

BEER

on the wall

"Drinking Beer Promotes Freedom of Speech"

Brew - Ha Ha

Surviving a Beer Festival

Last month I went to the 10th Annual Breast Fest Beer Festival.. (calm down guys, it's not what you think, all the proceeds went to benefit Bay Area non-profit Charlotte Maxwell Cancer Clinic) and had a great time enjoying beers from 60 breweries. Black Diamond Brewing Company was represented and I thought you all might want to share the experience with me, so enjoy this month's brews.

... Have you tasted your beer yet? Are you ready for a beer festival yet? Are you?! P.S. are you really ready for a beer festival? There are a few ways to really enjoy a beer festival so let me clue you in on a few tips.

1. **Plan Ahead.** Beer festivals are growing more popular all the time. Buy your tickets early to ensure entrance.
 2. **Designate a Driver.** With so little time and so many beers, make sure you have a safe option for getting home. Bring a non-drinking friend to do the driving or better yet, bring a friend and both of you take a taxi or some other public transportation.
 3. **Take it Easy.** The future of beer festivals depend on everyone acting in a responsible manner and not overindulging. This is very important for everyone's safety.
 4. **Eat Before You Drink.** Don't attack a beer fest on an empty stomach. I suggest you wolf down a big, carbo-filled lunch for the energy you'll need to get through the day. Eating also slows down the absorption of alcohol by your system.
 5. **Take Notes.** "What was that great Amber you tasted in row two?" Bring along a notepad to rate your favorite beers and help you remember where to go for seconds. You'll also want to buy your favorite beers at your local beer store after the fest.
 6. **Accessories Are Necessary.** Don't leave home without some cash to purchase cool glasses, t-shirts, and novelties that you will inevitably find on the festival grounds.
 7. **Bring a Cap.** Many breweries will want to stick you with their logo, to show your appreciation, bring a baseball cap to display your pins with pride.
 8. **Wear Spill Gear.** Even the best poured beers can sometimes go down the front of your shirt. Dark, absorbent colors are preferred to white t-shirts that can easily advertise a spill.
 9. **Don't Rush Home.** The brew fest isn't going to be the only gig in town. There are usually plenty of superb restaurants in the vicinity of the festival, so plan to hang out downtown after the fest to relax and let your beer settle.
 10. **Meet the Maker.** Keep an eye out for the brew masters. They are a wealth of knowledge and awesome to hang out with. I mean, come on ... they make beer, need I say more.
- Most importantly have fun, that's what beer and in this case, breasts are for! Check the web for an upcoming brew fest near you.

OVER THE WALL

BEER OF THE MONTH CLUB

this month's featured beers

Black Diamond Brewing Company: Concord, CA

Ales of distinction - that's what Black Diamond Brewing Co. is about! Black Diamond Brewing Company is an artisan's brewery located 30 miles northeast of San Francisco in Concord, CA, near the confluence of the mighty Sacramento Delta rivers and the majestic Mt. Diablo. The brewery name comes from the local coal mines where, during the 19th and early 20th centuries, nearly 4 million tons of these "black diamonds" were removed from the earth. The mining town residents came from all over the world, and their lives were characterized by hard work and long hours. Occasional celebrations were important to help sustain the dedicated miners, and beer became a favorite beverage.

This spirit of hard work and celebration of life is at the core of their philosophy at Black Diamond Brewing. They opened their doors in 1994 as a brewpub in Walnut Creek, CA, where they produced a unique blend of ales and provided quality food and entertainment for 10 years. As the passion for producing great beer dominated their vision, they closed the brewpub and then immediately reopened as a full-fledged brewery in 2005.

As they expanded their territory and available styles in bottles and draught, they continued to hold to their roots -- sourcing the best ingredients, working hard and never compromising.

Free Style Belgian Blonde

Black Diamond's flagship Free Style Belgian Blonde is truly Belgian style - a light copper-colored ale brewed with Belgian malts and yeast to provide the distinctive yet exceptionally smooth flavor.

The Rye malt added contributes to the delicate herbal and spicy undertones and the Belgian yeast strain provides the nuance and complexity. As is customary in Belgium, they use the finest Bohemian "Noble" hops which balance perfectly with the malt and yeast flavors. The result is an ale with a wonderful, very supple drinkability. Pair it with seafood, lighter cheeses or pasta and enjoy!

Silver Medal Winner of the 2008 World Beer Cup!

Steep Trail Amber Ale

Steep Trail Amber Ale is a medium copper-colored brew with a rich full malt character. At various stages in the brewing process, several varieties of British Noble hops are introduced to complement the natural sweetness of the finest English Pale and Crystal malts to produce a deliciously creamy brew with hints of toffee, plums and hazelnuts.

In the style of traditional British Special Bitters, this Amber Ale is a beer of great finesse and balance; it pairs well with roasted meats, full flavored fish, chili and any sturdy cheese. Try it the next time you barbecue!

Jagged Edge IPA

In the height of British Imperial glory, the English were dismayed to find their beer did not survive the long sea voyage in good condition. The solution to making their Pale Ale arrive without spoiling was to add additional hops (a natural preservative) and increase the amount of grain to give it a higher alcohol content. Thus, the Imperial Pale Ale (IPA) was born and has gone on to become one of the most popular beer styles in the world.

The West Coast-style Jagged Edge IPA recipe takes the hop factor to the next level, perfectly balancing it with hearty English malts to give it the zesty backbone of a bold IPA. This is a brew that can take on assertive dishes with lots of spice and heat as well as richer foods like creamy pastas. Push your taste buds to the Jagged Edge!

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