

## Micro-Back? Craft Brew Sales Picking Up

Monday , March 27, 2006 Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine — Like most small breweries, [Gritty McDuff's](#) went through a lull as sales of craft beer leveled off in the late 1990s. Now Gritty's and the craft beer industry as a whole are enjoying a resurgence, with sales growing at their fastest pace in a decade.

Production of craft beer — those specialty brews typically made in small regional or local breweries — grew by 9 percent last year, the biggest jump since 1996, when the microbrewery fad of the '90s was still going full tilt. Mainstream beer sales, meanwhile, fell slightly.

At Gritty McDuff's, production last year rose nearly 30 percent to more than 250,000 gallons.

[Ed Stebbins](#), brewmaster and co-owner, said consumers are demanding more varied and full-flavored beers. At the same time, small breweries are putting out more consistent beers and are more business-savvy than a decade ago, learning how to better market and distribute their products, he said.

The 1990s were a boom time for the industry, with sales rising fast and even doubling in 1994. But growth slowed by the end of the decade, and hundreds of microbreweries and brewpubs went out of business.

The industry is growing again, but at more sustainable levels. Craft brewers, Stebbins said, don't need to grow at astronomical levels to be profitable.

"I think we've learned that the beer industry doesn't have to grow in leaps and bounds, that it will grow steadily and slowly," Stebbins said.

Americans last year bought more than 6.3 billion gallons of beer, dominated by pale, golden-hued varieties, according to Beer Marketer's Insights trade newsletter. The top five brands were Bud Light, [Budweiser](#), Miller Lite, Coors Light and Natural Light.

But for consumers who demand more variety, there are craft beers. These beers, in general, are made with malted wheat or barley — without corn, rice or sugar adjuncts — and include ales, bocks, stouts, marzens, porters and other styles that can be light or dark in color and are typically more complex in taste.

They are often made in small batches and are more expensive — sometimes double the price — than the best-selling brands. Gritty McDuff's six-packs, for instance, usually sell for \$6.99 to \$7.99 at supermarkets.

The best-known craft beers are national brands like [Samuel Adams](#) or Sierra Nevada, but there are hundreds of small breweries nationwide that distribute their own brews locally and regionally. As of December, there were 1,368 breweries and brew pubs making craft beer, according to the Brewers Association trade group in Boulder, Colo.

Craft beer accounts for just 3.5 percent of U.S. beer sales, and imports make up 12.5 percent, said Eric Shepard, executive editor of Beer Marketer's Insights. But those numbers are going up, while the market share of mainstream beers is declining.

"It was a good year for the high-end (beers), and we'll see where this goes," Shepard said.

In the 1990s, craft beer sales took off and the industry was filled with optimism. Many breweries aimed for rapid expansion, and the most hopeful thought the industry could claim 10 percent or more of the U.S. beer market.

But the market became saturated, growth stalled and craft beer production grew at rates from 0 to 4 percent a year from 1998 through 2003. More than 500 brew pubs and microbreweries closed between 2000 and 2004, outpacing the number of startups, according to the Brewers Association.

The business is now on an upswing, with production up by about 7 percent in 2004 and 9 percent last year, according to the association. Overall beer sales in 2005 fell 0.2 percent in volume, according to

Beer Marketer's Insights. Sales of wines and spirits last year grew by less than 3 percent in volume, according to industry organizations.

In Seattle, Georgetown Brewing Co. doubled its production last year to about 186,000 gallons. Georgetown's beers, a pale ale and a pilsner, are sold at more than 380 bars and restaurants, or about double the number of a year ago.

Just like coffee drinkers, beer drinkers' tastes are changing, said Bret Chopp, operations manager and partner at Georgetown.

"I think it's a maturing of the customer base," Chopp said. "First of all people didn't know there was anything out there, and once they tried it they like it."

The aging of America helps to explain the market shift, said Ray Daniels, director of marketing for the [Brewers Association](#). Baby boomers are edging up toward senior status, and the median age of the U.S. population grew from 32.8 in 1990 to 36.2 in 2004, according to the Census Bureau.

"I think ultimately as consumers get older their tastes are more sophisticated," Daniels said. "And that's a big part of the growing interest in the category."

Much of the craft beer growth is coming out of regional breweries — rather than brew pubs that have tiny breweries on the premises. It's the breweries that produce the bottled beer and kegs for restaurants, bars and retail stores.

In Maine, more than two dozen companies of varying sizes brew their own beer. They made nearly 3 million gallons last year, a 30 percent increase in three years, according to the Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages.

Gritty McDuff's — the third-largest brewer in Maine behind The Shipyard Brewing Co. and D.L. Geary Brewing Co. — has most of its sales in Maine, but its out-of-state markets are growing. It now sells beer in 70 stores and bars in Massachusetts, up from less than 20 a year ago. This spring, its products will be sold in New Hampshire for the first time.

Distributors are taking greater notice of craft beers, Stebbins said, making it easier to get Gritty's beers on store shelves and in bars.

"They see the numbers. They see the trends," he said. "So they're planning their marketing around those trends."

## Weird Brews News

### **Tomato beer coming from the Japan**

A brewery from Japan and a pub owner teamed to produce a tomato-based low-malt beer. Tomato Bibere gathers the sweet flavor of a tomato with the bitter taste of hops. One tomato is used in the production of each 330ml bottle of reddish beer, according to media reports.

Isamu Waki, running an izakaya pub in Tokyo, has been asking other brewers to produce a tomato beer for years. Hirofumi Koda, president of Echigo Beer Co., was the first brewery operator to take him up on the idea.

Koda and Waki tasted different trial versions of the beer by altering the amount of tomatoes and by increasing the sugar content to improve the beer they finally released.

The master brewer aimed at making a healthy drink, so all of the ingredients are organic. Since tomatoes are fibrous and have a low-sugar content, filtration and fermentation were especially difficult. The first trial product, which took five months to make, was watery and barely tasted of tomatoes.

### **Japanese Asahi Brewery launches a Beer-Pouring Robot**

This is Asahi, a beer-pouring robot from Japan, media sources posted on January 26. It can refrigerate up to six cans of beer, two mugs, and with a simple push of a button it will pour a beer into the mug with perfect head every time. It gets even better too, this thing is free!

Asahi is running a contest in Japan only and is giving away 5,000 of Beer-Pouring Robot -refrigerator / bartender robots. In order to win beer drinkers have to collect 36 seals from specially-marked Asahi beer cans. Winners are chosen randomly from the submissions. The contest runs from 2/20 - 5/22.

### **A new healthy beer invented in India**

An Indian invented recently a healthy herbal beer. The beer promises much less hangover. Lady Bird Bio Beer contains Aloe Vera - more commonly found in health food shops - and medicinal herbs, according to Hindustan Times.

The beer has the same alcohol strength - five per cent - like all other regular beer. The difference however, according to its inventor Dr Srinivasa Amarnath is that it will leave you with less of a sore head.

Dr Amarnath, who has apparently worked on the particular beer for a decade claims it, has health benefits. He claims it can alleviate conditions such as asthma and arthritis.

## **Eccentric beer label engenders controversy in USA**

An American microbrewery producing a beer Hedonism said its bottle label is "cutting-edge artwork." But some believe it is obscene this engendering discussions on the appropriateness of such tricks on labels. Namely, the label on the Hedonism bottle shows topless male and female characters kissing and caressing each other.

Many believe that the American micro-brewery have gone too far with the sex appeal for its new Hedonism micro-brewed beer. It's hot red packaging, depicts odd looking cartoonish characters kissing each other and some seem to be fondling each other in a humorish way.

"We are trying to show what Hedonism (our new beer) looks like," says Scott Baver, co-owner and Brewmaster at Legacy Brewing. "Hedonism does mean happiness and pleasure. I think we have captured that in a very artistic, acceptable way. Besides, our beers' taste and experience is very pleasurable!"

The character artwork was hand painted by Deric Hettinger from Oxygen for the Arts which is located right next to Legacy Brewing on Canal Street in Reading.

Pagoda Media, a local design firm, created the actual bottle label, case and six pack layouts from Deric's artwork. "Legacy actually had a contest to create the art. As soon as I heard the word Hedonism I went to work," said Deric. "It's a great piece of art," said Dave Gemmel, another co-owner at Legacy Brewing. "Brewing the way we do is an art, so doing a fine piece of art like this fits with our business model," Gemmel said.

There are voices saying this is obscene, others believe that is ok, like for instance a cashier of Wheatland Beer Distributors who doesn't think it's such a big deal. The cashier said it's just a cartoon and it depicts the name of the product exactly. Reading-based Legacy Brewing said it's selling every case of Hedonism it can produce.

## **Palestinian Brewery intends to launch Hamas beer**

Taybeh brewery from Palestine is poised to start test-marketing of non-alcoholic Hamas beer, following the party's election victory. The new beer will feature an Arabic-only label in Hamas' trademark green color stated Nadim Khoury, according to media reports of March 22.

Only a few hundred bottles of Hamas beer will be produced to test its popularity, but Khoury said non-alcoholic beer is extremely popular in several Arabic countries.

So far, Taybeh has sold only alcoholic beer available in locations that sell beer to non-Muslims in the West Bank, as well as in Britain, Germany and Israel, al-Bawaba reported. Sales average 1.2 million pints a year.

"Every time we sell a bottle of beer, it goes toward building the state of Palestine,"  
Khoury stated.

"Beer makes secrets float to the surface." German Proverb

Now that the barbeque season is here, the big question is what to drink with that lovely grade 'A' beef that's sizzling away on the coals. Take a break for a minute and consider what it is that appeals to us about this steak. Garrett Oliver, Brooklyn Brewing's head brewer, has made a career of writing and talking about beer and food pairings. He compared two steaks, both cooked to your taste, say medium-rare, one beautifully charbroiled, the other boiled (!). We all know that we'd prefer the BBQ'd version. He maintains that that is because the sugars in the meat have been caramelized on the outside of the steak. Most beers have some caramelization in the kettle at the point where the heating surface is in contact with the wort. So, for a complementary drink, beer does the job rather well, certainly better than wine (because there is no caramelization in the wine making process). Back to the steak: reach into the fridge and pull out a Newcastle Brown Ale, or a Canoe Beaver Brown Ale. Now we've sorted out what to drink, well the cooking, that's up to you.....

## A Pot Pourri of Purbeck Pubs

I was fifteen when I first saw the Square & Compass as I cycled through the village of Worth Matravers. I was on my way to the Dorset coast to collect fossils at some of the best collecting spots in the world. My grandparents had retired to Swanage, a popular British South Coast resort in the Isle of Purbeck, and I used it as my headquarters for exploration. Fast forward about forty five years, and the family decided to hold a reunion in Swanage. My wife Carol and I wanted to check out some of the local pubs. The Square & Compass was an obvious start. It has been in every CAMRA Good Beer Guide & is on the CAMRA National Inventory of Pub Interiors. The pub hadn't changed since I first saw it. In fact, it's unlikely that it has changed much in a couple of centuries.

The Isle of Purbeck is not an island, but it was isolated historically from the rest of Dorset by the east-west chalk ridge known as Ballard Downs (in England, Downs are "ups"! ). There is a river gap in the 600-foot high steep ridge defended by a Norman fort known as Corfe Castle. Otherwise, there is no way a mediaeval army could enter the Isle. The way of life here, based largely on farming, fishing and quarrying, has not changed for centuries. Neither have the pubs.

The Square & Compass has been run by the Newman family since 1907. It was built several hundred years ago as a farmhouse, and its history goes back to the time of William the Conqueror. The Normans used the local Purbeck Limestone to build the nearby St. Nicholas church. It was also used in Westminster Abbey and Salisbury Cathedral. The pub, its name coming from the tools used by the local quarrymen and stonecutters, was first licensed in the 1720's. Each year in August the pub hosts a stone sculpture carving fortnight, with some participants choosing to camp in a nearby field. Built solidly of whitewashed limestone with a stone roof and flagstone floors, the building will endure for ever.

Carol and I arrived just before lunch time and parked in the field just around the corner. Inside the front door were two locals standing in the corridor, chatting away. Nodding a Hallo, we stepped over their dogs and looked for the bar. We came to another corridor stretching to left and right. A door at one end was labeled Museum, hmm? We looked into a room full of chatting people, but still no bar. A hatch in the corridor revealed the bar with cool beer served by gravity straight from the cask. The choice was Badger Tanglefoot, Ringwood Best Bitter, Quay Old Rott, Palmers Dorset Gold and Tally Ho!, or farm ciders (some organic). Wow! We took our beers into the busy room and squeezed in to a table. Time to eat, so I head back to the hatchway:

"Do you have anything to eat?"

"Yep."

"Er, do you have a menu?"

"Nope."

"What do you have?"

"Cornish pasties."

I've forgotten what they have in them. "Do they come with different fillings?"

"Nope. Just pasties."

"I'll check with my wife."

"There's only two left."



"I'll take them!"

The pasties, filled with beef, potatoes, onion and turnip, were fantastic. Just as good as I remembered! Apparently sometimes there is cheese and onion pie, too. Or, you can buy a sandwich from the Craft Centre nearby.

Afterwards we spend time looking at all the pictures and cartoons on the walls. Curiosity got the better of us so we check out the room labeled "Museum". It is full of "Stuff". That is the only way to describe this extraordinary collection of artifacts. There is one of the finest collections of local Purbeck Limestone fossils piled from floor to ceiling. There are items retrieved from ancient shipwrecks by local divers, farm tools, evil looking ancient weapons, a mammoth tooth, and even stuffed animals.

This is a totally rustic pub, with chickens and dogs outside, and even occasionally inside. In winter there are roaring log fires and occasional musicians. Most of the locals stand up in the corridor to drink their beer and chat. Outside there are stone seats and weather beaten and bleached wooden benches from which there are great views out to the English Channel. From here you can see ancient field systems, visible as narrow green terraces. I don't think I have ever seen so much clutter in front of a pub, with stone carvings, a big old cider press, ancient-looking vehicles, and cart wheels. Roger Protz, former Good Beer Guide editor wrote: "If I had to choose a favourite ale house from the roll of 20 years honour, I would plump for The Square And Compasses in Worth Matravers". Life definitely moves at a slower pace at the Square & Compass – it is a real gem.

One of our favorite hikes takes us north out of Swanage and up over the Downs to Studland. The walk is fairly steep at first but is well worth the climb. The views over the English Channel and inland over Poole Harbor are fabulous. In addition, a walk to the east end brings you to a spectacular view of a group of chalk pillars called Old Harry Rocks. On the way back look for several ancient burial mounds. The reward for all this hiking is the Bankes Arms in Studland, owned by the National Trust. Follow the signs: it is just outside the village and is easy to recognize as it is completely covered in ivy! This is a large building originally built in 1549. There is a cozy fire burning most days, and if there is no room inside there are tables outside. At busy times customers can sit at picnic tables in the field opposite and enjoy the lovely views of Studland Bay. The pub has a restaurant and a large L-shaped bar with eight ever changing craft brewery beers on handpumps. These will usually be from such breweries as Hopback, Smiles and Wychwood. There are also local real ciders: Old Rosie plus several others in the summer. Since our visit, the pub now has its own brewery; something for us to check out on our next visit. Today it is also a bed and breakfast.

It is probably best to centre yourself in Swanage for a visit to this forgotten corner of England. Stay at the Black Swan Inn on the High Street. It is a bed and breakfast. The building is over 400 years old, and it has been a pub for the last 200 years. The two bar rooms have low-beam ceilings decorated with keys and mugs. There are lots of historic pictures of Swanage on the walls. The beers (on hand pumps) change periodically, but will include such ales as Flowers Original or Ringwood Fortyniner. The food is excellent and includes vegetarian items. Nearby is the start of a beautiful coastal trail over the cliffs to Worth Matravers. There are

many other hotels and bed and breakfasts in Swanage, and you can also camp near the Square & Compass. Other attractions are the Swanage Steam Railway and several golf courses.

Square & Compass, M-F 12-3, 6-11; Sat 12-11; Sun 12-3, 7-10<sup>30</sup> (closed winter Sunday evenings)

Worth Matravers, nr Swanage, Dorset, UK, BH19 3LF  
01929-439229

Bankes Arms Hotel, M-Sat 11-11; Sun 12-10<sup>30</sup>

Manor Road,  
Studland, Dorset, UK, BH19 3AU  
01929-450225

Black Swan Inn, M-Sat 12-2, 6<sup>30</sup>-11; Sun 12-10<sup>30</sup>

159 High Street,  
Swanage, Dorset, UK  
01929-422761

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## BC Beer News

Victoria's **Spinnakers Brewpub** has a new item on the menu: beer and local artisan cheese. Six tasters of Spinnakers ales are paired with Vancouver Island cheeses, local fruit chutney, and English-style homemade flatbread crackers. The Hefeweizen is paired with Moonstruck 'White Grace', a well aged cheese in the English style with high acidity. Next comes the Honey Pale Ale and Natural Pastures 'Comox Brie', traditionally styled with a bloomy rind. The seasonal Raspberry Ale is spot on with Natural Pastures 'Wasabi', a true verdalait cheese infused with wasabi and ginger: the flavours are so varied. My favourite beer, the ESB goes well with Poplar Grove 'Tiger Blue', intense and aromatic in the style of a Stilton (this pair is to die for!). The Scottish Ale is matched with Poplar Grove 'Double Cream Camembert', rich and creamy with notes of white truffles. And, my favourite pair is the Imperial Stout with Moonstruck 'Tome d'Or', an Italian style hard cheese with a nutty taste.

The **Craig Street Brewpub** opened on Canada Day (July 1<sup>st</sup>), a bit behind schedule, but the wait was worth it. The pub is located in Duncan (about 40 miles north of Victoria) in the heart of the heritage downtown district. The owners, Liz and Lance Steward, have owned Just Jakes, the restaurant next door, for 15 years, and have built it up to be Duncan's premier dining place. They fell in love with California's brewpubs a few years ago while a trip for a family wedding. "We wanted to follow the California brewpub trend", says Liz. When the clothing store next door closed they leapt at the opportunity to realize their dream. The expanded kitchen now serves both businesses.

During renovations they discovered that the building had a lot of old growth lumber in it. Some was salvaged to make the stairs. A bar that came from a 1906 Montreal hotel was purchased. The Stewards also bought all the original paneling from the same hotel and it has been used throughout the establishment. There are several levels and the various nooks and crannies give the pub an intimate atmosphere. There is seating, including the rooftop patio, for 220.

"The brewing system was lost at sea on a boat for 30 days" says brewer Chris Gress. Despite this the brewery is working well and making great beer. It was manufactured by IDD in California and shipped with two other systems to a wealthy client in the Dominican Republic. This system stayed in storage and was purchased for the Duncan brewpub. And, yes, it was "lost at sea", mostly due to a miscommunication between the shipper and the agent in Canada. It has extra heating jackets on all the vessels so that decoction mashes will be possible. As Chris says, "I can make any style of beer in the world." For now he will stay with four regular house beers until everything is running smoothly. Chris was a Victoria home brewer who trained with Sean Hoyne. Sean, the brewer at Canoe in Victoria, consulted on the brewery project.

Incidentally, customers are welcome to get beer at the self-serve bar.

All of the beers are named after paintings by E.J. Hughes, a renowned BC artist living in Duncan. Hughes is a regular at Just Jakes, and was pleased to let the Stewards use his paintings for their bottle labels. (Bottling has not started yet but the art work is on display in the lobby.) Reproductions of many of Hughes' paintings hang throughout the building giving the pub a strong West Coast feeling.

To check out the beers my wife, Carol, and I ordered the Craig Street Toolbox for \$10.00. This was a sample of each beer, and, as a nice touch, it came with a glass of peanuts. We started with the Cowichan Bay Lager (5%), a pale gold, really clean refreshing lager with an excellent hop aroma. Next up was the Shawnigan Irish Ale (5.7%), a brilliant medium bodied red ale, with distinct hoppiness. Mt. Prevost Porter (5%) has a nice rocky head and is a dark reddish brown. It is a light porter but otherwise an excellent example of the style. It is very drinkable and was our favourite. We finished up with Arbutus Ale (5%) an amber gold medium bodied beer with a good head, obvious caramel maltiness, and a nice bitter aftertaste.

Most of the delicious food is locally sourced. Chef Brandon Aris has been with Just Jakes for 13 years. He is using the house beers in many menu items. He has a Mt. Prevost Porter BBQ sauce that comes with the chicken wings and the BBQ chicken pizza. The Irish Ale is used to make the excellent batter for the fish and chips I had. Incidentally the homemade tartar sauce is the best I've ever tasted. Carol loved the Panini. It was a large grilled ciabatta bun stuffed with roasted vegetables (red peppers portabella mushrooms, red onions, artichoke hearts), basil pesto and Monterey Jack cheese, and served with Asian coleslaw.

It is refreshing to find a new establishment that doesn't gouge the customers. Good beer at \$5.50 for a 20-ounce pint is less than at most bars. The pub is so popular with locals that some beers ran out during the opening weeks. Chris has everything back on track – he even has enough in the tanks to pour at the Great Canadian Beer Festival. With Liz Steward buzzing around greeting customers, this has become a favourite meeting place for local people. Craig Street Brewpub is a delightfully classy pub and a great addition to the beer world of Vancouver Island.

What a contrast **Central City Brewing Company** is. This swish brewpub is set in Surrey's Central City Mall, located near the Central Skytrain station. This might be a questionable destination for someone seeking out an interesting pub! However, if beer, music, and good food are what you are looking for, then this pub is for you. It has a modern chrome and glass look, and is definitely a sports bar, with lots of TV screens.

The beer is brewed by Gary Lohin whose reputation preceded him from his great beers at Sailor Hagar's Pub in North Vancouver. In a recent visit we found that there is definitely a hint of the Sailor Hagar brews at Central City. Since it was lunch, we ordered a taster tray. The first beer was Signal Light Pale Ale, which has lots of malt and hops flavour. This would be a great beer to accompany a pizza. Next we tried the summer seasonal, a Raspberry Wheat Ale. This was a very tasty brilliant beer with raspberry very distinct in both aroma and taste. Springboard Lager is a clean, sweetish lager with a very pleasant and distinctive Hallertau hop aroma. The Steelhead Stout is dark, smooth, and creamy, and has a nice chocolate taste and aroma. Our favourite was the Iceberg Copper Bock, a huge sweet (Munich) malty beer with a lovely dry finish. Nearby in the mall is the Central City Liquor Store where "Growlers" of the beer from the pub are available. These are 2 litre containers (equivalent to a six-pack) and are refillable for \$10. A new Italian canning line capable of 50 cans a minute is packaging Central City Premium Lager. Plans include canning the IPA next.

Partner Colin James is well known in the music world and has lined up entertainment ranging from Doug and the Slugs to Barney Bentall and the Legendary Hearts. Most nights DJ Adam West is in the house playing requests. Monday Night Football is hosted by BC Lion's Geroy Simon. Patrons can use the free wireless internet.

The food at Central City is excellent. Although the extensive menu is largely standard pub fare there are some interesting twists for lunch: tempura and coconut battered jumbo prawns as an appetizer, fish and chips made with Copper Bock batter, and a great Teriyaki Bowl.

**Craig Street Brewpub,**  
25 Craig Street,  
Duncan, B.C.  
250-737-2337

**Central City Brewing Company**  
Central City Mall, 13450 - 102nd Avenue,  
Surrey, B.C. V5L 1V9  
604-582-6620

## **Destination Pub: Craig Street Brewpub**

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Located at 25 Craig Street, Duncan, B.C. V9L 1V7

Phone: 250-737-2337. Open Mon-Thur 11am-11pm; Frid & Sat 11am-midnight; closed Sunday.