



THE BEST BREWPUBS **IN AMERICA**

# MEN'S JOURNAL

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**MICHAEL  
STRAHAN**

**FROM NFL SUPERSTAR TO MEDIA MOGUL**

"MOST PEOPLE HAVE ONE  
ACT. I'M ON NUMBER  
FOUR, FIVE, SIX."



**A GUIDE TO  
BIGGER, BETTER  
SHOULDERS**







The backyard scene  
at Brooklyn's  
Threes Brewing.

# New-Look Brewpubs

Gone are the days of burgers and wings at the mall. Today's craft breweries are more like innovative culinary labs, serving high-end, globally influenced cuisine in dramatic, adventure-friendly locations. They're even doing brunch. Here are the new rules behind America's best new brewpubs. **by JOSHUA M. BERNSTEIN**



## DIM SUM AND NOODLES ARE THE NEW BURGERS AND FRIES

For diners looking beyond the bun, Asian-inspired brewpubs offer pairings possible only when restaurateurs control both the kitchen and the brew kettle. One of the most original pubs in this regard is **BREWERY BHAVANA**, in Raleigh, North Carolina. It's equal parts brewpub, flower shop, bookstore, and dim sum restaurant, offering duck egg rolls, lobster-stuffed dumplings, and scallion pancakes served with coconut-oxtail jam. The beers are Belgian-influenced with a hint of Asian flare, like Glean, a saison flavored with mango and peppercorns. "Dim sum and Cantonese cuisine tend to focus on subtle flavors that are more nuanced than bold," says co-owner and head brewer Patrick Woodson. "No single flavor outshines the overall experience."

A similar understated elegance informs **SATO BREWPUB**, a Japanese-style izakaya and brewery in the basement of Buffalo, New York's first high-rise, finished in 1895. Here, husband and wife team Joshua and Satomi Smith offer yakitori, or grilled chicken, complemented by genre-blurring beers incorporating white miso, which lends salinity and umami to Bento, a rich cream ale.

In Richmond, Virginia, at **THE ANSWER**, owner and chef An Bui peddles super-fresh hazy IPAs and heavily fruited sours alongside banh mi made with crunchy house-baked bread, filled with fish sausage or roasted pork sliced thick. In Jackson, Wyoming, skiers and snowboarders can warm up with

Vietnamese egg rolls and crepes at Chicago's BiXi Beer. Below: Brewery Bhavana, in Raleigh.



**THAI ME UP**'s complex curries and noodle dishes while crushing their Pils-Gnar pilsner and 2x4 DIPA—both from **MELVIN BREWING**, born inside the Thai restaurant. Chicago's **BIXI BEER** serves chewy belt noodles slicked with oil. Beer, too, follows a Far East lead with the refreshing Shifties lager, featuring puffed jasmine rice, and Chelonian Lair, a dark ale that's seasoned with Sichuan peppercorns. "I think people came in with expectations that we'd be another brewpub," says chef and co-owner Bo Fowler. "But we want to put the dining experience on another level."



## AIRPORT BEER IS FINALLY WORTH WAITING FOR

### Tom's Urban Kitchen & Brewery

DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, COLORADO

Inside the airport's Westin hotel, Tom's Urban offers an outdoor patio with mountain views, exclusive beers from Tivoli Brewing, and kicked-up comfort classics like pickle-brined fried chicken. It's best beer, though, is the Tivoli Jet IPA.

### Cigar City Brewing

TAMPA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, FLORIDA

Pop into the brewpub—America's first to brew inside an airport—for a pressed Cuban sandwich and a preflight flight of Cigar City classics such as Maduro Brown Ale, plus rotating beers made on-site.

### Imperial Western Beer Company

UNION STATION, LOS ANGELES

"Every great train station should have an oyster bar," says cofounder Cedd Moses of his brewpub inside this historic Art Deco depot in downtown L.A. Order a dozen oysters on the half shell with a house beer like Travel Bug, a tart German gose that goes well with everything.





## CHICAGO IS THE HEART OF THE BEER WORLD—AGAIN

Chicago has long been a center of good beer, but Chicago brewpubs are now raising the bar even further, pairing exceptional beers with award-winning menus worthy of white tablecloths. **MOODY TONGUE BREWING CO.**'s brewmaster, Jared Rouben, is also a classically trained chef, and he practices what he calls "culinary brewing"—for example, lacing pilsners with shaved black truffles. At the brewery's bar, patrons can snack on grilled octopus with Spanish blood sausage or opt for a 10-course feast in the dining room, both overseen by Michelin-starred chef Jared Wentworth. Each dish is paired with



Clockwise from above: Pouring one out at Band of Bohemia; a plate of pasta at Forbidden Root; Revolution Brewing.

distinct beers (and glassware). "All the fun that's usually reserved for the wine world, we now do with beer," Rouben says.

Elsewhere in the city, star chef Rick Bayless now operates **CRUZ BLANCA BREWERY & TAQUERIA**, where modern Mexican-style lagers and tropical IPAs are paired with heaping platters of smoky, wood-grilled chorizo and salt-cured flank steak. The city is also home to America's first Michelin-starred brewpub, **BAND OF BOHEMIA**, which is celebrated for seasonal dishes designed around brewer Michael Carroll's diverse, well-balanced beers.

In fact, you'd be hard-pressed to find a Chicago brewpub that doesn't go beyond the fry basket. **FORBIDDEN ROOT RESTAURANT & BREWERY** features botanical beers like the digestif-inspired Fernetic, plus crispy chicken skins with pimento cheese. **REVOLUTION BREWING** serves smoked-poblano burgers and homemade doughnuts. And **DRYHOP BREWERS** offers hazy IPAs served alongside cranberry bratwurst and steak frites with malted herb butter.

"There's nothing new about Chicago's love for beer and food," says Moody Tongue's Rouben, noting the prevalence of the city's food-focused beer cultures—German, Irish, Polish, and Czech immigrants. "Bringing the two together is a staple in Chicago."

## THERE'S STILL NO BETTER COMBO THAN PIZZA AND BEER

### Double Mountain Brewery & Cidery

#### OREGON

Hop-forward pale ales and IPAs excel alongside original pizzas like the Truffle Shuffle—a white pie with mozzarella and truffle oil-marinated mushrooms—at this Hood River institution.

### Jackie O's Public House & Brewpub

#### OHIO

After this Athens establishment brews its beers, such as Ohio Pale Ale, it uses the spent grain to make its pizza dough. Its signature pie: the Oestrike, with artichokes and local feta cheese.

### Zero Gravity Craft Brewery Brewpub at Flatbread

#### VERMONT

This Burlington favorite has 15 taps of beer and makes wood-fired pizzas like Punctuated Equilibrium, featuring Kalamata olives and Vermont goat cheese, in its hand-built clay oven [right].



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: COURTESY OF REVOLUTION BREWING; COURTESY OF BAND OF BOHEMIA; COURTESY OF AMERICAN FLATBREAD; COURTESY OF FORBIDDEN ROOT



## BREWERS ARE NOW BUTCHERS, TOO

▶ The best brewpubs have great brewers—that's a given. But many of these brewmasters now run world-class charcuterie programs, too. Earlier this year, Alex Liberati debuted **DENVER'S LIBERATI OSTERIA & OENOBEERS**, an ambitious Italian brewpub that specializes in wine-beer hybrids he calls "oenobeers," such as an IPA infused with Oregon-grown riesling grapes, paired with homemade pastas and

charcuterie, including salami, guanciale, and mortadella. Acidic beers excel at cutting charcuterie's salty richness, a pairing perfected at Berkeley, California's **THE RARE BARREL**, with its aged sours served with bacon-maple rilletts. In Brooklyn, the Meat Hook, a whole-animal butcher shop, focuses on grass-fed beef used in the dry-aged burger served at its restaurant, **THE MEAT HOOK AT THREEES**, located inside Threes Brewing. Lowcountry standout **EDMUND'S OAST RESTAURANT**, in Charleston, South Carolina, makes meat-friendly brews like Baby Bubble Barbecue Beer and has a dedicated butcher, who breaks down whole hogs, turning them into sausage, ham, bacon, and even headcheese.

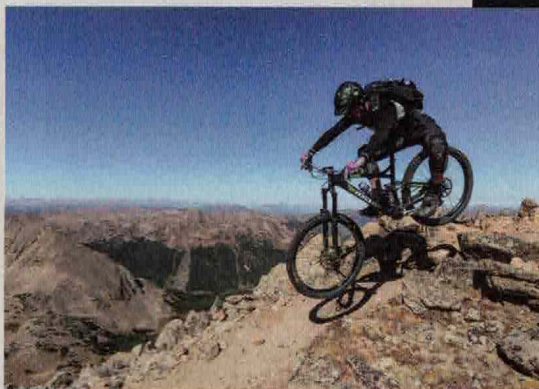
The cheese and meat boards at the Meat Hook at Threes, in Brooklyn.



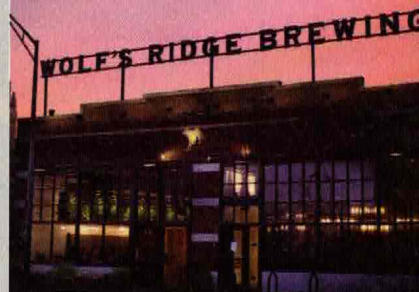
## BEER IS BETTER WITH ADVENTURE

▶ There's always been a good dive bar or two near a trailhead for post-bike beers. But now some of America's best brewpubs are setting up shop in adventure-friendly locations, showing that adrenaline and hops may be the best pairing of all. Mountain bikers regularly meet at **OSKAR BLUES GRILL & BREW**, in Lyons, Colorado, near Rocky Mountain National Park, before riding the Heil Ranch and Hall Ranch trails. "Nothing's better than sharing a post-ride pitcher of Dale's Pale Ale on the patio with buddies," says Oskar Blues founder Dale Katechis. Snowbirds and mountain lovers who flock to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, have **ROADHOUSE BREWING CO. PUB & EATERY**, which offers its Loose Boots "après IPA" alongside duck-confit poutine. The Trapp

Family Lodge, in Stowe, Vermont, features 60 miles of cross-country ski trails and the **VON TRAPP BREWERY**, where skiers unclip and unwind with hearty sausages and European-inspired lagers. And for rafting buffs, Maine's Northern Outdoors Adventure Resort is base camp for white-water runs down the Kennebec River. After drying off, they can post up at the resort's **KENNEBEC RIVER PUB & BREWERY** for a burger made with Maine-reared beef and the flagship Magic Hole IPA. Yeah, you'll want a second pint. You earned it.



Bombing singletrack is a pre-pitcher favorite for Oskar Blues' patrons.



## IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY FOR BEER

▶ **Wolf's Ridge Brewing**

OHIO

At brunch time, this Columbus brewpub uses coffee and vanilla beans in its Daybreak cream ale, and its spent brewing grains are used to bake bread that's turned into breakfast toast capped with sunny-side up eggs and smoked arctic char.

**Bluejacket**

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The airy pub serves crunchy tater tots beneath bacon, sausage, and runny eggs, while toast is crowned with avocado and blue crab—a surprise standout with its coffee-infused stout.

**Magnolia Brewing Co.**

CALIFORNIA

The San Francisco craft brewery offers English-inspired ales, house-cured salmon, and massive egg sandwiches slicked with sambal chili mayo.

**Manayunk Brewing Company**

PENNSYLVANIA

On Sundays, this Philadelphia brewery runs a jazz brunch with cedar-plank salmon, an omelet station, and beers such as the orange peel-flavored Wandering Wit. It's as smooth as the morning music.