former corporate master, **Craft Collective Beerworks**, the former **Factory Brewing** who rebranded as **TBA Beverages** in this past spring when their business failed. That brewery was acquired by **Mod Beverage** in October. (You may not consider them craft; we'll specify our criteria momentarily.)

Two others (**Coal Harbour** and **Hearthstone**) ceased brewing operations during 2020, but odds seem reasonable that those breweries will come alive again at some point. If they do, it will mean that no physical breweries were permanently lost during

2020. The fact that four locations already gained new management underscores that there are still a number of businesspeople, presumably in full control of their faculties, who are willing to wade into the brewing industry even during a year like this.

More proof of the enduring attraction of brewery ownership lies in the fifteen other operations which rose from the ground up and launched during 2020.

Naturally, we would have seen more, had COVID not disrupted construction schedules and business plans. At the end of 2019, the *What's Brewing* [BC Craft Beer Map](#) tracked as many as 27 BC breweries in some form of development. At the beginning of April, before the massive pivot from on-premises to at-home consumption created a lifeline for the industry, it looked to be a lost year for those brewery openings, and that notion lasted through summer.

However, thanks to a late surge, 2020 won't go down as a year of stagnation after all. In a one-month period from late October to late November, *The Hopline* announced six new breweries—a rate of more than one per week. It will take a push of at least three more in December to avoid making 2020 the first year since 2013 to see fewer than 20 openings (see chart opposite). As it stands, the nineteen so far brings our calculation to 205 operating craft breweries in BC.

What is a "Craft Brewery"?

In [Parts I and II of this series](#), this author put forward the assertion that any measurement or criterion used to separate "craft breweries" from "non-craft breweries" is pointless. I did however offer a definition of "craft brewing", based around the admittedly-subjective notion of *ethos*—and despite the difficulties of truly knowing a brewery owner's *ethos*, I've noticed that a few other writers have come to the same conclusion. We like to think that craft brewers are the good guys.

Continued on page 13

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From left: Johnny, Navin, Regi and Batu at St. Augustine's in Vancouver. Photo: Buddy Turner

>> NAVIN AUTAR

What can I say about 2020 that we don't already know? British Columbia confirmed the first case of COVID-19 in late January; fast forward to November, and the pandemic has evolved into an unprecedented healthcare crisis across our province and the world. Thousands of people faced, and are still experiencing, huge curveballs and bumpy roads with challenging times in their personal and professional lives.

Facebook's Memories feature resonates with me more this year than ever before. It allows people to see what they did on a day any number of years ago. The memories refresh every day; it's like a digital diary in which I can look back on my life and see changes over the years. Notifications pop up on my iPhone, and with a smile on my face, I happily open and look through those memories. However, I'm also sad because next year's memories will not show photos telling stories of gatherings amongst friends, hanging out at new or familiar places and travelling.

Changes to how we socialize

The world around us has changed because of COVID-19, including the way we can currently socialize. Our health authorities are focused on containing the coronavirus by breaking up and preventing transmission chains and concentrating on flattening the curve through restrictions, orders, and bans on numerous activities like social gatherings, non-essential travel, etc.

Before the horrible virus infiltrated our lives, we freely gathered and socialized in "places of business," mingling with friends and others at shared long tables, wandering around meeting people or say-

ing hello to someone you have not seen in some time. For my brother Regi and me, our favourite "places of business" is not a single place, it is a community of fantastic craft breweries, craft-focused bars, taphouses and tasting rooms. It would be unusual if a week passed without us visiting one or more establishments within the Lower Mainland's craft beer community.

Our adventures in tasting craft beer took us on afternoon and day trips, weekends and longer "beercations" to destinations throughout our beautiful province, the United States, and internationally. We noticed the common thread at all the craft beer-focused places and communities has always been the kind and amazing people. Our interactions with people along our journeys have fostered many friendships. These experiences are all part and parcel of being out and about having human interactions and enjoying life's pleasures. It was a time before personal protective equipment, social-distancing guidelines, restrictions and social bubbles were top of mind and part of our everyday vocabulary.

Adapting in a time of uncertainty

My brother Regi (of [Regi's Beer Adventures](#)) and I have adapted to the health authorities' safety measures by putting our social interactions in "places of business" on hold, which profoundly saddens us. We have shifted (hopefully only temporarily) to immersive videotelephony technologies such as Zoom and Facetime, which let us socialize, mingle, laugh and be with people in virtual environments of chats, groups, and events. We are happy these technologies are available during these unprecedented times, but we would prefer to be with people socializing and interacting in person.

When it comes to consuming our favourite craft beers, for now, we primarily drink at home. However, we show our support for the local craft breweries and do our part to help them through these troubling times by stocking up on their tasty libations. Besides purchasing craft beers at liquor stores, we also head out to local breweries to grab beers at their retail counter or order through their online store to pick up our pre-selected goodies. Also, many breweries offer delivery services right to your front door, which we also use.

Craft beer is something Regi and I both enjoy. For us, it isn't about getting inebriated; it's about spending time catching up with friends and making new ones, sharing conversations, stories and laughs.

Due to current rules, we cannot freely walk around at "places of business" to interact and engage with other people and groups outside our social bubble. We both understand and appreciate the safety measures are in place to keep everyone safe as our province's health authorities' rules and guidelines about COVID-19 continue to evolve.

Hopefully, one day, we will not have the wariness of the COVID-19 virus lurking in our minds, and we will be able to socialize again freely. Maybe the new normal might be different than what we are used to, or perhaps things will return to how it once was—which is what Regi and I hope! 🍻



NAVIN AUTAR

has been following the BC and the North American Craft Beer scenes devotedly for years. Along with his brother [Regi](#), they have attended countless beer festivals and events. Web: [Vancity Craft Bros.](#)

When constructing a historical database that encompasses the near-four-decade craft brewing renaissance, as used in the 30th Anniversary issue of *WB* that J. Random mentioned, one needs a more inclusive approach. The definition of "craft brewery" for today's purpose is "Commercial operation employing its own physical microbrewing facility". It doesn't have to be completely independent; if it did, we couldn't count **Vancouver Island Brewing** (owned by a large Ontario craft brewer). For purposes such as **BC Craft Brewers Guild** membership, it's possible and patriotic to distinguish such Canadian ownership as better than that by a foreign multinational—and that's how we think when we're out buying beer. But for consistency across our historical measurement we include still-extant operations like **Granville Island Brewing's** classic location, which was, and (on its own) still is, clearly a microbrewery. That means we must also include the likes of **Stanley Park Brewpub**.

A craft brewhouse can range in size from a tiny nano to something like **Central City Brewing's** Bridgeview plant. Large as the latter is, it's not macro scale. That's how we distinguish between our "craft revolution" generation of players and those like Molson, with its massive Chilliwack plant—as well as Labatt's Columbia Brewery in Creston, Sapporo/Sleeman's Okanagan Spring plant in Vernon, and Pacific Western's regional-level brewery in Prince George. A day will come when craft behemoths like **Phillips Brewing & Malting Ltd.** will overtake those like Pacific Western not only in terms of sales but in size of physical brewing operations...but we're not there yet.

As noted in [Part III of this series](#), it's likely that these breweries won't be called "craft" forever. That won't necessarily be because they crossed some arbitrary, subjective threshold of size, quality or trendiness; it's simply because the term "craft beer" will no longer be needed by (at least that segment of) the industry at some point. Clearly, a couple of generations from now, this term will have lost its purpose and people will associate the "craft wave" with a moment in time. (Apparently, we're not at that stage yet though, as evidenced by the marketing of Central City's *Beer League* "Craft-Brewed Lager".)

What is a "Wave", and is it over?

Which brings us to the definition of "wave". Plainly, there has been more than one wave of interest during the craft beer renaissance...however, there was a time when this author struggled to pin down which wave we were currently in. Fortunately, the Birth Rate bar chart shows us exactly how many waves have taken place, because, as J. Random noted, we can clearly see the existence of three distinct bumps, each bigger in size than the last.

Earlier this year, the question was whether the current wave would be completely lopped off, another casualty of 2020. Well, **BC Liquor Distribution Branch sales for the Summer of COVID are in**, and they provide an indication. The winner in terms of growth is the "Micro Brew" segment with a 3.8% increase—much smaller than years past, but a full point better than "Commercial" (the mega brewers) with their retail muscle and cheap appeal to stay-at-home volume buyers.

We also have extensive anecdotal evidence about the strength of retail sales from the panel of brewers who participated in this issue's Industry feature. It seems that, despite a drop from 28 new breweries last year to 19 this year, we're still floating close to the crest of the third wave. With the [BC Craft Beer Map](#) counting as many as 30 BC breweries in the pipeline in late 2020, it should

Climate change is not all in the same direction everywhere. In most cases, it means exaggeration of local climate characteristics. Water is one thing BC is unlikely to run out of. Self-sufficiency in hops and barley is something we should continue to work towards. The resurgence of hop growing in BC has been great to see. **Phillips Brewing and Malting** and **Field House Brewery** have already shown the way with barley. If the economics prove marginal, local research shows **inter-cropping with peas** could be the ideal solution. Pea ale anyone? *Anyone?*

In conclusion, I find these days only one thing is constant: the speed of the rate of change is getting faster. By the time this gets into print, my soothing could already be reality. Cheers. 🍺



The travelator beckons



J. RANDOM

is a former VP of CAMRA Vancouver, beer fan for 4 decades and occasional homebrewer. Has been penning the Ullage & Spillage column for What's Brewing since 2003.

take some time to recede.

Will we see a "fourth wave"? For that, we need to remember that "wave" doesn't just mean "a steady increase in breweries". It means an unusual curve upwards, as seen in the mid-'80s, mid-'90s and the early 2010s. For a fourth wave to be possible, a period of fallow has to occur (which was the case after both the first and second waves).

At that point, it should be sufficiently far into the future that the massive exposure and goodwill "gourmet beer" has basked in is no longer top of mind for a new generation. Otherwise, such a wave will be qualitatively different, because the first three waves were all about one thing: *discovery*.

As for 2020, it seems likely that the days of growth acceleration are over, and a plateau phase is beginning. But that's not the same as a tragic decline, which clearly did not take place.

So, it seems that 2020 won't be the all-time year of devastation some foresaw back in March and April. As of publication time, the year 1999 remains the bloodiest era in BC brewing with seven lost (see the "Death Rate" chart). Let's hope we get through December with no further casualties so as to avoid tying that record. Small victories must be celebrated. 🍺



J. THUNDERFOOT

writes about the business of beer every five years or so. Sometimes more often.

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YOUR FAVOURITE INDUSTRY EVENT
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For years, the *What's Brewing Community Events Calendar* has been without question the most comprehensive listing of beer events in BC. Year after year, it averaged over 100 events per month, and close to 1500 per year. The onset of COVID lockdown in 2020 was an immediate threat to its relevance. However, as the brewing community settled into quarantine, the Calendar soon featured a brand new category: *Virtual Events*.

Most such events are simple videoconferences hosted by a brewery, but larger events can go virtual as well. Case in point is the **Canadian Brewing Awards & Conference (CBAC)**, held annually in late spring. The 2020 event was to take place in Victoria, and its loss was a disappointment to many in the BC community.



The crew from Gibsons Tapworks 'virtually' accepting an award during the CBAC 2020 Internet broadcast

Rather than take the year off, Ontario-based CBAC organizers **TAPS Media** adopted a masterful idea: pre-recorded "virtual acceptance" celebrations. Reaching out to their nationwide brewery constituency, they convinced soon-to-be award winners to submit personalized video clips and spice up what would otherwise have been a monotonous awards list recital. In November, the **Ontario Brewing Awards** followed suit.

Here in BC, the **BC Craft Brewers Guild** is set to present their fourth **BC Craft Brewers Conference** in early February, and they've also decided to go virtual.



Ken Beattie at #BCBeerCon 2019

This prompts the question: how does a virtual conference work, and what's behind the scenes? For this we had a word with Ken Beattie, Executive Director of the **BC Craft Brewers Guild**.

Q&A WITH KEN BEATTIE

Q. We understand that the 2020 conference was moved to February 2021 for reasons that predated the coronavirus. Can you tell us more about the original plan and venue for the 2021 event?

After the 2019 conference we knew we had to move our location as the building was scheduled for destruction. Therefore we began to look for a new venue that could offer us a multi-year location for our conference. Also, we are required under the Society Act to hold an AGM within 6 months of our year-end, which is December 31st, so it made sense to find a time in the first quarter of 2021.

Our plan was to hold the conference in February in New Westminster at the Anvil Centre. At this moment we are discussing dates there for 2022, as it suits all we require.

Continued on page 36



JAK'S

BEER • WINE • SPIRITS

PRESENTS...



JUST DESSERTS

...when your
sweet tooth isn't in the
mood for chewing

Photo: Lundy Dale



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Meet the What's Brewing Virtual Tasting Panel



OUR LIVE PANEL GOES VIRTUAL!

Check out this special Winter Tasting Panel episode on one of BC's top beer podcasts, **Pacific Beer Chat**. The editor of *What's Brewing* joins the Panel as they Zoom in on our six-pack of "dessert beers". They share some opinions, some insights and some laughs.



WHAT IS A DESSERT BEER?

Well, there's no such thing. That is, you won't find this category in any official list of beer styles. Because it's not a style *per se*, but rather a broad class with some commonalities.

Think pastry stouts, salted caramel porters, flavours like coconut, peanut butter, Mexican chocolate, doughnuts, fudge and anything you'd associate with an after-dinner treat. If you count coffee, oatmeal and milk stouts, then you might want to have them with breakfast again the next morning (see our [Winter 2017 panel episode](#) for more on that).

With the onset of winter, it's a great time to look for these darker, heavier beers with slightly above-average ABV, and save your sweet tooth from doing any of that inconvenient chewing.

WHAT WE SAMPLED

The beers evaluated this round included:	ABV
Bad Tattoo Peanut Butter Chocolate Porter	6.0%
Moody Ales Lusty Chocolate Stout	5.8%
Old Yale Himalayan Salted Caramel Porter	6.0%
Parallel 49 Salty Scot Caramel Scotch Ale	7.5%
Twin Sails Cookie Jar Oatmeal Fudge Stout	6.0%
Vancouver Island Brewing Nanaimo Bar Porter	6.2%

AND THE WINNER IS...

Bad Tattoo's Peanut Butter Chocolate Porter. Check out the podcast episode to hear grown adults going gaga over its amazing aroma. Definitely use a tulip glass or similar vessel to capture its nose. As one of the reviewers said, it would be worth just inhaling this beer all night.

Moody and Old Yale were right behind, but realistically none of the beers got a bad score; they're all great for a sweet treat after dinner.



Continued on next page

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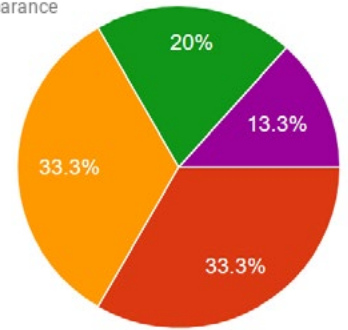
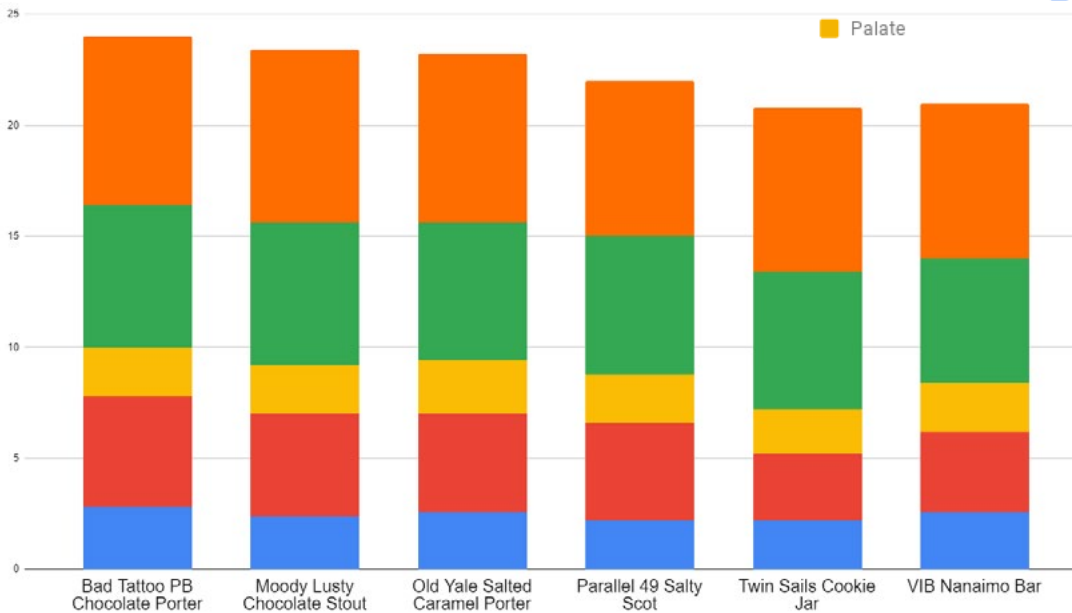
Vancouver • Burnaby • New Westminster • Coquitlam • Richmond • Campbell River • Williams Lake • West Van

OVERALL GROUP / CATEGORY RATINGS

Here's how our six beers scored in these five categories, for a total possible score of 30. For a full list of individual scores, turn to next page.

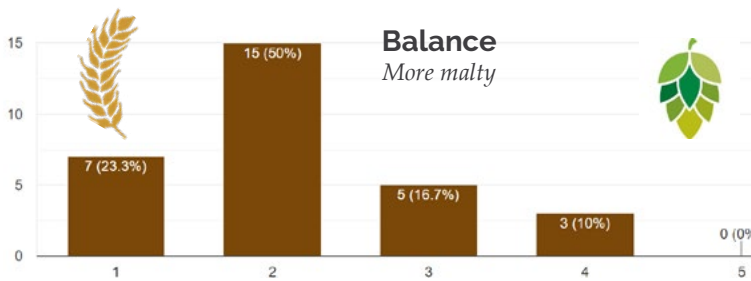
Overall Impression
Flavour
Palate

Aroma
Appearance

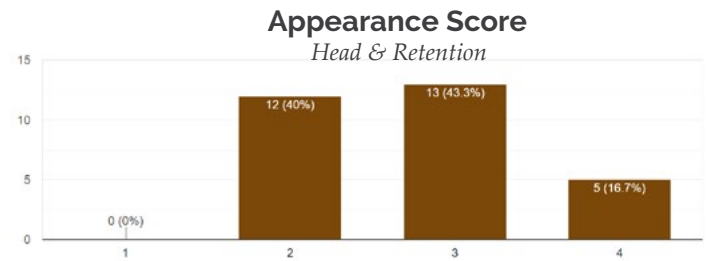


- I didn't finish my sample
- I thought it was fine
- I would pay money for this beer
- I would recommend this beer to a friend
- I would definitely seek this beer out again
- Heading to liquor store right now for more

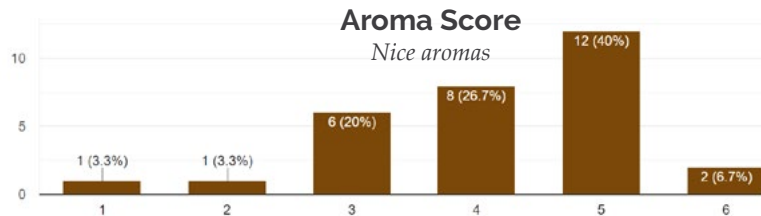
Pie chart tip: start at top of legend and work clockwise from 45 degree mark (3 o'clock) >>



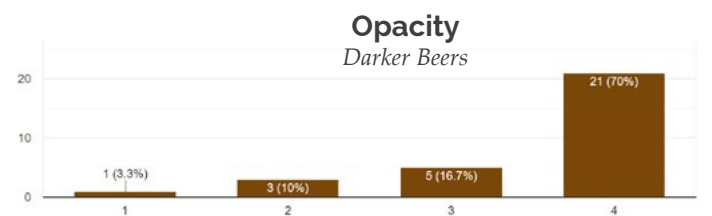
Balance
More malty



Appearance Score
Head & Retention

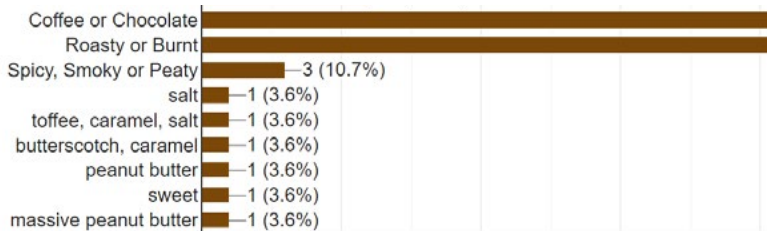


Aroma Score
Nice aromas

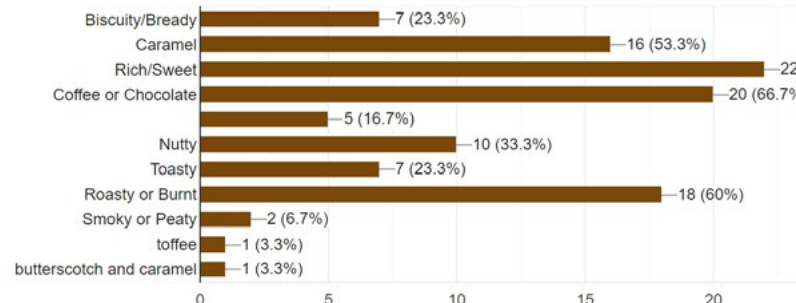


Opacity
Darker Beers

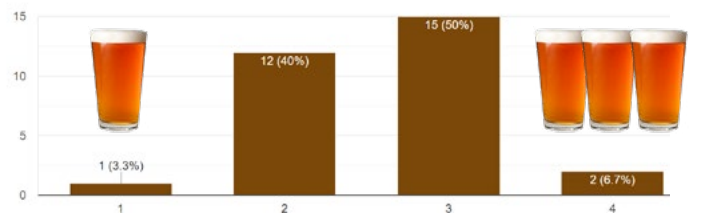
Aromas Detected



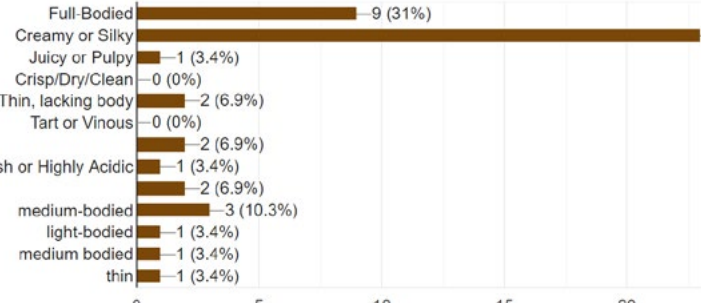
Malt Characteristics



Drinkability








Palate
Sensations such as mouthfeel & body



BAD TATTOO PB CHOCOLATE PORTER 24.0/30

 2.8/3  5.0/6  2.8/3  6.4/8  7.6/10








-  **23** Chocolate and peanut butter. Classic combo. Not too sweet. Slightly on the bitter side of balanced.
-  **27** If you love peanut butter and chocolate, then this is the beer for you. I wish that the peanut butter carried more in the flavour but the aroma was amazing!
-  **22** The beer was well made and enjoyable as a Porter. However, while the aroma speaks of rich peanut butter and chocolate, that is not anywhere near as present in the flavour. It's a good beer but does not scream dessert.
-  **24** Peanut butter beers are rarely executed well but this one hits the mark. PB flavour and aroma is present against a solid porter base. I'd prefer a little more body, but beggars can't be choosers and that is my only (constructive) criticism.
-  **24** My wife is not a fan of peanut butter. The smell of it makes her search the web for "divorce on a budget". Naturally, I would live off peanut butter if I was allowed. Drinking this beer is like indulging in a guilty pleasure behind my wife's back, in front of her face.

PARALLEL 49 SALTY SCOT 22.0/30

 2.2/3  4.4/6  2.2/3  6.2/8  7.0/10







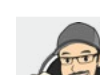
-  **21** Malty with sweet caramel. Hop bitterness balances the sweet. Salty finish.
-  **26** At 7.5% abv, this is a sipping beer, still with a bit of alcohol warmth and flavours reminding me of saltwater taffy. A perfect dessert beer.
-  **22** This is a slow sipper. The sweetness level is a bit high but a good 12oz pour would be perfect.
-  **21** Lots of flavour in this one. It had sweet caramel in waves. This might be your thing, but for me it was a half glass tippie.
-  **20** This beer is a dark horse. I like it, however it's not one I gravitate to. I don't know why, it's just how it is. It's not perfect for every situation, but when it's right, it's right. Right now, on this stormy evening as I sit by the fire, it's right!

 Warren  Lundy  Mike G.  Carnell  Mike A.

MOODY LUSTY CHOCOLATE 24.0/30

 2.4/3  4.6/6 

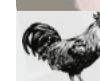






-  **24** Well balanced. Chocolate and grains.
-  **22** Enjoyable stout with a good balance.
-  **24** I wish it was more sweet for a
-  **27** I haven't visited this beer in ages. In stouts, here is a rich, full-bodied stout that begs to be sipped as the stouts that "Stouts are too sweet these days".
-  **20** I remember this beer differently. Change, or maybe my preferences have changed. The beauty cascaded out of the bottle once or twice. Still sexy,

TWIN SAILS COOKIE JAR 22.0/30

 2.2/3  3.0/6 



-  **21** A balance between hop bitterness and the chocolate and caramel notes.
-  **22** Nice and fudgy! Too rich to be a stout, but would be good also made into a stout.
-  **19** Flavour is pretty good but the hop bump up the aroma.
-  **18** Fudge is the most prominent flavour. I feel Twin Sails could really hit with this.
-  **24** If there's one thing I love more than the goodness of cookies into a beer, it's pay to learn! I'm talking a year of learning. Although there's not a lot of learning, it's time for bed.

TE STOUT 23.4/30

2.2/3  6.4/8  7.8/10



malts. Not too much bitter from the roasted

balance of bitter and sweet.

dessert brew, but it is a well-crafted beer.

ges, but I should have. In a world of sweet pastry
ed, roasty-toasty-dark-chocolate-bittersweet beer
now comes down. Extra points for complaining
e days" as you quaff.

tly. Could be my sample, or could be a stylistic
nce changed. I remember lusting big time as this
mber. Now it seems like she's been around the
just without the same enthusiasm as before.

STOUT 20.8/30

2.0/3  6.2/8  7.4/10



ness and roast flavours. The salt works well with
otes.





have more than one, but a great dessert beer and
o an ice cream float or added to a brownie recipe.

he aroma is really lacking. I wish they could just

at characteristic, salt balances, its enjoyable but I
it this recipe out of the park with another batch.

ore than beer, it's cookies. When you throw all
o beer, you're speaking a language that I would
ar long subscription, not just the seven-day trial.
n the nose here, the flavour brings it home. Now

OLD YALE SALTED CARAMEL PORTER 23.2/30

 2.6/3  4.4/6  2.4/3  6.2/8  7.6/10



20

Chocolate and roast with some caramel. Not very salty. A bit of warmth.



19

A nice porter, but the roasty qualities of the malts took over, hiding the caramel aspect. As it warms up, it becomes more obvious.



27

As desserts go this is pretty darn spot on. Sweet but not cloying.



26






A rich, silky and smooth robust porter that does, in fact, taste of salted caramel. I'm not sure you could ask much more of this beer.



24

I could drink this whole beer and have another without thinking about it. It's a good beer to share with a few friends while you sit by the fire and warm your cockles. It could even be a good beer to share with your enemies. I think if we all shared a beer with our enemies, we'd have a lot more friends.

VIB NANAIMO BAR PORTER 21.0/30

 2.6/3  3.6/6  2.2/3  5.6/8  7.0/10



19

Roast and chocolate upfront, coconut and vanilla tucked behind. Finishes with a hop bitterness to counter the sweet malts.



18

I felt that the roasty, toasty, burnt malt notes took over and hid the "nanaimo bar" flavours. Again, a beer that should probably sit for a bit and warm up to really taste the coconut and vanilla notes.



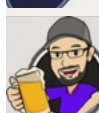
27

The first version of this beer was not all that great. This latest batch is really good though. It brings the flavours of Nanaimo Bars without being really sweet.



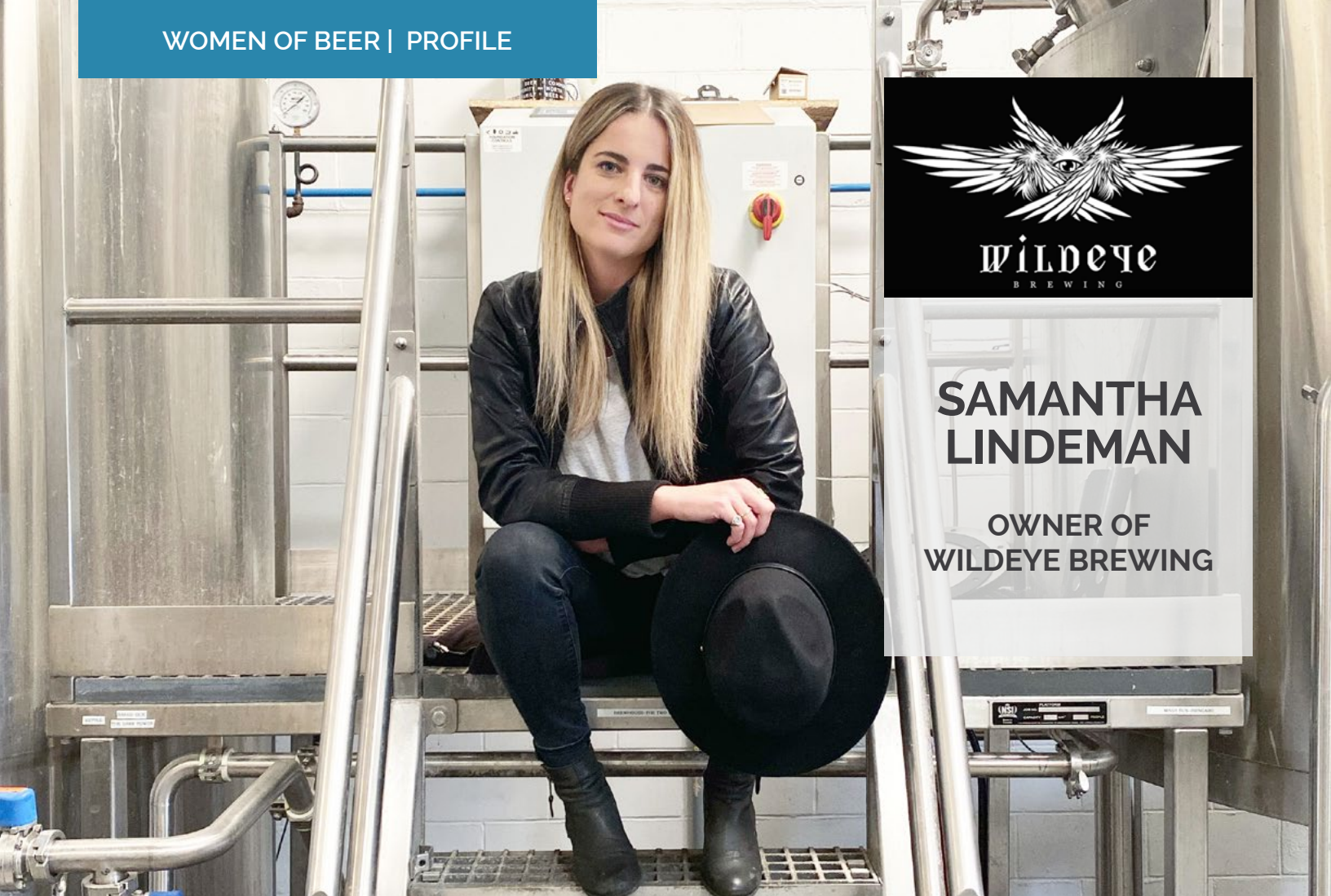
21

Creamy and full bodied, I get a nice bit of vanilla off this. I am still missing the connection to Nanaimo Bars. Even so, if someone was looking for a vanilla stout I would recommend this.



20

I wish I got more of the delicious coconutty chocolate base. Everyone knows that's the best part of the Nanaimo Bar. The mouthfeel is great, the porter flavour is there, but for a dessert beer, I want a bit more personality.



>> LUNDY DALE

I first tried Wildeye's beers about three years ago at an event, and their beer ran out really fast! At that time they were contract brewing out of Factory Brewing (as it was called at that time). In late May of 2019, they finally opened their brewery/tasting room in North Vancouver, an area that has definitely become a destination craft beer hub. The owner and conceiver is Samantha Lindeman, and she is not even thirty!

And if Samantha's last name sounds familiar to you, it should. Her heritage is from the Lindeman family-owned winery, founded in Australia in 1843. So how did a woman who grew up in the world of wine end up opening and running a brewery? Read on... 🍷

A CONVERSATION WITH SAMANTHA LINDEMAN

How long have you wanted to have a brewery?

Since I came up with the idea in my head. What do they say? If you can't get the dream job, build one?

How much of "you" is in Wildeye?

I spend every day and night thinking and dreaming about Wildeye and the next steps for the brand. It's quite hard to shut it off, but I couldn't imagine it any differently.

As owner and principal, what role did you play in creating this brewery?

It took me years to create the vision of Wildeye Brewing in my head. After I was confident in the business plan, I took it to friends and family, waiting for them to tell me that I was out to lunch. Every single person felt confident in my plan, so at that point I felt I had no option but to move forward. I handled every stage of the build out from start to finish.

Why the name?

'Wildeye' came from our love for wild ferment beers. The logo was inspired by an angelic creature called a seraph. We are also just a little bit wild, so the name seemed fitting.

Your background and name are from the wine industry, why the change/switch to craft beer? What brought you into the industry?

When I was working in the wine industry, craft beer wasn't really talked about like it is now. We had a handful of craft breweries in Vancouver, but most people I knew didn't talk about it much. Then while I was working for a winery in Australia, I came across a new craft brewery nearby and I couldn't believe the complexity of aromas and flavours in the beer, much like a wine. It was nothing like the American lagers that I was used to. From that moment on, I started researching craft breweries around the world, and my passion for beer surpassed my enthusiasm for wine.

How were you trained?

I dabbled in college but what benefited me the most was asking for a TON of help. You would be surprised by the number of people that have built breweries or other companies that are so willing to help. With all kinds of things like what chemicals are needed for a boiler, I did not know by the way.

How involved are you with the day to day operations?

I have a hand in all the day-to-day operations while focusing the majority of my time on sales. It's something I can't ever see changing. I plan to be sitting at the bars when I'm 60 still pushing Wildeye.

Have you ever brewed? Do you get involved with the brewery planning and ideas?

As much as I would love to spend time brewing, there just isn't enough time in the day. We schedule "beer storming" sessions and often create recipes as a team. I also like to involve our kitchen staff, front of house managers and sales reps to the sessions. It's important to me that everyone at Wildeye is excited about the beers we are making.

You appear to have a focus on women on your team, from brewers to front of house, was that planned?

It's very important that we support women in the beer industry, but I didn't go out of my way to hire women in the roles available. It just so happened that the best fits for our team were female. I think it's also a testament to how putting women in the positions of power will result in more inclusivity for women.

As a woman, do you feel respected in your work?

I do. I feel that the times of not feeling respected are fewer and far between. It should be about the beer at the end of the day, and not who's selling or brewing it.

Are there advantages/disadvantages of being a woman in the industry?

I believe that there are advantages and disadvantages in the industry regardless of gender. There are some obvious ones in the beer industry, but you don't need to grow a beard and own a plaid shirt anymore to brew and sell delicious beer.



CanneryBrewing.com

What do you love about the industry?

I love how connected everyone is in this industry. It's all about collaborations and working with the community but nothing beats sitting at one of my favourite local bars crushing a Wildeye after a long day.

What is your favourite Wildeye beer and why?

My favourite beer is our *Belgian Blond Rosé*. Michael, our brewmaster, has a passion for Belgian beers which you can truly see come through in this beer. The rosé part of the beer is a collaboration with our friends at the Hatch Winery. I drove down to Kelowna and back in an afternoon to pick up Pinot Noir skins moments after they were crushed. Bringing our love for beer and wine together in this collaboration was very exciting.

What is your favourite beer outside of your brewery and why?

Field House Brewing and Four Winds Brewing have always been my favourite local breweries. I like to try something new each time but *Quadrennial* was next level.

Favourite female in the industry?

This may sound a bit vague, but I look up to every woman in the beer world. Together we are building a more inclusive industry.

What sets you apart from the other breweries in Vancouver?

I wanted to build a brewery that was inclusive to all. Somewhere that everyone would feel comfortable visiting and spending their day or evening just hanging out. We also have a killer chef, Erica. She has been creating some elevated dishes that pair really well with our beers. Before COVID-19 we focused on in-house beer events and always had live music. We hope to bring that back soon!

Biggest achievement to date?

Opening a brewery... That shit wasn't easy! 🍷



LUNDY DALE

Lundy is a founder of CAMRA BC's Vancouver chapter, Barley's Angels' Pink Pints Chapter and BC Craft Beer Month. Past President of CAMRA BC, and recipient of the BC Beer Awards Legend award.





TO THE PACIFIC RIM: EXPLORING THE BREWERIES OF BC'S FAR WEST

Ucluelet Brewing

>> BRIAN K. SMITH

In these times of social distancing and closed borders, we still have opportunities to explore in our own backyard. If you live in the Lower Mainland, this is quite easy. I am going to take you on a four-day trip to Vancouver Island's west coast to check out new arrivals in the craft beer industry, easily and affordably. It's a great mini-vacation that provides many opportunities to taste premium craft beer (and spirits), and meet some amazing people.

Our trip begins in Vancouver. It is much cheaper to get a bus from downtown to Horseshoe Bay, walk on to the ferry (8:30 am to Departure Bay) and rent a car in Nanaimo than it is to take your own car on the ferry. Budget Rent a Car will pick you up at the ferry and take you to their downtown Nanaimo lot, ten minutes away. What you save on car ferry fares can be enough to cover the four-day rental!

Port Alberni

Skirting the Nanaimo craft beer scene, our first destination is 80 minutes north west, in Port Alberni. Here are our first two craft breweries. **Twin City Brewing** is one block off of Highway 4, at the corner of Margaret Street and Southgate Road, and **Dog Mountain Brewing** is in the old part of town (2 km away). Do check ahead for days of the week they are open, to make sure you can visit both.

I recommend arriving at Twin City for lunch (and our timing was perfect after the ferry and the car rental). Owner/head brewer Aaron Colyn has a great line up of fresh core and seasonal beers on tap. I had their juicy brisket sandwich, called the Bulgogi Brisket— Korean smoked marinated beef brisket, toasted brioche bun, mozzarella, Napa cabbage, crunchy carrot and daikon slaw, and gochujang aioli pairs perfectly with a *SparkChaser Smoked Red Ale*. If you are in the mood for pizza, theirs is second to none on the Island, possibly in all of BC! My favourite is the Maui Wowee. To be eaten, not smoked!

During my stay in Port Alberni, I learned exciting news of a third brewery in the works. Safe to say, you should plan an overnight stay. Looking for something different and unique, I checked into the floating **Swept Away Inn** down at the harbour. The M.V. Songhee is a 100-foot, converted 1944 minesweeper/tug. Daniel and Bouchra Savard serve up a wonderful Mediterranean-style breakfast in the morning (included). You can also book seats at a Moroccan dinner party on board, most weekends. Bouchra prepares the main course and Dan does the desserts.

Dan has a good supply of Belgian and local craft beers deep in the ship's hold for a nightcap.

Award-winning BC craft spirits and wine are also available. Swept Away Inn is open from April 1 through October 15.



Checking in to the Swept Away

From the harbor, you can see the bright green street facade of Dog Mountain Brewery, just four blocks away at Argyle Street & Third Avenue. Head up the hill for happy hour on the rooftop patio and there's a good chance you'll meet Andy Richards and Robin Miles (owners/brewers) as they serve their delicious brews to your table. Recently they have added a tent to the roof, so life on the roof can be awesome all winter long. The beer board menu had twelve great beers listed plus a guest tap: **Strathcona Beer Company's** "Love Buzz" Sour. The house favourite during my visit was #7, the *Pineapple Pale Ale*. I also really enjoyed the seasonal *Arm's Length Blueberry IPA*. For dinner, I recommend the Dark Tower Donair, a juicy mix of spicy beef and lamb. Be sure to visit the downstairs bar where there is canned beer, cigar box electric guitars (yes, electric three-strings that work) and DMB collectables for purchase. The downhill walk back from the brewery was appreciated after a few pints, and I



Dog Mountain



Dog Mountain Brewing

returned to Swept Away in time to have a Belgian tripel before bed. With a third brewery, Port Alberni might require a two-night stop!

Waking up on a tugboat in the morning with a fresh sea breeze wafting in your cabin window from the Alberni Inlet is an experience you won't forget.

If there is a bunk above you, don't sit up too fast (ouch!). The smell of fresh coffee and Moroccan spices softly fill the passageway from the galley. Ask Dan and Bouchra to share their story of how they arrived in Port Alberni.

Ucluelet

After breakfast, drive across town and connect to Highway 4A west. A stunning two-hour drive awaits you, on your way to the westernmost breweries on the Pacific coast of Canada. During my visit, there was some major road work alongside Kennedy Lake. Check ahead for the highway status. Ucluelet sits on the southernmost part of the Ucluth Peninsula. Tourism, recreation, commercial/sport

fishing and forestry power this town. It has a number of high-end resorts, but has some affordable places too. I stayed in the West Coast Motel On The Harbour, with the picturesque Ucluelet harbour, full of docked fishing boats, in front. From here it is only a five minute walk to Ucluelet Brewing.

Each end of the Pacific Rim Peninsula offers lots of activities. On the southern end, the Wild Coast Trail is of particular interest, with open views of Barkley Sound, the Broken Island Group, Amphitrite Lighthouse, and the historic, shipwrecking, wild Pacific Ocean coast. It has many access points and is easy to walk. Make sure to visit the Ucluelet Aquarium, which offers close-up views of marine life from Barkley & Clayoquot Sound waters. Once a year, everything on view is returned to the ocean habitat. There is also **Pacific Rim Distillery**, with award winning gin and vodka distilled from secret family recipes.



The new centre-piece in town is Ucluelet Brewing (previously a church named St. Aiden's on the Hill), on the corner of Peninsula and Main. This young brewery had its grand opening on February 14, 2020, just one month before the COVID-19 pandemic shut everything down. I asked owner/manager Dennis Morgan how they managed to get through the early days of the pandemic. He said "the only thing I could do was sell growler fills out of our front door. I would make about \$200 a day."

The craft beers produced here are from



Ucluelet Brewing

master brewer Allan Cukier. The name might sound familiar for those who know **R&B Brewing** in Vancouver. Allan started brewing test batches for the Ucluelet

Brewery months before opening, providing a solid line-up of great beers on their current menu.

One of my favourites is the *South Swell IPA* (6.5%ABV, 55 IBU). It's like the whole west-coast experience in one glass! A total of nine beers were on tap during my visit, including a wit, a porter, and a sour. There is also a small kitchen on site.

I had a Cajun Pulled Chicken Wrap—definitely recommended.

I was up early the next morning to watch the sun and fog play on the harbour in front of my hotel. Mid-morning, I met my longtime Ucluelet resident friends for breakfast at The Blue Room, right next to the brewery. Friendly staff and a solid, hearty breakfast menu makes this a number one spot to start your day. On my way out of town I stopped at the government dock to see a colony of sea lions 50 metres off shore on a float. The barking and cajoling from these big, bad boys can be heard throughout the town!

Tofino

After passing the Highway 4 turn off, heading north towards Tofino, you enter Pacific Rim National Park Reserve. The first time I visited here was as a child back in the late 1960's. I always feel the same excitement today as I did back then. Rain-forest board walks and long expansive beaches, with the raw power of the Pacific Ocean crashing down, are worth visiting over and over during your stay. Even in the shoulder seasons, surfers can be seen



Twin City Brewing

Continued on page 26

Continued from page 26

riding the crest of the waves from dawn to dusk. The fresh, crisp air feels exhilarating as you walk for endless kilometres along the white sand beaches. Be sure to purchase a park pass.

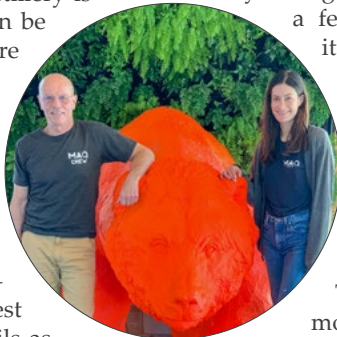
Just before the town is **Tofino Brewing**. This brewery has been serving its delicious beers, such as the *Kelp Stout* and *Tuff Session Ale*, since 2011.

I sat down with marketing manager Allan Pearson to see how things have gone during this year. Back in March, the brewery stopped production for two months. Ever since then, they have been playing catchup. Four of the eleven beers offered throughout the year are seasonal, including the *Dawn Patrol Coffee Porter*, *Cosmic Wave Double IPA*, *Winter Lager*, and the *Spruce Tree Ale*. Growler fills are available to take back to your hotel.



Tofino Brewing

Next door is **Tofino Distillery** (opened June 2018), with a great selection of gin, vodka, liquors and upcoming whiskies. Neil Campbell, one of three owners/full-time distillers, sat down with me to discuss their products. The distillery is certified organic, so you can be sure the spirits from here are of the best quality. I tasted the *Old Growth Cedar* and *Rose Hibiscus Lavender* gins and the *Espresso* and *Jalapeno* vodkas. I also recommend their *Psychedelic Jellyfish Absinthe*, *Beach Fire Cinnamon Liqueur*, and *Limoncello*. You can also request a limited number of cocktails as tasters on site.



MAQ Hotel, Tofino

In the town of Tofino, I stayed in the recently renovated MAQ, a historical hotel/

pub previously known as the Maquinna, after the Nootka chief who met Captain James Cook and George Vancouver in the 1770s. Owner John Hooks has added lots of Art Nouveau style and open space to the main floor lobby. The rooms are modern and comfortable with new bathrooms and reclaimed Alberta barn wood on the walls (although the walls are a bit thin). Just down the hill is the terminus for the Trans-Canada Highway and the government dock. Take a walk down there in the early morning to experience the fog playing with the surrounding islands and mountain ranges, making a beautiful dreamscape.

I noticed two float planes tied up at the dock and in the afternoon I went on a 30-minute tour with Tofino Air. Pilot Connor has been flying in the area for the past two years in all

sorts of weather so I was pretty confident the sunny afternoon should pose no problems. It was a spectacular tour flying between peaks on the island and up and down inlets. If you've got the time and a few spare dollars

it is certainly worthwhile. Tough City Sushi, just a block away, will give you the best view of the harbour while you enjoy some great sushi washed down with a local craft beer.



Tofino Air

The short vacation to the most westerly craft beer production area in Canada ended all too soon. I learned a lot about

how the owners of not only breweries and distilleries, but also the supporting busi-



Tofino Distillery

nesses, had adjusted to 2020. Flexibility and the necessity to make quick changes have most of them in a stable state now. It was really heartwarming to see how the BC tourism and local support have pulled together to ensure everyone can survive.

Although the winter may not be the ideal time to head out through the mountains, spring is just around the corner. 🍷

Congrats to Brian!

Brian was recently named 2020 British Columbia Photographer of the Year by the **Professional Photographers of Canada**.

This is an award of distinction that recognizes how seriously Brian takes his craft. There were professional entries from all over BC, and for the first time Brian came out on top. *What's Brewing* congratulates Brian on being BC's best in 2020! - Editor



BRIAN K. SMITH, MPA

is an accredited member of the BC Association of Travel Writers, and is Chief Photographer for *What's Brewing*.



Twin City



NORTHERN CRAFT IN CHANGING TIMES

>> ADAM ARTHUR

These are most certainly challenging times for independent craft breweries in Prince George, and Northern BC as a whole. Yet many have stepped up in order to keep the spirit of the craft beer community alive!

The most significant collaboration to mention is the partnership between the Prince George Humane Society and **Trench Brewing & Distilling**. On October 17, the humane society hosted the Ales For Tails online fundraising event at the brewery. It celebrated the release of the *PG Humane Society Rescue Brew*, a delicious ESB. Partial proceeds from the sales will go towards the ongoing care of the animals at the shelter.

During the month of October, **CrossRoads Brewing & Distillery** held a series of Brewmaster's dinners. I had the pleasure of being able to attend one by winning a contest through the Prince George Downtown Business Improvement Association. The food and beer pairings were excellent; the highlight beer was the *Iced Coffee Porter*. So tasty!

Another highlight was the release of the *Explore BC IPA* with Haskap Berry, in conjunction with the BC Ale Trail and BC Craft Beer Month. This was one yummy brew. Northern BC was represented by the **Wheelhouse Brewing Company**. This beer made it to Prince George in stores and was on tap at the **Nancy O's Restaurant**. Speaking of Nancy O's, folks really should try this place if they make it to Prince George. The food and BC Craft Beer



selection is excellent. So pleased knowing that the 52 Foot Stout from Barkerville Brewing Co. is now on tap.

Speaking of the BC Ale Trail, Dawson Creek's Post & Row Taphouse & Eatery is now on the list. I look forward to getting there and trying it one day. I most certainly will have the beers of **Fort St. John's Mighty Peace Brewing Co.** and **Beard's Brewing Company** once I have the opportunity to check it out. Perhaps they will have the Breakfast Porter from Mighty Peace Brewing Co. on tap. Overall, the Northern BC Ale Trail is worth exploring by far!

Speaking of beer, interesting ones that I had early in the Fall included *Lichtenhainer Smoked Sour Wheat Ale* from **Smithers Brewing Co.**, *Sherwood Mountain Brewhouse's Munich Lager* and the *Just the Tip – Spruce Tip Ale* from **Three Ranges Brewing**.

Two radio stations in Prince George are now promoting local, independent craft beer. There's Thirsty Thursdays with CrossRoads Brewing & Distillery, hosted by 99.3 The Drive - Classic Hits. This program highlights CrossRoads beers and also includes some craft beer education. And 94.3 The Goat – World Class Rock, hosts the Trench Brewing Friday 4 Pack. Honestly, these are two great ways to get the word of local, delicious, independently brewed craft beer out there to the folks in Prince George.

Overall, the independent craft breweries in Prince George and Northern BC are finding ways to survive. Their selections are popping up at restaurants in Northern BC. They're also collaborating with wonderful non-profit organizations like the PG Humane Society to ensure that they also survive, they're collaborating with local media to spread the word of craft, and they're truly displaying the ethos of craft. The independent craft breweries of Northern BC are simply amazing. And hopefully they will get through these tough times. Cheers to that! 🍷



ADAM ARTHUR

is a craft beer fan since 2010 who's glad to represent Northern BC and the city of Prince George. He supports independent craft breweries in (and outside of) BC.



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WEST KOOTENAY BREWERS

Craft For Community

>> SARAH BEAUCHAMP

You are sitting at your favourite bar in town watching the bartender pour that familiar winter ale that always signals the beginning of ski season. As you wait for them to slide that frosty mug of beer down your direction, you probably aren't thinking about hop farmers, or the ways the brewery is trying to cut back on water consumption, or what happens to all the grain at the bottom of the fermentation tanks.

For Hedin Nelson-Chorney, owner of Tailout Brewing in Castlegar, British Columbia, he knows all too well that beer and the environment go hand in hand. As a former employee of Parks Canada, with a Masters degree in Conservation Biology, Hedin has a deep understanding of the importance of treating the land well. "Hops are the lifeblood of beer," he says. Land and beer are intertwined.

Hedin does his best to buy hops from B.C farmers, however, Canadian hop farmers face so many obstacles. While western Canada is known as the grain belt of North America, British Columbia is just starting to obtain more proprietary rights over hops. Today, pricing and trademarks are the biggest challenges for farmers here in this region; it is difficult to compete with American growers who are able to offer such a wide range of trendy hop varieties. If there were more incentives to buy locally, such as tax breaks for brewers who use locally grown hops, people like Hedin who are just starting out in the brewing industry would be in a better position to support local industry.

One of the core values for Tailout Brewing is community and Hedin tries to focus on how they can support local business. Hedin and his partner Mary Lusty, who is also Tailout's head brewer, moved to Castlegar for its small town charm and its incredible landscapes. Hedin wants his brewery to be the hub of the com-



On tap at Tailout Brewing in Castlegar, BC. Photo: Louis Bockner.

munity, a place for people to enjoy beer responsibly, while getting out there to experience some of the best outdoor living British Columbia has to offer. "We are so lucky to be living here in the Kootenays," he says.

This is one of the reasons why he started the Mug Club, a membership program that gives participants special discounts on merchandise, growler fills, as well as special events and member parties. This year they hosted a Fly Fishing Film Festival in their tasting room. Each member even receives their own custom mug designed by a local potter. Hedin sees the brewery as a space to engage the community in meaningful ways. For Tailout Brewing the goal is simple: they just want to bring people together.

The popularity of craft breweries has exploded over the past ten years. Each small community here in British Columbia seems to have their own microbrewery, and although you would think this would make the brewing industry competitive between towns, Hedin has experienced quite the opposite. "There are good relationships back and forth between all the brewers here," he says.



*Hedin Nelson-Chorney & Mary Lusty, Tailout Brewing.
Photo: Louis Bockner.*

Trail, Rossland, Salmo, and Castlegar now all have their own breweries; in Nelson there are three microbreweries currently operating, including Nelson Brewing Company, which is fast approaching their 30th anniversary.

Simon Barna has been with NBC for seven years, acting as the head brewer for the last three. Having spent his youth working at the Kingston Brewery, Simon was grateful for landing the position with Nelson Brewing Company, who even paid for him to attend brewing school.



The original Nelson Brewing and Ice company opened in this building in 1897 and operated with success until the 1960s. In 1992, the Nelson Brewing Company opened their brewery in that same location.

Photo: Sarah Beauchamp.

"Local breweries have always been the cornerstone of community," he says. From sponsoring neighbourhood sports teams to partnering with local charities, NBC's core values include giving back to the place they call home. Another value: supporting organic agriculture.

In 2006, NBC decided to transition the brewery to fully organic to better reflect the values of their community. This means that they pay up to 45% more for their products while adhering to numerous rules and regulations, including surprise organic inspections to maintain their certification.

"It is an added expense, but that certification is important for the company," Simon says.

Ten years ago, it was almost impossible to obtain organic malt. Today there is a lot more research going into barley and hops growing, which is exciting for the agricultural side of brewing. With the popularity of microbreweries, there is a lot of potential for B.C hop growers to prosper. For NBC, maintaining relationships with organic hop farmers here in our province is something they value.

Just like Hedin at Tailout Brewing, NBC is also very mindful of their environmental impact. Brewing creates a lot of waste, and the team tries to use as much of their green waste as possible. Their leftover grain goes to farms in the community; their pro-

tein and hop matter creates a nitrogen that is excellent fibre for compost soils. They even installed an ozonator to avoid the use of industrial sanitizers full of unwanted chemicals.



Simon Barna has worked with NBC for seven years. He has been the Head Brewer for three years. Photo: Sarah Beauchamp.

However, Simon says their biggest win of the year was being able to save on water consumption. This year the brewery was able to upgrade their heat exchanger, which allows them to trap hot water and use it to brew the next day. Brewing requires a lot of water, so this has been a game changer for their team, and another step closer to crafting beer in more sustainable ways.

Brewers like Hedin and Simon are finding innovative ways to craft beers with sustainability, community, and environment in mind so that we may carry on enjoying pints of our favourite hops and barley. Our local breweries craft with their community in mind. 🍺



SARAH BEAUCHAMP

traded in her city life for laid-back Kootenay living. She contributes to *Living Here*, an online publication telling positive stories from rural communities around BC. www.livinghere.ca



Kind of makes you feel like grabbing a cold one! Photo: Louis Bockner.

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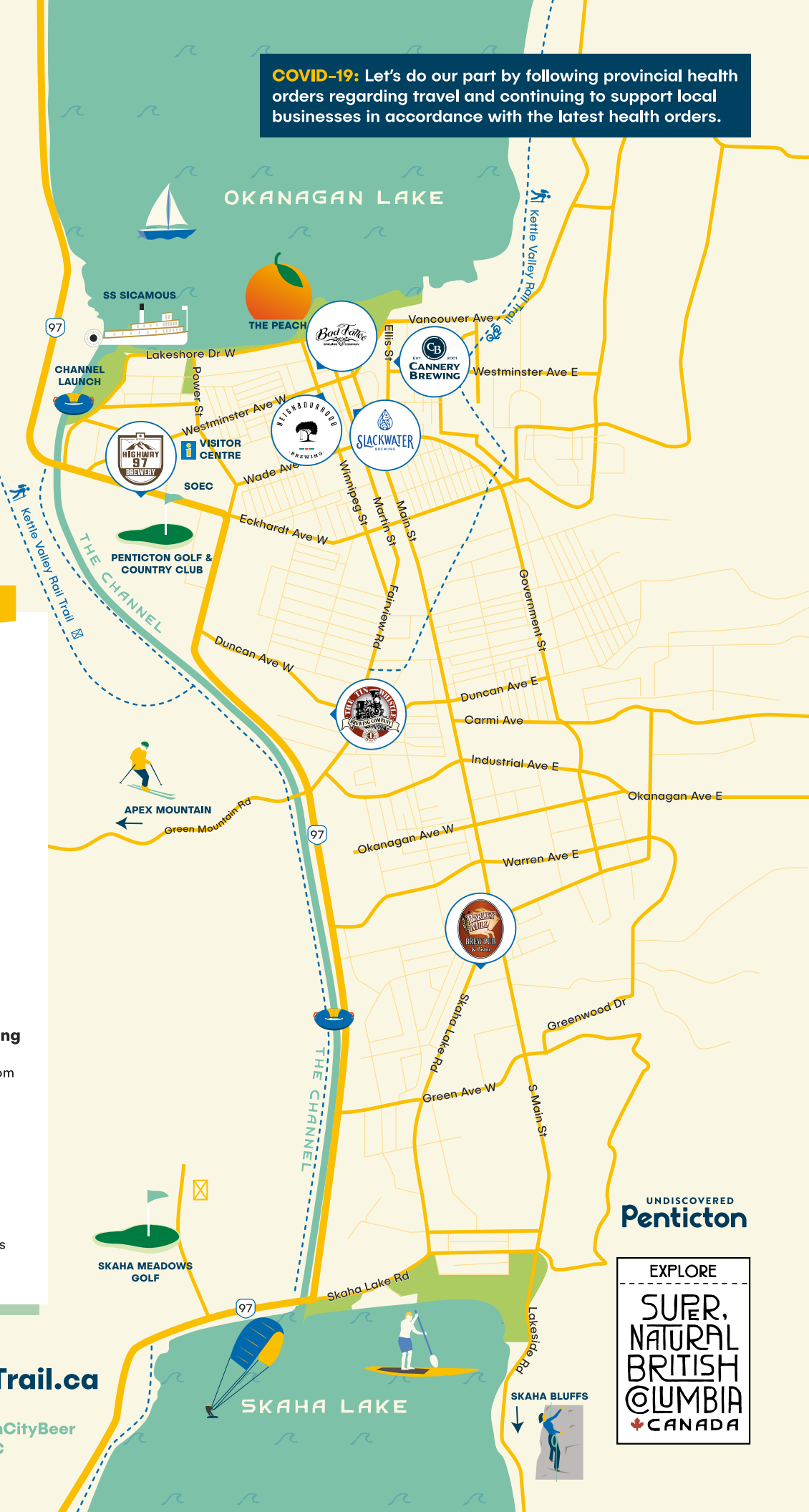
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CANADA

WINTER IN THE OKANAGAN

>> KIM LAWTON



Cannery Brewhouse

Despite the challenges of COVID-19 restrictions, regulations and rules, the South Okanagan craft beer industry has adapted, pivoted and endured. I'm very proud of all the ways that our breweries have innovated and changed their business models. The passion of the craft brewing community is strong and has fueled creativity and innovative thinking. It's exciting to see all of the changes to our craft brewing scene.

One of the highly anticipated changes to Penticton's craft beer field is the arrival of **Neighbourhood Brewing**, which recently opened. Neighbourhood is Penticton's seventh brewery and one of BC's newest.

The stunning purpose-built brewery building is 10,000 square feet, spread out over two floors with a 25 HL brewhouse built by Ripley's Stainless in Summerland. They have a 150-person patio which features a big outdoor fireplace. Plan to stay a while, as they have 30 taps including Neighbourhood's beers, beer from their sister brewery **Yellow Dog Brewing**, guest taps, local cider, and wine.

There are also big changes at Penticton's first craft brewery, **Tin Whistle Brewing**. After celebrating their 25th anniversary this year, the brewery now has new owners, Tim Scoon and Alexis Esseltine. Tim and Alexis are excited to continue the legacy that Lorraine and Mike Nagy built with Tin Whistle. Tim and Alexis have a number of new things in the works, including brewing their first new beer in December for release in January. When you visit, plan to enjoy a beer in their newly expanded indoor tasting room.

To deal with reduced capacity, **Bad Tattoo Brewing** in Penticton decided to cover

their patio with a heated tent to increase their seating for the winter. It will be connected to the brewery building, and they will have the garage door open to essentially offer an extended interior.

Cannery Brewing transformed a section of their brewhouse into a beautiful new indoor seating area. Floor-to-ceiling pallets of empty cans enclose the welcoming space in the Cannery Brewhouse that blends the warehouse atmosphere and high ceilings with warm lights and a friendly vibe. Once restrictions allow for it, the return of Sunday night live background music will further enhance the experience.

Having a large space where guests can be physically separated in different sections, **Slackwater Brewing** plans to add add back programming such as Tuesday trivia nights, live music, and smaller brewmaster dinners when permitted. They recently launched an expanded winter menu including a Little Slackers menu, and delicious coffee-based specialty beverages made with collaboration coffee beans from local roaster Seis Cielo Specialty Coffees.

Highway 97 Brewing is busy working on plans for their move to their new, larger downtown location, right across the street from Cannery Brewing, in spring 2021. Once they are in their new location, Penticton will feature five downtown breweries all within a quick walk of each other.


Firehall Brewery in Oliver added an enclosed and heated tent to their large patio. This provides a comfortable space that is partially open to the outside air. They also rent out time around propane firepits, which customers can book online for their household bubble. They also plan to

host some limited-capacity events such as trivia once allowed, and an expanded food menu with daily specials.

Summerland's **Breakaway Brewing** took over space in the building beside them to create a newly expanded seating area. The new space doubled their capacity and now accommodates up to 48 guests. They also completed their production facility and have started brewing in-house. Their beers are exclusively available on site. They have a number of new beers planned throughout the winter that can be enjoyed alongside their new taco menu.

Since now is not the time to travel, and you can't visit Canada's Craft Beer Capital, enjoy a taste of Penticton with a number of delicious winter beers available around BC. Bad Tattoo has two new winter beers coming out in December: their *Red Plum Winter Sour* and *Nordic Nights Winter Ale*. These join their recently released *Peanut Butter Chocolate Porter*.

Cannery Brewing will have a variety of stouts to keep you warm this winter. The *Darkling Oatmeal Stout* and *Heist Maple Stout* are both back now in 473ml cans. Watch for the return of the *Kindling Imperial Stout* brewed with coffee, chocolate, oats and coconut. It's available in 473ml cans at private liquor stores around BC, just in time for Christmas.

Highway 97 has three seasonal fall and winter beers. *Mountain Man Cranberry & Orange Witbier* is a limited-release Christmas ale fermented on cranberries and conditioned on orange peels. *Coquihalla ESA* is a limited-release mild malt-forward ale, and the *New Reality Hoppy Blonde Ale* features Lemondrop hops. Look for all of them in 473ml cans. 



KIM LAWTON is a craft beer fan, a long-time supporter of the craft beer movement, President of CAMRA South Okanagan and the Marketing Director at Cannery Brewing in Penticton. She can be reached via Instagram @DogLegMarketing

CREAM OF THE CROP

» ADAM CHATBURN

As a recent transplant to the North Island community of Comox, I had fun in the fall, social-distance visiting the local breweries. I noticed that a big seller was cream ale—both **Gladstone Brewing** and **Land & Sea Brewing** were serving it as fast as they could make it. Even Dave Paul's nano-operation **Love Shack Libations** in Qualicum keeps a cream ale as one of his four core beers.

What is a cream ale in Canada? Let's start with what it is not. It's not a lactose-sweetened beer, like a cream stout. There's no cream in it. Neither is it an Irish cream ale like **Kilkenny**, that's usually just a nitro version of an Irish red ale. It actually has more in common with the American light lagers we all know and avoid. Its roots may lie with the almost-extinct **Kentucky Common**, an amber ale made with corn grits that predates the US Civil War.

Produced from mash to glass in a week and sold for almost half the cost of a lager, this "Common" or "Cream Beer" was the cheapest beer available to bars. Unlagered, and kegged while still actively fermenting, it likely had a problem with diacetyl, the buttery popcorn flavour of incomplete fermentation. The under-attenuated finish and lingering corn sweetness may have helped hide the diacetyl and contributed to the "cream" flavour, making a feature out of the bug, as it were. Some believe that it may have even been soured with *Lactobacillus* to earn the "cream" moniker but the evidence for that is flimsy; infected wood barrels and poor sanitation probably led to spoilage from bugs rather than a deliberate sourness.

Why is it Canadian? By the time US Prohibition began, this proto-cream ale accounted for around 75% of beer sold in Kentucky and had similar lighter analogues throughout the East. During that time, Canadian brewers appropriated the style and refined it: the dark malts were cut, the corn grits gave way to flaked corn, and the grain bill began to look more like a light lager. Longer lagering reduced the diacetyl and an ale that thinks it's a lager was reborn. It remained a decent seller but generally sidelined as just another homogeneous light macro beer. Old-fash-

ioned and uncool, it was something of an upset when *Sleeman's Cream Ale* unexpectedly won Canadian Brewing Awards gold in 2015.

The style had an odd renaissance in the early days of craft when BC institutions **R&B Brewing** and **Shaftebury Brewing** both launched cream ales in the '90s. Oddly, these beers were actually strong dark milds inspired by John Mitchell's traditional British ales and had little to do with the historical Canadian cream ale. Some of these dark milds/cream ales still exist in BC. You may also be familiar with the Montreal version, such as *St. Ambroise Cream Ale* from MacAusland, which is a nitro pale ale inspired by the Kilkenny-style Irish cream ales.

It's easy to see how consumers are so confused by this enigmatic and largely inaccurate name, hence why defining a Canadian cream ale may be beneficial, if only for the purpose of this article.

I spoke to my old friend Tak Guenette, head brewer at Gladstone about their *Cream Ale*. "Corn adds a mellow sweetness that is completely different from crystal malt. The lack of protein cuts down the body, giving the beer a different balance," he said. "Our hopping rate is probably a bit higher than average, with three charges at 1.25g/L. The corn supports and really allows the old-world hops to shine." Gladstone uses 18% corn in the mash, an expensive amount as this "cheap" adjunct is a specialty grain and costs about twice as much as the malt.

Dave Paul of **Loveshack Libations** in Qualicum has *Crafty Cream Ale* as a core beer, "I don't do too much different," he said. "Fair bit of flaked corn in the mash, bit of Vienna and Munich malt, and some pretty mild hops. Bittered with Centennial but kept under 20 IBU. I think there's a reason it's my number one seller. I call it the gateway beer, lots of people in the area (let's face it, our population is a little older) hear 'craft beer' and think hoppy IPA's, when they're used to *Lucky Lager* and *Kokanee*, etc. When they get dragged to a brewery or brought a beer, they try this cream ale and find out that a lighter style beer can actually have flavour and mouthfeel!"

Tessa Gabiniewicz, Head Brewer at **Land & Sea Brewing** in Comox (my new local) has *Glacier Cream Ale* in their core lineup.



Gladstone Cream Ale.
Photo: Untappd / Derek L

"It was one of the first brews I did on our system and the recipe is pretty much unchanged in the two years since", she notes. "It's always a challenge to make as there's nowhere to hide (flaws). It keeps me honest."

I asked her, why make a cream ale and why do you think it's such a hit in the North Island? She explained that she didn't know Gladstone had one first. "I always liked ales that have been lagered so I knew I wanted something like a Kölsch, but with corn that's clean, crisp, and crushable. I think it's just a coincidence that so many brewers in the area made this style of cream ale but I don't think that it's a coincidence that they are our best sellers."

In the past, I've been asked by people curious about craft beer if there's a craft cream ale. Hard to know which style of cream ale they meant! The term is now so ambiguous that you could wind up with any of the above styles. I think some folk who are craft-curious see it as a way to dip their toe with a familiar inoffensive style, and that's why it's important to remind the world that this is a gateway beer. Hopefully craft versions spread out from here! In a Lucky part of the world it's an easy drinking, light in colour and body, locally-produced ray of sunshine. ☀️

ADAM CHATBURN

is former president of CAMRA Vancouver. Follow him at [@real_cask](#) on Instagram and [@realcask](#) on Twitter. He doesn't post very much, but when he does it's awesome.



WARREN'S IMPERIAL STOUT

>> WARREN BOYER

Winter is upon us once again. With holiday gatherings being limited in size, and people spending a bit more time around the house than previous years, there are more opportunities to make homebrew. Colder months are generally more suited to beers that are stronger in both flavour and alcohol. I have talked about barley wine in past columns, so this year I thought I would suggest an Imperial Stout.



This recipe will create a 9.5% ABV stout. Ideally it should be conditioned for several months, so put some bottles away for next year (next to the bottles of barley wine in your cellar).

If you want to step it up a bit and mimic a barrel-aged beer, you could use some oak cubes with this recipe. There are a few ways to use oak cubes effectively, some methods are easier while others allow more control over the level of wood flavour you are adding to the beer. I suggest using around 50 grams of sanitized oak cubes in your fermenter. You can sanitize them by gently boiling for 10 minutes or soaking them in vodka or bourbon. You could use the water from boiling as a tea or use the spirits as a tincture to add more wood flavour to the beer. If you use a primary and a secondary, then use them in the secondary. You can age the beer in a fermenter from two weeks up to two months on the oak cubes. If you prefer a strong wood flavour, use a bit more; if you like it more subtle, use a bit less.

Spirals or barrel staves can be used as well. Staves from whiskey barrels are particularly nice as they have been heavily toasted and may contribute some deeper and more complex flavours.



WARREN BOYER

of Fraser Mills Fermentation is an award winning homebrewer. Certified Beer Judge, former President of CAMRA Vancouver, and occasional Professional Brewer.
E: homebrewboy@shaw.ca



MARINER

BREWING

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THE RECIPE

Method	All Grain
Style	Imperial Stout
Boil Time	60 min
Batch Size	20 liters
Gravity	Original 1.089 Final 1.017 (approx.)
Result	ABV: 9.5%, IBU: 80, SRM: 50 (calculated)

Fermentables

8 kg	Crisp Malting - Pale Ale	82.5%
600 g	Simpsons - Roasted Barley	6.2%
500 g	Simpsons - Crystal Dark	5.2%
200 g	Weyermann - Caramunich Type 3	2.1%
200 g	Simpsons - Chocolate Malt	2.1%
200 g	Crisp Malting - Pale Chocolate	2.1%

Hops

42 g	Warrior	Boil 60 min
56 g	East Kent Goldings	Boil 10 min
56 g	East Kent Goldings	Flame Out

Water salts

10 g	Chalk
4 g	Calcium Chloride
3 g	Gypsum
5 g	Baking Soda

Yeast

2 packs	Fermentis - Safale - American Ale Yeast US-05
---------	---

Mash at 67C for 60 minutes. Boil for 60 minutes, adding Warrior hops when the wort first starts boiling. Add EKG hops 10 minutes from the end of the boil, as well as at flameout/end of the boil.

Ferment at 18C to 21C. It may take quite some time. Be patient. 🍷

BREW CLUB CORNER

BC HOMEBREW CLUB LISTING

Brew Westminster (Google Group)

BrewVic:
[Website](#) | [FB Group](#)

BrUBC:
[Website](#) | [FB Group](#)

[Cranbrook Brewing Culture](#)
(FB Group)

[Fraser Valley Fermentalis](#)
(FB Group)

[Full Barrel Homebrew Club,](#)
[Langley](#) (FB Group)

[Nanaimo Brew Club](#)
(FB Group)

[OK Brewers, North Okanagan](#)
(FB Group)

[Royal Canadian Malted Patrol](#)
(FB Group)

Stonehouse Brew Club,
Maple Ridge (FB Group)

[Ten Corners Homebrew Club,](#)
[Fraser Valley](#) (FB Group)

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[UVic Wizards of Beer](#)
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VIRTUAL

Surviving The Winter

This might be the hardest winter the hospitality industry has seen in generations. How will the tasting room side of these businesses make it through the cold and flu season with slashed capacity and freezing patios?



Hannah: With Dr Henry telling people to stay home and only interact with your immediate household, it seems most people are listening and we've seen a pretty drastic drop in business the last few days.



Michael: Winter will be challenging for us, especially if it's a really cold one like a few folks are expecting.



Ben: Yeah, it's going to be tough for us if nobody wants to sit at our five picnic tables. Our indoor seating is limited and a lot of people don't feel comfortable about sitting indoors anyway. Patio heaters are impossible to buy now, but we're looking.



Kellie/Cole: We have a heated, covered patio that seats 36 people. We just added six gas heaters, so our guests will be warm and cozy through the winter.



Sean: Other than the heaters we installed, there is not too much we can do. We looked at enclosing our patio, but the seating capacity is too small to justify.



Ben: I've been encouraged by seeing some hardy people out on our patio on cold days lately. I'm hoping that Vancouver develops a BYOB (bring your own blanket) patio culture, and we have just ordered blankets that we'll sell for as cheap as we can manage.



Sean: We offer (lend) blankets free of charge.



Tim: Here on the West Coast we're luckier than places back East, where there would be no possibility of using an outdoor space.



Brendan: We are building a new bar upstairs to better service our rooftop patio. We are going to keep a large section open all winter with waterproof tents and new heaters. It's a comfortable environment that we have already noticed customers enjoying on cold rainy days.



Byron: We have a good-sized patio, and some of it is covered and heated. It's cozy for winter, as is the new fireplace and couch we've added inside.



Ben: I am worried sick for all of my favourite restaurants. We could lose some legendary establishments.



Kevin & Brandi: We had temporary outdoor seating during the summer. We're putting together a winter plan, but at this point construction may not be possible until closer to spring.



Mike: Last year, January was really bad for us. Consumers were just not spending because of Dry January.

Trying out virtual events

We asked people if they had held any "virtual" or online events.



Ben: We did host a virtual anniversary party back in May as a sad substitute for the epic love-ins we've thrown before. Guests received an anniversary mixed pack through our home delivery service, then we took questions from our online audience.

Mitch and I blathered on a bit about the experience of running Dageraad for six years, then we had a set by a local musician. We couldn't all party here in our parking lot, but at least we were drinking the same beers and communicating a little.



Cole: We had an amazing response to our Drive-Thru [curbside take-out] Juice Box releases, and we're planning to continue putting them on through the winter.



Tim: We love the idea of virtual events. Several members of our team have experience with on-line seminars and broadcasts and we're looking at angles to explore that.

Of course, the tricky bit is getting samples of beer to people sitting at their desks at home so they can taste along. Maybe we give out a QR code for a Zoom tasting when people buy a 4-pack in store?



Kevin & Brandi: We haven't yet, but we do plan on hosting some. Being a community hub is one of the best parts of running a brewery, so finding ways to fulfill that role is important to us.



Sean: We have not as of yet explored virtual events, but we are not ruling it out as a possibility.



Byron: We haven't moved to virtual events, although our brewer Jason has been virtually meeting friends for beers recently. This is a fun idea, we might just have to plan something!



Nick: I did a virtual tasting for a company over Zoom where we got the beer out to everyone, and that worked pretty well. I think that with people at home more, these kinds of online tastings could be beneficial in helping people feel connected.



Ben: Online gatherings have to be organized around some kind of event that gives people a reason to all show up at the same time. They have to include a way for people to interact without becoming a shouting match. I'd be totally happy to copy someone else's idea if another brewery has success at it.



Hannah: At Trading Post, we've talked about hosting virtual trivia nights, virtual tastings and virtual brewery tours. *Note: the owners of Trading Post Brewing have another division called Red Door Events. See Hannah's thoughts on the State Of Events In 2020 feature on page 37.*



PART III: LOOKING FORWARD

How Governments Can Help

Lara: We do feel that a large amount of aid has been offered at the Federal and Provincial levels, which we are extremely grateful for (we actively pursued CEWS support). We would love more support from our municipal government, even in the form of relaxing certain by-laws.

We would like policy-makers to keep in mind that many affected by COVID are seasonal businesses which have just lost out on their summer money making period. Even if we were able to go back to normal in [always slower] December or January, the damage of losing the vital months would have been done.

Michael: The province's allowance of redline area expansion was huge for us as well. We were able to use a good portion of our empty lot next to us for a big, beautiful patio area.

Tim: The patio exemption is an example of how a simple step to allow craft breweries to operate in the same way as they do in other jurisdictions shows that our community can be trusted to enjoy the product responsibly.

We'd really welcome an examination of the by-laws, laws, and policies that govern Craft breweries and tasting rooms.

Mike: In May, I [started a Change.org petition](#) to extend drinks-to-go. The government had a two month program permitting restaurants to do growler fills from fresh growlers off the rack, but they didn't allow growler fills-to-go with food. So I registered as an in-house lobbyist to get that directive amended to allow craft beer-to-go with food.

I've also been busy lobbying for the corkage program wine has to be for beer as well. You should be allowed to go to the store and pick up your \$20 bottle of beer and bring it to a restaurant to pay your corkage fee.

2021: Wishes for a Better Year

Byron: Entering our 4th year now, our team is more dialed-in than ever. I'm confident that Mariner is about to have the best year yet, and I can't wait for it to unfold with more delicious beers, food, and good times in 2021.

Michael: We're focused on our production expansion, and hope to have a bigger brewhouse by this time next year. And who knows, maybe we'll come up with the cure for COVID in the process!

Tim: As soon as things are really, truly safe again, we think there's gonna be an enormous party, and we want to be right at the centre of it.

Ben: I would absolutely love to be in a crowded pub right now with about fifty of my best brewing industry buddies and hug every one of them and have loud conversations at short range while swilling pints.

I just can't wait to see our room full again, with people bumping elbows at the bar and casually chatting to strangers, but that might be a dream for 2022. 🍻



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VIRTUAL CONFERENCING

Continued from page 15

Q. As 2020 progressed, it no doubt became clear that the pandemic would not be over by Spring 2021. However, you decided to keep the Conference going in a virtual format. Can you tell us what it was like to have to wrestle with that decision, and some of the factors in play.

Firstly, one has to acknowledge it is impossible to replicate the in-person experience members and suppliers enjoy at a live in-person event, so this event will not be the same from a networking perspective. That being said, conferences are not only about sharing a beer; the educational content and the supplier interactions are key elements that drive attendance as well.

The other challenge is to engage the suppliers with the attendees in a meaningful interaction that benefits all interests. Our goal is to align all the sessions into specific learning tracks, so that all technical training is done in one concentrated half-day period rather than spread out over the week.



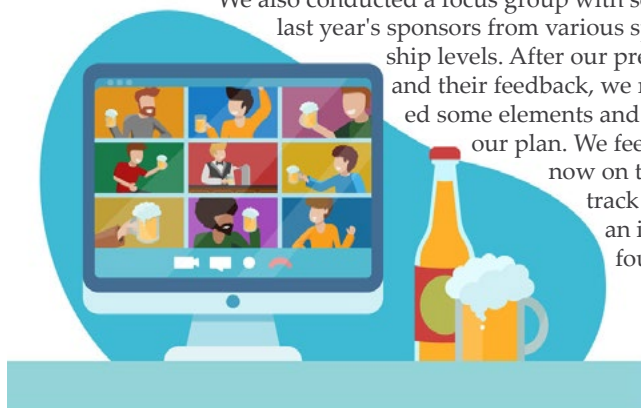
We will set up breakout rooms with specific topics directly related to the session themes for the day. For example, one morning will be for brewer's topics, allowing brewing staff to attend for a half day versus checking in all through the week. Decision-makers will be exposed to the vendors directly related to their top-

ic, and we hope this will encourage members to jump on for their half day.

Q. Are there any particular beer events that have helped you in planning the transition to virtual? Can you tell us a bit about the research behind this and the changes you've had to make.

We are working with our creative and social media service supplier, Victoria's **The Number Creative**, to work through the process and deliver a virtual conference that will benefit members and suppliers year-round, not just four days in February. I have attended several US-based virtual conferences, as well as the **Ontario Craft Brewers Conference**, and viewed several different models. They were all somewhat standard in their format. I saw some things we will use and some we will definitely avoid.

We also conducted a focus group with some of last year's sponsors from various sponsorship levels. After our presentation and their feedback, we reevaluated some elements and tweaked our plan. We feel we are now on the right track to deliver an impactful four days.



VIRTUAL CONFERENCING | cover



Q. At this point, the final schedule of events is still in the works for February's conference. Can you tell us about the presenters and activities you're working on?

We have identified five educational streams to deliver the content we feel our members will be most interested in hearing about: Brewing Technical, Brewing Logistics, Marketing, Sales/Operations and Finance/Accounting.

We have reached out to the **Master Brewers Of Americas Association** for help in identifying and arranging content. Our board is also very active in recommending topics. As well, we are considering a short Guild member survey to solicit feedback and suggestions.

Q. The craft beer industry was built on in-person experiences at tasting rooms and beer festivals. Your conference has always been a reason for the BC industry to meet together in one place.

Do you have concerns that a portion of your membership and audience will overlook or reject a virtual event, and how will you explain the value of meeting this way?

Those concerns were priority number one, but these are unprecedented times, and everybody is doing things differently compared to a year ago. Though some people may be feeling Zoom fatigue, if we deliver excellent content, relationship-building opportunities and an element of fun through social networking, we are confident they will support this member benefit.

There are a lot of practical benefits to a virtual conference: the ability to fit into regular work, saving time and money on travel, as well as the opportunity to undertake focused and applicable learning without the discretions and limitations of a physical centre.

Q. Tickets go on sale mid-December, including to the general public. Should someone who is not yet a Guild or industry member consider attending?

We are always happy to see interest shown by those who do not already work directly in the beer community. If you have a business or an idea for a business that is focussed on the beer industry, I suspect you will find value in attending. 🍺

BC Craft Brewers Conference
February 3–5, 2021
Advance tickets on sale mid-December
www.bcbeercon.ca



Leah Heneghan



Hannah Brown



Mike Willis

The State of Events in 2020

If you are a fan of BC's major beer festivals, you may be missing them and interested in knowing what to expect over the next year. Of course, the people who organize them are waiting like the rest of us to find out just how this virus and vaccine will play out. We reached out to a few of the folks behind a number of respected annual beer events to find out what they're going through and get their take on the future of real and virtual beer events.

Leah Heneghan, Vancouver Craft Beer Week

WB: Is it too early to talk about next year's event?

We are hoping beyond hope that we can put a festival on next year. There are 2020 ticket-holders out there who are holding on to their ticket for 2021, so we're trying to remain as positive as possible.

We have an idea of some dates, potentially later in summer 2021. Because our event is outdoors, hopefully we will be one of the earlier events to get the go-ahead. Being out in the open air definitely makes people feel a lot safer. But we're not about to confirm anything until we have the absolute go-ahead from health authorities.

That's really the most important thing to us. I don't want to put on an event that people don't feel safe at, because realistically that means I'm not going to feel safe at it.

WB: Will you go with the venue you had planned for 2020 (Concord Community Park in False Creek)?

Yes, absolutely. It is separated into two parts and it's all outdoors. There's a pretty big space that we could use quite comfortably, if we took the numbers down.

No matter what, it will end up being a scaled-back version of before. You're not going to see seven or eight thousand people together in one place all day. It will be spread out over more days and more sessions, with, say, a thousand people at a time.

WB: Do you think there's any value in doing your smaller satellite events in virtual format?

I can't figure a way to make it feasible. You know, the logistics of trying to get beer to people; I just don't know how to do that in this current climate. Or trying to do a large-scale tasting event with multiple breweries and a ton of people on a Zoom call...we're really trying to keep our focus on the long-term goal.

Is there a model out there you've seen others in the industry using that you thought was pretty innovative?

I did see some images from the UK where they had built all of these risers so groups of six could have their own personal concert experience [see above]. Also, I know there are a couple of events that are still going forward in California. I just personally wouldn't feel right trying to move forward with an event right now.



2,500 people [attend a socially distanced summer concert](#) at a pop-up venue in Newcastle, England. Photo: Twitter @goldenraindrops

We just have to be patient, and be vigilant. The sooner everybody starts behaving, the sooner this thing will be under control. And then hopefully we can all get back to some kind of normal.

Hannah Brown, Red Door Events

WB: How did the pandemic affect your operation?

COVID has affected all of the events the Red Door Events team puts on. The first event we had to cancel was the **Fort Langley Beer & Food Festival** that happens every year on the May long weekend. This is our kickoff for the summer events season. Based on our early bird ticket sales from November to March, we were projected to sell out all 4000 tickets again this year.

In late March, we made the call to postpone the event until June, then in June to postpone it again until September. We ultimately cancelled the 2020 event in late July.

Our second loss was the **Summerset Music & Arts Festival** that was scheduled for the last weekend in August. Again, we were aiming to sell over 4000 tickets at the three-day festival, and host some amazing local and international artists. After COVID, we planned to turn the event into a drive-through concert where ticket holders would remain in their car, socially distanced from other attendees. Then just a few weeks before the event, Dr. Bonnie Henry announced that no drive-in events of any size could take place. So we pivoted once again and turned this year's Summerset festival into 'Summerset Sundays', an intimate concert series host-

Continued on page 39



LANGLEY'S LOCAL BREWERY

A Natural History of Beer

By Rob DeSalle and Ian Tattersall

>> TED CHILD

Beer and its constituent parts are increasingly being considered as subjects for serious scientific research. If knowing what is happening in beer research is of interest to you but reading through a pile of research papers isn't in your schedule, *A Natural History of Beer* might be right up your alley. Written by Rob DeSalle and Ian Tattersall, *A Natural History of Beer* (Yale University Press) is the follow up to their first book, *A Natural History of Wine*, and is all about the most recent and exciting research being done around beer.

Much like *Beeronomics*, another academic beer book, *A Natural History of Beer* is less about expressing the authors' own ideas or findings and more about synthesizing a large amount of research conducted by others. It's also wide-ranging, traversing "evolution, ecology, history, primatology, physiology, neurobiology, chemistry and even a bit of physics." The authors discuss, in detail, findings on the genome sequencing of hops, barley and yeast and what that indicates regarding evolutionary history. There is also a chapter on beer belies.

There is always room for more books about beer that dive into the deep end, whether it's in science, theory, history or culture. Sometimes we like our beer books like a session beer: quick and not too demanding. But eventually we want the one that reads like a barrel-aged imperial stout. We want to have our minds blown. So we must celebrate a book that takes a good look at the most recent science of beer.

The question about *A Natural History of Beer* is whether it is a beer book that has a lot of science, or a science book that has a lot of beer. Neither is bad, but the former will appeal to the average beer nerd more than the latter. Unfortunately, the writing slips into the latter at times throughout the book. This is not unforgivable, but there is something slightly disingenuous about a college professor who advertises a course as being about beer when in fact the course uses beer as a way to teach genomics, phylogeny or some other field of science. This comes up often throughout the book, and even the authors suggest skipping the chapter on essential molecules, which has little to do with beer (other than, yes, having molecules).

There will always be a place for good science on some readers' bookshelves. If a deep dive into the science of beer sounds like a good escape from the world's more immediate problems, then crack a beer and *A Natural History of Beer* and read like it's 2019 again.

This book will have immense appeal for the science buff who likes beer but somewhat less for the beer buff who likes science. 🍺



TED CHILD

is a Recognized BJCP Beer Judge and award-winning homebrewer. He is also What's Brewing's in-house book reviewer. Look for his assessments of the latest beer books and publications in each issue



ed in the back parking lot of our [Trading Post Brewing's] Fort Langley Eatery every Sunday for five weeks in August.

WB: Are there any plans on your end to do any "virtual events"?

We don't have any plans to host any virtual events at the moment. We are optimistic that we will be able to host our events in some capacity in 2021, so our team is keeping busy researching and brainstorming ways in which we can do so safely.

Mike Willis, West Craft

West Craft has produced both indoor and outdoor events like Hopwired and Fruit Beer Fest. For 2020, Fruit Beer Fest was offered virtually. Here are some of his candid thoughts related to festivals and events.

At the beginning of the year, I was pretty certain I was going to hold my last Hopwired. Then it did well and on the same day [in late February] we announced Death By Donuts. COVID hit a week after, and it was like we were the first AND last major event of 2020.

Hopwired was just insane in 2020, with how many people bought tickets. I think we were selling tickets for between \$40–50 dollars last year for an all-inclusive event [five hours, no tokens needed]; a pretty good deal. So it was a little crowded. I've always been a bit of a germaphobe, and I like my personal space, so I've always wanted, you know, three to six feet of distancing.

Regarding virtual festivals: We did our Fruit Beer Fest boxes through two liquor stores: one in Vancouver and one in Victoria, with niche product from all over the world. People were Instagramming their photos. But the liquor stores were just so overwhelmed.

This past year, we were going to launch our Prost! beer festival in Octoberfest style, with a ton of great beers from Germany, from Washington and across Canada. Maybe in 2021.

I'd still like to do something virtual for Hopwired [Feb 2021] like a coffee and beer box. But everything will come up real last minute.

I don't want to be too grim or try to tell the future, but I really don't see many of the indoor events proceeding for probably two to three years. We will probably see outdoor events before anything.

I also don't know how it's all going to function in two years, because people have to use glassware. We'll see if there are concerns about second strains [of the virus], which I think is probably going to be fairly inevitable.

I think if people come out of COVID and have a bit of money they'll want to get out and try new things. But I'm genuinely concerned for after the holidays and into the Spring, at the end of the fiscal year, how people are going to respond and how consumer spending is going to be. I don't know where people are going to be at, and will they have those same personal networks they can have the same meaningful experiences with [at a beer event].

I don't know how much trauma this experience is going to cause for people, myself included. People I know in our community are going to experience a lot of PTSD. I know that various people in the craft brewing community have moved on to other jobs.

Can I give a shout-out to Aaron of [Cascadian Beer Podcast](#) and his Stay Home Pub Quiz? It's good to get people interactive, to shut off other priorities and connect with other people. They shouldn't be drinking alone on a Friday night.

My ambition [like Aaron's] is to be able to connect people and make sure that they're having a good time. 🍻

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gwc.ca



Hiking & Fishing at Kanaka Creek Regional Park

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metrovanvancouver.org/services/parks/parks-greenways-reserves/kanaka-creek-regional-park



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MAPLE RIDGE • 24480 FERN CRESCENT
bcparks.ca/explore/parkpgs/golden_ears



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Black Sheep Public House & Liquor Store
MAPLE RIDGE • 12968 232 ST



Kingfishers Waterfront Bar & Grill
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Witchcraft Beer Market and Bistro
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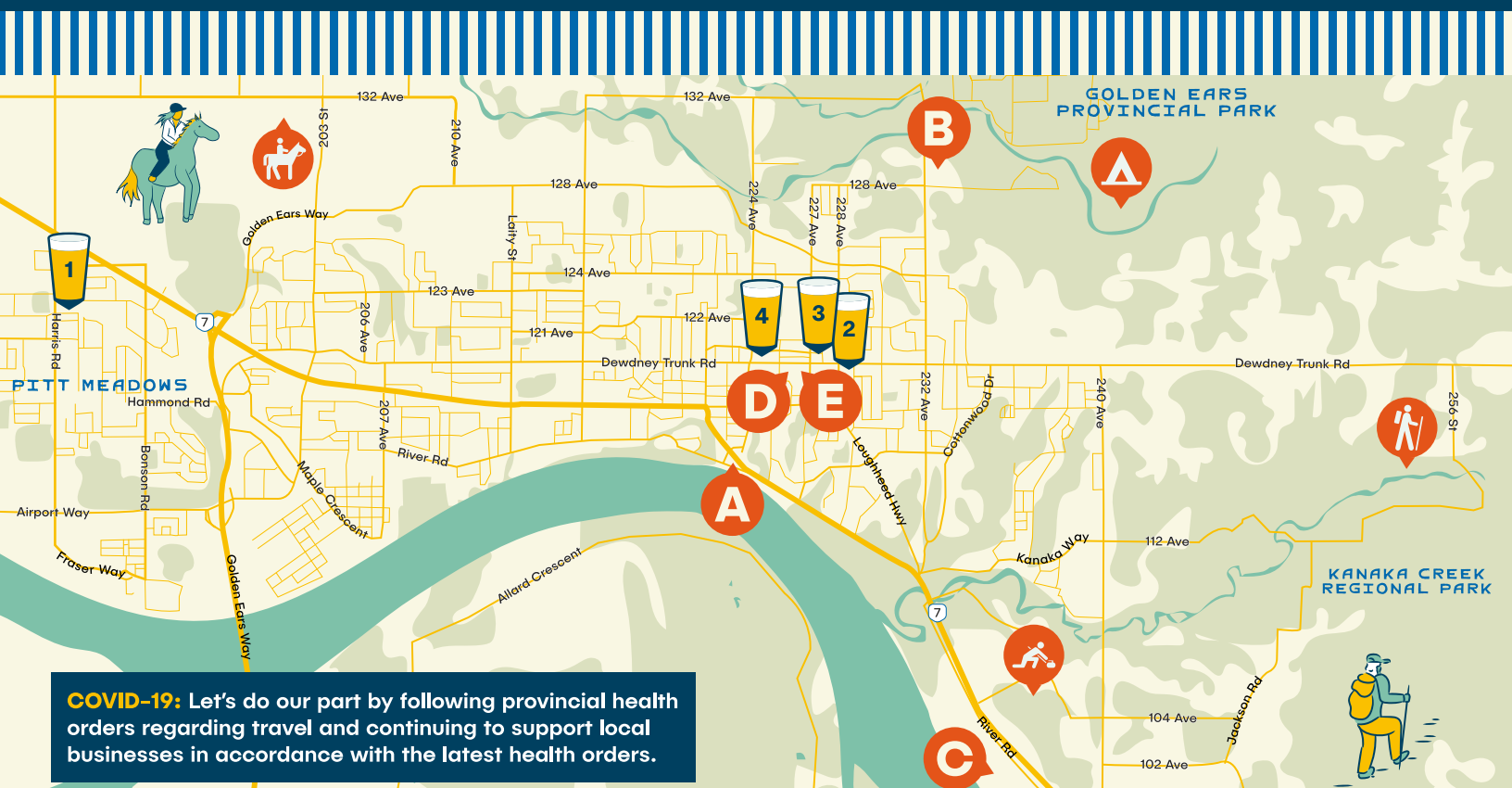
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