

# CRAFT

Beer, Wine & Spirits

Jan./Feb. 2024

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Don't Drive your Bartender to  
Drink a Four-Pack of Bar Faux-Pas

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The History of Mead

**FREE**

Locally Owned And  
Published In Maine

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Doing Right by the Pint



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# CRAFT

Beer, Wine & Spirits

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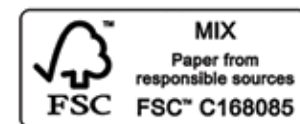
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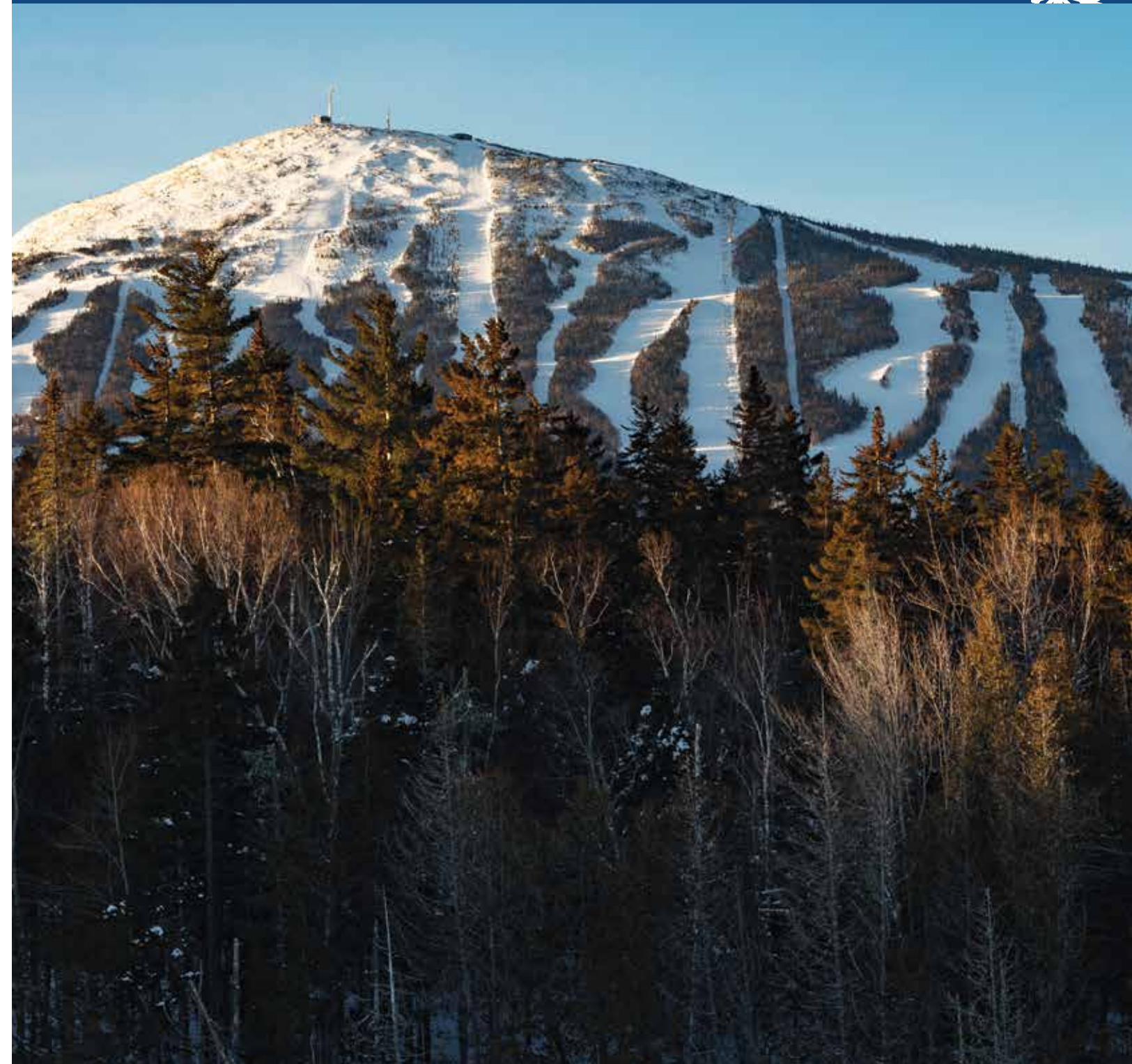
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# I Pray for Après



By Aidan Leavitt





Tis’ the reason for the season... Well by now you’re probably sick of hearing that, but no we’re not talking about Old Saint Nick. It’s après-ski season which means it’s time to embrace the ski lodge activities. Think mulled wine, logs on the fire, fluffy socks that actually keep your feet warm, gently falling snow, friendly shadows cast across the tavern. The French may have come up with the term, but they certainly don’t have a monopoly on it, although not so deep down I think all of us winter sports enthusiasts and lodge-lubbers wish we were darkening the shadow of the Matterhorn. While we New Englanders might not have the spindly-shaped spires of the European Alps to gaze loving upon, we have a bountiful bevy of bar rooms and

tap houses calling out to us. This winter, whether you’re on the road to visit family, off to catch a glimpse of snow-capped hills, or hunting down fresh tracks, you’ll find there is little better than popping into a warm and inviting restaurant or bar to de-ice. This post-holiday season we’ve compiled a guide, albeit a small one, to post and pre-ski Pine Tree State pub and grub hotspots.

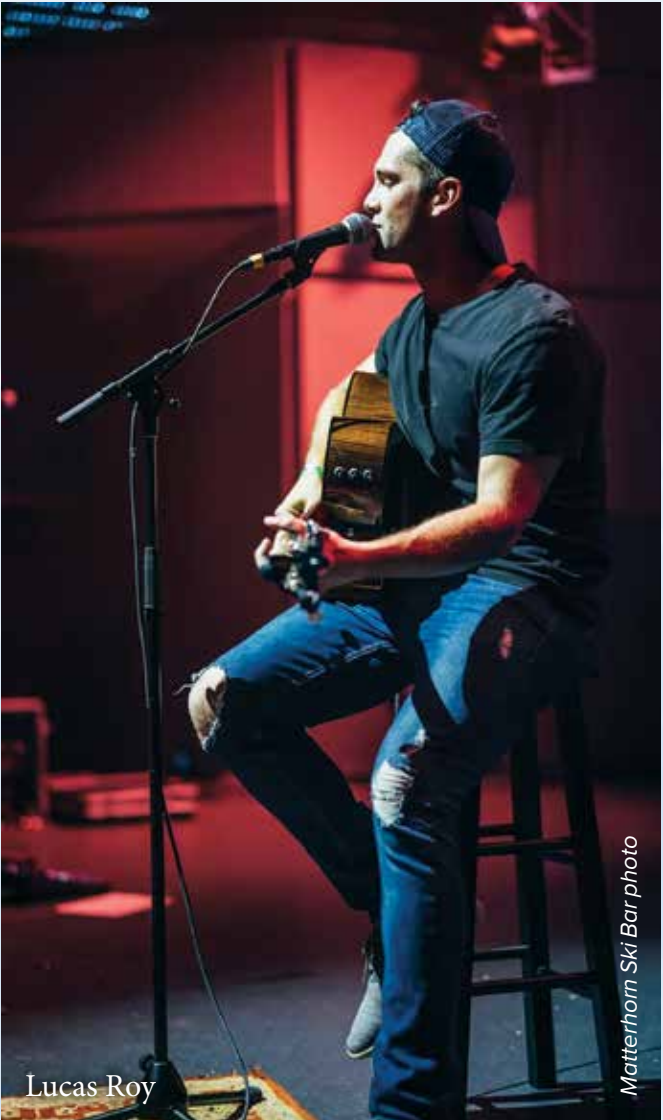
Ah, Sugarloaf, is one of our favorite ski destinations here at Maine Craft. Its snowy peak and long winding trails have been providing us with great groomers to shred and a fun crowd for quite some time. A favorite of many University of Maine at Orono students, there are understandably a few lively bars in the area that cater to

the needs of our fellow sore and sorry skiers. We’ll start off with a fan favorite: The Rack BBQ. Undeniably a great time every time, this wood beam bar is packed to the ceiling with ski memorabilia and thirsty patrons. Not only does it have a diversified draft list with offerings from Bunker, Banded and Bigelow brewing companies (not to mention many more regional favorites), but it also has some big ole barbeque plates (plus pizza) AND live music from respective Portland and Bangor favorites like Rigometrics and Peach Belly. Sauntering back to the slopes we’ve got on-mountain offerings from Sugarloaf like Widowmaker and the unbeatable ski-in ski-out bar at Bullwinkle’s. Not only can you pop inside to warm up, but alternatively you can snag a brew on the ski sticks from the outside pickup window. The outdoor section is a particularly ideal spot to catch a reprieve and a Tubular on sunny (non-windy) spring days.

Speaking of the Matterhorn, nestled in Newry, the nearest Sunday River as one can be, this delightful spot has long stood as a testament to the restorative power of the après-ski spirit. Its stylings and ski splendor are suited to a post-shred pint and often you’ll be able to catch live music here as well. Some other notable picks for the nearby Sunday experience includes Sud’s Pub, but of course Sunday River Brewing (unreal Bloody Marys), and Steam Mill Brewing. We also have to recommend checking out Definitive Brewing Company’s tasting room, which comes with an absolutely incredible view of the terrain.

If you’re looking for something on-mountain you’ve got the tried and true Foggy Goggle operated by the Sunday River team, as well as the Whitecap Lodge’s Shipyard Brew Haus, which is a nice spot to end, or start I suppose, the day.

Rangeley is probably one of the most gorgeous ski towns we have to offer here in Maine with its sweeping lakes and handsome mountain views. As a skier myself I am particularly pleased to see Saddleback back in operation. In town, there are a couple of desirable options found down on Maine St. such as the Furbish Brew House & Eats, the Corner Pub, and for our hockey-heads we have Sarge’s Sports Pub and Grub.



The recently renamed and reopened Pleasant Mountain has always been a standout pick for Southern Maine skiers and it’s certainly a fitting name for the terrain. Nearby in Bridgton, there’s the stylish Queen’s Head Pub and the incredibly cozy-looking Black Horse Tavern, both accommodating offerings for those looking to shirk the cold.



Feature



Family favorite Mt. Abram sports a couple of wondrous watering holes like Suds Pub and Millbrook Tavern to be found in the nearby town of Bethel. Watching the sun in full splendor set over the rolling Appalachians in this quaint little town is well worth the drive out, and we suspect you'll find it working its way into both your heart and ski schedule.

Farmington is one of our favorite ski towns out there. It's got the lovely Titcomb Mountain right in town and you're likely to run into a variety of University of Maine at Farmington ski prodigies zipping around and making the most out of the cold clime. Farmington is decidedly a skier's town as it sits about halfway between Sunday River and Sugarloaf (although we'd be remiss to give you the impression that it's close to either). Nestled in the heart of downtown, Tuck's Ale House serves typical bar fare, a smattering of regional brews, and of course, Guinness. There's nothing like a good hearty stout to fill you up. Right next door is the slightly more upscale HOMESTEAD



Kitchen Bar. This restaurant, while not open late, offers live music, good eats and a relaxed vibe.

Sleeper Pick: Après in Portland is not exactly close to a ski mountain, in fact, it's pretty far from all of them, but that's why it's here on our list. If you are trying to muster up the strength to hit the slopes but come up short, or you sleep late and miss the first chair by a mile, you can always mosey on over to Portland's own cozy ski-styled bar. Located in the East End near some patron picks like Belleflower, Lone Pine and Goodfire Brewing, this bar delivers style and savory substances. The atmosphere is fun and familiar with a large bar, varied draft list and half-circle bench seating for bigger groups. Not to mention the bar is also pretty close to Arlberg Ski and Surf which means you can go drool over the newest skis and bindings.

To all our après appreciators out there, we at Craft Maine wish you nothing but plenty of pows, a plethora of pints, and lots of gnars to shred! 🌲

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# Beer Styles



## English-Style Brown Porter

The English-style brown porter has no roasted barley or strong burnt/black malt character. Low to medium malt sweetness, caramel and chocolate is acceptable. Hop bitterness is medium. Softer, sweeter and more caramel-like than a robust porter, with less alcohol and body. Porters are the precursor style to stouts.

### CATEGORY: PORTERS

This longstanding style can be traced back to the working class of the 1700s and its popularity with street and river parters. A porter is dark in color with flavors of chocolate, light coffee, nut and caramel. Porters are less roasty and espresso-like than stouts, but have deeper cocoa flavors than brown ales. Porters are a great beer to have with a wide variety of foods, and a favorite among many craft brewers and their fans.



SRM refers to a beer's color. A very pale beer, such as American wheat, typically has an SRM of 5, while a dark colored stout is usually in the range of 25-40 SRM.



IBU is the measure of hops' contribution to a beer's bitterness. It can range from zero to over 100. Beer bitterness is subject to perception. What is aggressively bitter to some is mildly bitter to others. Also, bitterness can seem lower in the presence of residual sugar, carbonation, and cooler temperatures.



ABV varies by craft beer style from around 3% to more than 20%. Alcohol flavor may be perceived, and is sometimes desirable, in craft beers with higher ABV.

### FOOD PAIRINGS

 Roasted or Grilled Meats

 Gruyere

 Chocolate Peanut Butter Cookies

### GLASSWARE & SERVING TEMPERATURE



Nonic Pint  
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The imperial pint was adopted as an official measure by British Parliament in 1824. Using this official system of measurement, the nonick version of the imperial pint glass was produced for use in pubs in the 1960s. The glass bulges out at the top which improves grip, adds strength and reduces chipping.

More information and other styles can be found at [www.CraftBeer.com](http://www.CraftBeer.com).



# It's a Bird, it's a Plane, it's UFO

By Liz Lane

Liz is a writer, podcaster located in Southern Maine

David R. Allenson takes his antiques like his alcohol: neat. Some might include the adjectives sorted, copious, or impressively arranged. He's the kind of guy who can leave a bank with a 30-year loan in his mid-seventies. Allenson has broadened his horizons so much that it now includes a liquor outlet, a campground, a fleet of flying machines, and five other buildings under one umbrella with 300+

other antiques and bumbershoots roosting beneath.

Offering 5,300 varieties of adult beverages makes sense when establishing Naples as the unofficial wine capital of Maine, but why throw airplanes in with the mixers? To complement the craft beer runway, of course. While Allenson may lack hours in a cockpit, his aptitude for conquering space is astounding. He doesn't need

wings to defy the gravity of others' expectations. Since his flying leap from store manager to store owner in 2004, the newly dubbed Umbrella Factory Outlet has nearly quintupled in square footage. But not all at once, of course.

Allenson was already intimate with the location and culture of Naples, having been employed there since 1995 and with decades of grocery experience before purchasing the establishment. With the change of hands came a change in names, and in 2004, Tony's Foodland became a memory, and the Umbrella Factory Outlet began to unfold.

"I've added on to the supermarket five times. I took every chance when somebody left the shopping center to take over their lease. I went from 5000 square feet to 24,000," proclaimed Allenson. "I didn't plan on adding as much as I did at the beginning because of finances, but to stand a chance against the competition, I had to grow."

The evolution and expansion of the grocery store prompted Allenson to move his beer, wine, and spirits into an independent but adjacent store. Besides biding his time while real



David R. Allenson



Jenna Noyes

estate opportunities developed, two other hurdles Allenson soared over were financing and his time on earth.

"I had the chance to put a liquor store in my supermarket, but I wanted to put my liquor in a private store. The state didn't want me to do that because I did more business in my supermarket, but I convinced them because I've been doing it for a long time," recalled Allenson. "I was very fortunate when it came to borrowing money because the bank couldn't discriminate against my age. I was born on a leap day, so while I do turn 20 in February, I was 74 when I received my 30-year loan."

Other transitional opportunities opened after replacing all shelving and cold cases in the first remodel—namely, open skies for planes. UFO is fully stocked with other striking decorations: a jukebox from the 70s still spinning 45s, 30-plus neon lights, and a functional coke machine from 1964 that they've converted from dimes to dollars. While some suspended vehicles are still functional, others approached UFO from a different angle.

Allenson and his wife, Gail, are antique fiends whose trophy finds complement the beverage selection. Inspired by an unused corridor in an adjacent former salon, Allenson conceived the idea of an illuminated landing strip guiding

patrons through an impressive array of over a thousand varieties of craft brewskis ready to take off.

"We have a plane from an airport hanging in the liquor part of the store. We brought it down the highway on a flatbed to get it here in parts, and it was the first thing we suspended from the ceiling. It's a triplane, a two-seater remote-controlled airplane," Allenson added thoughtfully. "We have a Red Bull aircraft hanging upside down because that's how it's supposed to be done."

After years of feeding and providing for the people of Naples, a former competitor became a crucial distribution connection.

"In 2009, we became one of 39 stores to become an Independent Hannaford. You can only get involved with them if they offer, so it was awesome that they approached me," expressed Allenson. "It's helped me expand, and when the lease is up in 2027 on the Subway next door, I'm taking it over and putting in a pizza shop."

While the craft beer runway is eye-catching, there are so many distinct features of the Umbrella Factory that it's a challenge to choose what notable sight to mention first, but the massive stockpile of booze is a frontrunner for most.



# Business Profile

“I have over 1000 craft beers in my store, over 1900 different kinds of wine, 1800 different kinds of liquor, over 400 ciders, and hundreds of nips,” boasted Allenson. “I have four full spirit aisles, including a 24-foot long one just for vodka, our biggest seller. “We sell a lot of Tito’s Vodka, and I have over 100 cases displayed with a big neon sign. No one else in Maine has nearly the variety we do.”

Allenson has you covered for those with a fear of flying but a love of the outdoors. Formerly the salon’s location, the Factory has expanded to take the outside in. The Lost Moose Campground section of the store features coolers and displays, along with some charming misdirection involving a newly renovated bathroom and the door to a port-a-john, as, according to Allenson, every camp needs an outhouse.

This is the kind of business where they have so many cool things going on that you almost forget the namesake. The airplanes on the ceiling have competition: over 250 unique umbrellas that the Allensons have purchased or been gifted that are strictly not for sale. Unsurprisingly,

the store is more than just a town necessity- it’s a hit with tourists, too.

“There’s not many people that live here all year long. My business triples in June, July, and August. It’s unbelievable how many people shop and stay in camps, motels, and bed and breakfasts near the big lakes,” explained Allenson. “It’s a tourist town more than anything, but I try to build my business around them for three months of the year, and for the other nine months, I cater to elderly people on fixed incomes because that’s the locale.”

Despite soon entering the octogenarian arena, Allenson is still determined to expand and continue adapting to the needs of the people in Naples and celebrate the connectedness of the community.

“Many facilities don’t know who you are because people just buy their product and leave. If I don’t know you, our meat manager Micheal does. If he doesn’t, Thad our co-manager does. And if he doesn’t, my secretary Bev does. Most of my employees live in the area and have been here so long; we know people by first name.” 🍷

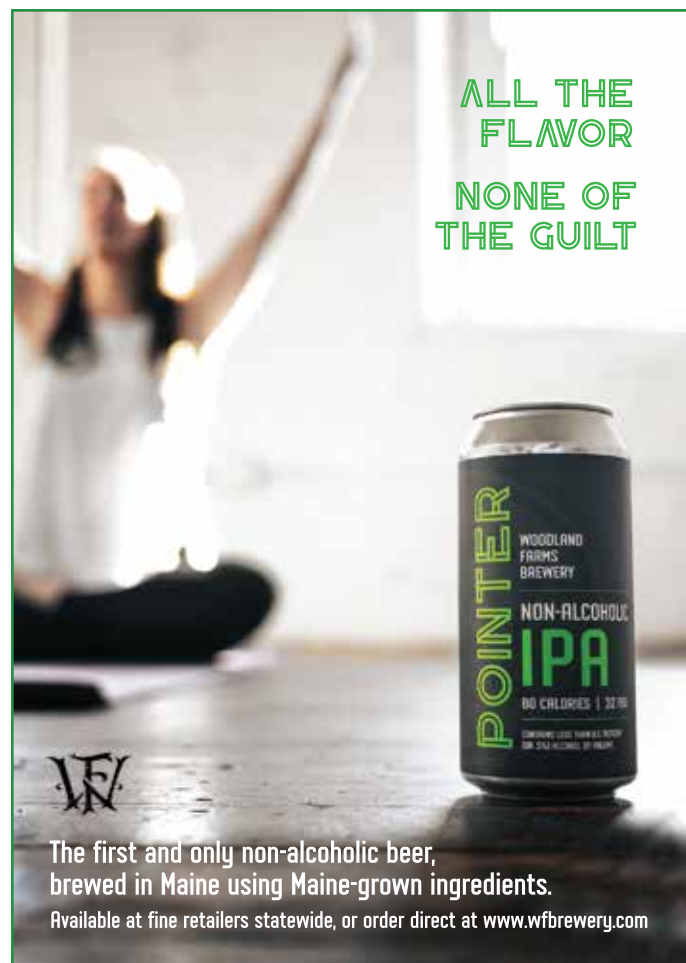


# Business Profile





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<b>Bubbly Bramble</b> Bombay Bramble Gin, Raspberry Liqueur, Fresh Squeezed Lemon, Lemonade, Topped With Prosecco	<b>Strawberry Lemon Drop Martini</b> Strawberry Infused Absolut Citron, Fresh Squeezed Lemon, Lemonade, Strawberry Puree, Sugar Rim
<b>S'mores Espresso Martini</b> Espresso And Whipped Vodka, Crème De Cacao, Torani S'mores Syrup, Iced Coffee, Graham Cracker Rim, Chocolate Drizzle, Toasted Marshmallow	<b>Key Lime Pie</b> Blue Chair Bay Key Lime Pie Rum, Whipped Vodka, Simply Limeade, Graham Cracker Rim, Whipped Cream, Lime Zest

**Wine List**  
Kendall Jackson Chardonnay, Due Torri Pinot Grigio, Matua Sauvignon Blanc, Mionetto Prosecco, Stella Rosa Moscato, Josh Cabernet, Julia James Pinot Noir and Terrazas Malbec

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# Road Trippin'

## With Craft Maine

### Have the Time of your Life at the Dirty Dancing Resort

By Victor Block

It didn't take long after arriving at Mountain Lake Lodge in Pembroke, Virginia, to realize that despite the resort's name, it has no lake. What it does offer guests is a long and varied list of activities and appeals that can fill many a day.

Then there's that not-so-secret

reason why many people go there. Most of the popular 1987 motion picture *Dirty Dancing*, which supposedly took place at a vacation retreat in New York's Catskill Mountains, was filmed at the Virginia property.

Taking advantage of the almost cult-like following the motion picture

spawned, Mountain Lake Lodge stages a series of special weekends throughout the year which are focused on the film. During my recent visit, I combined immersion in the movie's mystique with a sampling of the many other things to do and see on the resort's 2,600-acre spread.

## Road Trippin'

Its history alone is enticing. In the early 1800s, a wooden hotel was built to serve as a stagecoach stop. Following several reincarnations, a businessman purchased the property and, in 1936, erected the sprawling lodge that still stands, using native stones from the surrounding hills. Today, it's owned by a foundation that preserves its role as a place where people can forge a close connection with nature.

The resort clings proudly to its past. Hallways are lined with historic photographs and memorabilia, and cottages built during the early 1900s have been refurbished to serve as accommodations. Stone benches from that time are scattered about the campus to provide rest and respite.

As I soon learned, those seats come in handy for guests seeking a bit of R&R after taking advantage of the resort's eclectic A-To-Z choice of recreational alternatives, from art classes to zip lining.

There are 24 miles of hiking trails of varying degrees of challenge. Birdwatchers can explore the tranquil hemlock forest and marsh bog nearby. Tours reveal hidden areas of the property, and guides share little-known stories about its past.

Escape rooms challenge the ingenuity of those who venture into them, and a ropes course tests their bravery and balance. An onsite shooting range, Clays at the Overlook, offers rifle shooting at moving targets and lessons are available for a fee to help beginners score a bullseye. Other opportunities close to the resort include fishing, kayaking and canoeing, river rafting and golfing.

### *What happened to the lake?*

Not long ago, the on-site lake itself offered a choice of water-related opportunities. Geologists explain that Mountain Lake was formed about 6,000 years ago by rockslide dams. They say it's the only body of water in the world that goes through natural periodic cycles of draining through leak holes and then refilling as those openings are plugged in by sediment.

While the lakebed was empty when I was there, it's famous for another reason. During the making of *Dirty Dancing*, Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey practiced "the lift" there, the most famous part of a dance routine portrayed in the movie. The location is identified by one of a number of signs that mark spots where scenes were filmed.







## Road Trippin'

The resort's special Dirty Dancing weekends, which are held throughout the year, attract both first-time participants and fans who, I learned, have watched the motion picture as many as 50 times.

At a costume contest, Hollywood wannabes dress up like various actors. Dance lessons introduce some of the moves that gave the movie its name, and games like a scavenger hunt and trivia quiz separate die-hard groupies from less dedicated devotees.

Not a resort to be satisfied with its film fame, Mountain Lake Lodge also offers other themed events: Independence and Mother's Day celebrations, football weekends, craft beer tastings and Thanksgiving and Christmas fetes.

Even if this inventory of special occasions doesn't tempt a visit to Mountain Lake Lodge, the long list of activities may do so.

Accommodation at Mountain Lake Lodge includes the historic lodge building and cottages around the property. Meals in the Harvest Dining Room, where some Dirty Dancing scenes were filmed, offer a farm-to-table experience using locally sourced ingredients. A meat and cheese charcuterie board, listed as a "small plate," provided a bountiful meal for Fyllis and me to share. Entrée alternatives include cast iron chicken and sesame seed-crusted salmon.

Washing down a chicken or fish entrée with an icy brew can provide a tempting taste treat, and nearby breweries can offer that potential. The Moon Hollow Brewing Company typically offers about a dozen beers on tap, including a Hefeweizen, which includes the unlikely aroma combination of banana and clove, with a hint of bubblegum, and Lavender Fields, which are soured, then infused with black currant puree and lavender blossom.

Long Way Brewing Company takes pride in its mission to provide free daily lunches to people in need. Fittingly, it's located in a repurposed former church. Its products include light, hoppy and malty beers along with Blood Orange Hard Cider.

One of the region's only farm breweries, Rising Silo, uses organic malts and water from its own well. Produce from local farms is incorporated in many of its beers, and visitors may pick up fresh vegetables, dairy foods and meat that was raised on-site. Among the appropriately named beers produced by the three-barrel brewing system are Farm Life Lager, Goats Eye Ryle Pale Ale and Brown Chicken Pale Ale.

For more information about Mountain Lake Lodge, call (540) 626-7121 or log onto [mtnlakelodge.com](http://mtnlakelodge.com).

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# Don't Drive your Bartender to Drink a Four-Pack of Bar Faux-Pas

By Jeff Cutler

Have you ever popped into your local pub for a pint, and you could tell the staff was less jovial and friendly than on your last visit? If this has ever been your experience, you've probably stepped afoul of the barroom societal rules. When these norms aren't followed, a faux pas occurs. What follows can be a lifetime of snubs by bartenders and waitstaff, OR you can fix it on your next visit.

"WAIT," you cry. "I don't know what I did to get them angry!"

Think! THINK!! And use the examples below to see if that's how you were behaving.

Once you figure it out, run, don't walk, to that bar and ask for forgiveness. You'll have a laugh, you'll OVERTIP, and all will return to normal. There is no alternative course of action if you plan to keep visiting bars and drinking beer.

By the way, there were half a dozen or more bars and stores visited for this article. I am naming the venues in NO PARTICULAR ORDER, and I am not naming any bartenders. Here's where I went for my info... Brickyard Hollow; Three Robbers Pub; Byrne's Pub; Maine Beer Company; Flight Deck Brewing; Oyst-Hers; UFO Stores; and Water Street Restaurant.



**MANY ways you have probably irritated your bartender:**

**1 - The Beer Inquisitor**

We live in an age where an IPA is seemingly released every seven hours. We're also constantly watching brewers experiment with adding jams or sours; hot peppers to Radlers; spices to ales; and artificial flavors of all sorts to everything else. Which means you can be forgiven if you have some questions about a particular beer.

But there are ground rules about cross-examining your bartender. They are not psychic, so they are unable to guess exactly what you'll like. The bartender knows what beers they have - but so does the menu. Instead of having the bartender recite the list for you, try sounding out the names in front of you. Better still, there are other resources at hand. Have you taken a hard look at the beer taps? Or glanced at the beer fridge or the cans displayed above the bar?

After all that, what if you can't decide? Should you ask for a taste of a beer you're interested in? Certainly! And that's where it should end. The bar has invested in tiny glasses to use in flights and for tasting samples of their draft beer. Tasting samples does not mean tasting all the beer before you decide.

In fact, if you notice that the tasting samples are flowing like glue, maybe you are the guy or gal who asks to taste three different beers (which is almost a full beer by itself), then order one drink and leave. The net return for the bar is negative 2/3 of a drink; the net return for the bartender is being tipped on one drink instead of the service action of pouring four beverages for you.

Perspective. It really does depend on what side of the bar you're on.



2 - The Bar Distractor

Don't be the person who performs bothersome activities and makes noises at the bar.

Pretend you can only interact with people who are within five feet. That means you can talk and enjoy a person on either side of you; you can pleasantly accept your food from a server who approaches from behind; and you can talk to the bartender when they are clearly able to interact with you.

Some people say that these tips can be enhanced with context clues. For example, if the bartender has gone into the kitchen, it's probably not a good time to ask them a question.

Next is actually hitting the bar. To a person, the bartenders I talked to in New Gloucester, Freeport, Bath, Damariscotta, and Lisbon all get annoyed when a patron pounds on the bar. It could be in excitement or to emphasize a point, but for all bartenders it's a distraction.

The irony is that many establishments are trying to keep people around longer, so there are increasingly more televisions in the bar area. And when games are on, patrons make more noise.

The final bar distractor is coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose at the bar. Any of these things should be done - if we've learned anything from science and Covid - away from others. Preferably don't visit a restaurant if you're exhibiting signs of illness. Since a bartender interacts with multiple people, your snuffle could get 50 people sick.

And blowing your nose at the bar is just blech!

3 - Time Sucks

In the world of beverage service, bartenders have favorite drinks and then they have drinks and tasks that they try to avoid at all costs. These are the time sucks...tasks and requests that dig into the bar efficiency and at the precisely WRONG time, these time sucks can put the entire restaurant in the weeds.

How? If a restaurant has one bartender and a bunch of tables, it's easy. Let's imagine a tourist wanders in and asks for a muddled drink, a coffee drink, a blended drink and a gimlet. At the same time, two tables are filled, and drink orders are entered. Suddenly the bartender has 12 drinks to make, four of which have to be made individually.

A person can also become a time suck, especially by asking questions and carrying on a conversation with the bartender. While it's pleasant to chat with customers, a bartender staring at a 12-drink order might not want to engage in an ongoing waterfall of small talk and queries.



Going for extra points, the person who is constantly trying to flag down the service staff is a special type of irritant. Like a theatrical production, a restaurant and bar have rhythm and balance. Servers allow time for everything to come out coordinated. If they rush one thing, the rest of the meal could tumble like dominoes. \*That's hyperbole, but if rushed, some pieces of the meal might not be done properly...including drinks.

Lastly, instructing the bartender on how to make 'your' drink isn't going to make you a new friend. Think about this for a second. You went to a bar that didn't carry your drink and asked them to make it for you. That's like asking your grandmother to knit you a scarf instead of the sweater she spent the last decade on. Drink what they have.

4 - Myriad Maddening Moves

When researching this article, I spent a lot of time in bars asking bartenders questions. As noted above, I did not hang any venue or bartender out to dry. They all have a hard job to do. That said, here is the stuff that didn't make it into their top three complaints...it's another handful of 'concerns' bartenders have.

The dish collectors - people who are somehow against letting the bus staff collect dirty glasses. This includes all the people who order water and never touch it and folks who insist on keeping saucers and side plates so they can discard garnishes and paper.

The crowders - people who lean on and onto the bar making it hard to serve or make drinks in front of them.

The career coach - anyone who asks a bartender what their real job is.

The amateur bartender - the fun folks who specify top-top shelf booze in multiple-alcohol drinks. The best vodka isn't going to help in a Long Island Iced Tea; and maybe not even in a White Russian.

The oblivious – the customers who wander into the restaurant at the very stroke of closing and ask if the kitchen is still serving and if they can get a quick drink if they know what they want. Try that at the DMV or Post Office, or come to think of it, any other business. Hours are hours.

Please don't be fooled. Ultimately, there's more good that goes on around bars and restaurants than this list of random complaints. Thanks to all the bartenders for putting up with my endless questions, my leaning on the bar, and my shouting across the restaurant to try and make a point.

Until next time... Cheers! 🍷



## Spirits

# Recipes

By Jeff Cutler

When you mention the month of February to someone, especially in the United States, a big red heart appears in mind's eye and creates an immediate expectation.

Wait, I'm not your therapist. I don't know what you've been through, and I don't want to know who hurt you. Let's just agree we've all been hurt, we're all damaged, and we all enjoy a quality beverage or two to celebrate our resilience.

For those of you in calm, positive and healthy relationships, you can also enjoy the two beverages I'm about to share. Just don't be judgmental. It's great that you've found love and acceptance, for the rest of us we are going to find comfort in a couple of fun winter drinks.

And we're also going to embrace the fact that none of us is a finished product; all of us can be better and happier; and we can all get there if we realize that everyone is in the same big round, earth-shaped boat.

With that said, let's jump into what I'm calling Deep-Winter Drinks!

Be real. It's the cusp of February and the weather is at its peak of angular resistance. Ice is everywhere - especially here in Maine - and snow has turned dirty and ugly. Like all winters, this one is a fight.

*We battle until the buds appear on the trees.*

*We battle until the sewers are no longer blocked by debris.*

*We battle until the cold-snap and spring session beers are released!*

Until that happens, here are two drinks that will keep you warm and frisky this winter. Credit to Jess, the spectacular and skilled bartendress at Byrne's Irish Pub in Bath, ME for assisting me with these concoctions!

### Bombardino Away!

During the colder months, the spirits with a little more kick can add warmth to an otherwise bleak afternoon or evening. Bearing that in mind, the Bombardino puts a boot in your posterior, and it's smooth enough to enjoy at a party or while reading a book by the wood stove.

I didn't come up with the name, but it's appropriate. When you taste the brandy at the front of your first sip, you might pull back. But then the notes of chocolate and delicate cinnamon pull you back to the glass.

That's the magic of Jess's Bombardino with its Italian heritage. The drink can be made a couple of ways, and it's always a beverage of celebration and traditional family and friends gathering. Literally defined as 'the bomb', this drink is easy to make and enjoy.

### Ingredients:

- 1.5 oz Brandy
- 2 oz Eggnog (heated to warm, not quite simmering)
- 3 oz Whipped Cream (room temp whipping cream is best)
- Cinnamon to sprinkle as a garnish

1. In a juice-style or rocks glass, add the warmed eggnog to the bottom. Gently fold in the Brandy and then top with the whipped cream.

2. At that point stir gently until mixed and glass is warm. \*Whipped cream will begin to melt, allow it to paint flavorful ribbons of white into the glass.

3. Sprinkle cinnamon over the top and serve with a holiday cookie on the side or a cinnamon stick in the glass.

This little drink reminds me of elves and the magic they bring to the holidays. It definitely warms you up, too.



## Spirits

### The Decadent Nightcap

For folks who believe that most drinks should have a dessert element to them, I bring you the Nightcap. With rum, chocolate, Frangelico, whipped cream, coffee and chocolate shavings, you might need to fast after a couple of these. But they're delicious!!!

To keep you warm and buzzed with sugar and a bit of alcohol, here's the Nightcap. Jess suggested this drink because she is often running the pub on cold winter nights and customers demand something with flavor and kick. It's not a super-powerful drink, but it will satisfy a sweet tooth and calm you down a bit.

### Get these things together...

- 1 oz dark rum
- 1/2 oz Frangelico
- 1/2 oz chocolate creme liquor
- 3 oz (approx) coffee

- 1 oz whipped cream
- 1/4 cup dark chocolate shavings

1. Once collected, pour the liquors into an oversized coffee mug. Give the liquors a quick stir and then pour in the coffee over the top. Next, float the whipped cream on top.

2. Then wrap up the presentation with a generous sprinkling of chocolate shavings.

3. Serve with a candy cane on the side (don't insert it as it will melt before you get it to the table).

While this drink brings back the essence of holiday flavors and tastes, it's a winter drink. And even if it does make you think about the holidays, just sit in your cushy chair, put your feet by the fire, and enjoy your Nightcap. Spring is coming soon enough. 🍀



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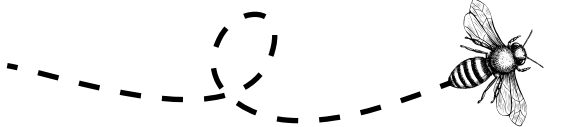
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## Mead

# The History of Mead



**By Beverly Ann Soucy**

*Soucy is a writer, artist, and herbalist with a background in photography living in the mountains of Western Maine. She lives in a little red house with her two sweet older puppies Rusty and Dottie, is a cancer survivor, and makes her living as an herbalist and a stained glass artist as well as writer for several Maine publications. She is also the proprietor of an online publication that showcases the Ten Towns of the River Valley here in Western Maine. Beverly holds several volunteer positions with the local non-profit groups in her community and when she isn't participating in those, you can often find her out on the trails foraging for plants and roots. She is currently living her dream, with a solid four-year plan, back in her hometown of Rumford, Maine.*

Mead has a fascinating history that dates way back to ancient times. In fact, mead is thought to be the oldest alcoholic drink known to man. This hydromel was very popular throughout all of time. Stories of the Viking Era made it popular in the history books, and it is now coming back to life for a handful of master brewers looking for something a little unique for their customers.

It is a simple blend of fermented honey with no real shelf life. People all over the world have been drinking mead for thousands of years and it was particularly popular in medieval Europe.

The basic ingredients of a great mead are simple: honey, water, yeast and time.

It is thought that mead was first discovered by accident when bees that had collected nectar from the flowers around the beehive, found their way into a pool of water. This water eventually fermented and the bees that had consumed it became intoxicated from this happy accident. Much like the fermented berries that birds get intoxicated with, those little bees were having the same experience.

After observing the bees, mortals began to experiment with making it themselves and the rest is quite literally history.

Makers would mix honey and water in a clay vessel, and then allow the wild yeasts that were present in the surrounding environment to help in the fermenting process.

Over time, mead-making methods became more refined, and different cultures began to develop their unique styles. During those times mead was the popular drink among nobility and warriors.

It was often served during important occasions like weddings and celebrations or simply a keg tapped after a village was pillaged and plundered, often drunk out of horns or tankards in Viking times.

The drink was so popular that it even became associated with the Norse God Odin, who was said to drink mead from a magical cauldron.

Today mead-making is undergoing a bit of a resurgence with mini craft breweries and independent mead makers experimenting with different ingredients and different techniques to create a unique and delicious blend as a way to stand out in today's market with a little something different from the typical beer-drinking clientele in offering something bold and unique with an old-world feel and connection.

A closer look at how modern mead-making is different today from its ancient origins is in the access to ingredients and technology. Early mead makers were limited to the honey, water, and yeast that were available locally, however, modern mead makers have access to a wide variety of unpasteurized, raw, local honey, as well as many different types of yeast, and other additives. Additionally, modern technology has made it easier than ever to control the fermentation process. Temperature control yeast strains and other factors can be carefully monitored to produce a consistent and high-quality product. Despite these differences, many modern mead makers still follow some of the same basic principles that were used by early mead makers. For example, many meads are still fermented using wild yeast that is present in surrounding environments and that is unique to their bioregions. This adds a one-of-a-kind flavor and character to the final product.





Mead was an important part of Viking culture and was often served during celebrations and gatherings. The winter solstice was one such celebration with the return of the sun, served again at the summer solstice, a celebration of the longest day of the year, served at a religious ritual performed to honor the gods and goddesses and casks were tapped at funerals and weddings.

Made in casks, barrels of mead were also brought out of the galley when the Viking longships would pull up to a piece of land for settlement and celebration.

Today, many modern mead makers still honor those Viking traditions by creating meads that evoke the flavors and characters of ancient Vikings. These recipes may even be brewed with ingredients that were historically used by Vikings such as heather or juniper berries.

In Viking culture, mead was a very important drink. It was often associated with warrior culture and masculine strength. In addition to the celebrations mentioned earlier, mead also played an important role in Norse mythology.

According to legend it was created from the blood of a god named Kvasir, who was murdered by two dwarfs. The mead was said to possess magical properties and was guarded by the god Oden himself.

The story of medieval poetry also involves mead and tells of how the drink was created by the gods and goddesses to give the gift of poetry to mortals. This myth highlights the importance of mead as a stimulant for creativity, and for artistic expression, and demonstrates the central role that the drink played in Viking culture, I suspect that role still holds importance in today’s culture.

Today mead is experiencing a big resurgence and popularity and can be found in most wine aisles at your local supermarket and specialty wine shops.

In the early Viking era mead was typically brewed in large wooden casks, which were made of either oak or Birchwood. These casks were often quite large and could hold anywhere from several hundred to several thousand liters of mead. The brewing process itself was relatively simple. The brewer would heat water and honey together in a large cauldron, and then allow the mixture to cool. Once cool, the mixture



would be poured into the wooden cask, along with a special type of yeast called KVEIK. It was an important part of Viking brewing as it was able to ferment at relatively high temperatures, allowing brewers to make mead even during the colder winter months.

Once the mead was in the cask, it would be sealed with a wooden lid and left to ferment. The fermentation process could take several weeks to several months. During this time the mead would develop its distinctive flavor and sweetness. When the mead was fully fermented it could either be drunk immediately or stored in the cask for later use. If the mead was to be stored, it would typically be moved to a cooler location such as a cellar or a naturally cool cave.

One of the benefits of storing mead in a wooden cask is that it allows the drink to develop additional flavors over time. As the mead ages, it absorbs flavors from the wood of the cask, as well as from any other ingredients that have been added during the brewing process. This results in a rich complex drink that was highly prized by Viking warriors and was often saved for only special occasions.

Overall, it played an essential role in Viking culture and was often associated with strength, courage and the masculine ideals of the warrior class.

Brewing and wooden casks are a time-honored tradition and one that continues to this day in many mead circles around the world. The length of time that it ages can vary depending on several factors, including the type of mead, the aging conditions, and personal preference.

Generally speaking, most meads will benefit from some amount of aging as it allows the flavors to meld together and develop a smoother taste. Some mead may benefit from aging for only a few months, while others may require several years to fully mature.

As a general rule, sweeter meads tend to age better than dryer ones as the residual sugars in the mead provide a source of food for the yeast and help to preserve the flavor during the aging process with honey being a very powerful preservative. Mead is typically stored in a cool, dark place. This helps to slow down the aging process and prevents the mead from developing off-flavors or becoming oxidized.

Ultimately, the decision of how long to age is a matter of personal preference and varies from person to person. Some individuals prefer their mead fresh and young, while others enjoy the complexity and flavors that develop over time.

Some popular types of mead, such as melomels and bragots may benefit from longer aging periods due to the addition of fruits, spices and herbs.

It’s important to know that not all meads benefit from aging, and some may even lose flavor and become dull over time.



If you’re interested in aging your own mead, it’s always a good idea to taste it periodically to get a sense of how the flavors are developing, and to ensure that it doesn’t spoil.

There are many notable Vikings, who are said to have celebrated with a horn of mead, and by horn, it was typically a bull horn with some of those horns holding up to 3 liters of mead. The horns were cherished and very personal and passed down to members of their clan.

One notable Viking is Leif Erickson, a famous north explorer, who is credited with being the first European to set foot on the North American continent according to some accounts, with several casks of mead in his galley. Erickson celebrated his arrival in Newfoundland, with a large feast that included barrels of mead and days of feasting. Another notable Viking, who enjoyed mead was Harald Fairhair, who used it as part of his diplomatic efforts, using it to win over rival chieftains and establish alliances. Another Viking, who was said to be very partial to mead was the great poet, Egil Skallagrimsson, a famous Icelandic, warrior and poet, who lived in the 10th century. He was well known for his love of mead and was said to have celebrated many victories with copious amounts of the drink. In fact, one of his most famous poems was written in honor

of his son, who died after a night of heavy mead drinking!

Overall mead played a very significant role in Viking culture and was considered to be a divine beverage.

The drink was enjoyed by warriors, poets and kings alike and continues to be revered by mead enthusiasts around the world today not just for enjoyment but for the connection to the ancients and their culture.

And yes, women were allowed to drink mead in Viking culture.

While it’s true that Viking society was patriarchal and male-dominated, women were still allowed to participate in many aspects of cultural and social life, including feasting and drinking. There are several accounts of Viking women who were known for their love of mead and their ability to hold their own in drinking contests. Additionally, mead was often served at weddings, and it was customary for both women and men to take part in the celebrations.

It’s worth noting, however, that the drinking habits of Viking women were likely influenced by their social status and position in society. For example, women from wealthy and powerful families may have had more freedom to drink and participate in cultural events than women from lower-status families who were often found preparing the actual cele-



## Mead

brations from building fires to preparing meals for days of feasting. While Vikings society was certainly patriarchal it is important to remember that women were still able to enjoy many of the same cultural and social traditions as the men, including the drinking of mead. They were also involved in the production, especially in larger households where the mead was produced on a much larger scale.

The herbalist women knew the local plants and berries and would use those plants to add additional flavor to the barrels. Juniper berries added an earthy and piney flavor with benefits from its anti-oxidants, yarrow imparted a floral and bitter taste and slowed down or stopped bleeding, wort for its mild sedative properties and prophetic dreaming before important battles, meadowsweet for a slightly bitter effect and to ward off colds and sickness, and heather which grew prominently along the sides of the rivers where the Vikings often settled and were used as an anti-inflammatory and as a carminative and added for its floral flavor.

These plants would be added to the mead during the brewing process to impart different flavors along with their specific medicinal properties.

Additionally, other ingredients such as fruit nuts could be added to create different flavors. It's worth noting that some of these ingredients, while they held medicinal

properties, may have been added to mead for their therapeutic benefits as well as hallucinogenic herbs for extra courage for going into battle and for enhancing flavor. Overall, the use of these medicinal plants and herbs helps to create a rich complex flavor profile for Viking mead.

One important festival during Viking times where mead casks were tapped, and feasts were prepared was the Yule celebration which took place in December and lasted for several days and was the Norse equivalent of our own Christmastime celebrations. It was a way to celebrate and honor Odin and was a celebration of the winter solstice and the return of the sun.

During this celebration, a large log was lit and left to burn for the duration of the festival. Mead and other beverages were served, and feasts were prepared to feature a variety of game meat, bread, root vegetables and sweets. Gifts were also exchanged during those Yule celebrations. It was a time for the community to come together to celebrate the winter season with wild abandonment, often passing out after a day filled with merry-making right where they sat, only to wake up and continue with the celebration for days on end.

Mead was the specific drink that Vikings were known to consume for these parties, but more specifically for going into battle, as it was widely believed that if they consumed alcoholic beverages beforehand, they were stronger in battle. One reason for this was that alcohol could help to calm one's nerves and provide a sense of courage.

I believe that part still stands true to this day. Courage and mead rightfully go hand in hand. Whether it is for starting a conversation, gaining a sense of community, or just being part of something much larger, mead drinking can certainly enhance it all.

Mead has a fascinating history that spans thousands of years across many cultures and is an ancient beverage worthy of its own exploration.

Next time you are in the grocery store or at your favorite wine shop, go ahead and grab a bottle or two. I promise you will remember this little lesson in the history of mead-making and feel a sense of real connection to the Warriors of the past and to the gods. And if you want to feel connected get yourself a proper mead-drinking horn and don't make any plans for the next day.



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# Doing Right by the Pint

By Aidan Leavitt

What is sustainability? A shiny new logo? Green colored merchandise? A verbal commitment to planting trees in some far-off land? No, sustainability is a choice to be made. It's an agreement to reduce waste, to take the first actionable step on the long path towards lowering harmful impacts on the natural environment that we all draw from. To paint sustainability as an easy act would be a fool's errand, yet despite the active effort it requires there are many instances wherein doing the right thing makes sense, and well cents. Sometimes a lot of them.

Here in Maine's brewing mini-metropolis of Portland, there is a myriad of breweries doing their part to both cut waste and costs alike. To understand where the waste is generated in the brewing process, one must know the process and its components as the brewers do. Well... maybe not to such a degree, but it is important to know that beer, like most consumable products, does not appear out of thin air, so much as we wish it might. Not only does it take

a lot of energy and resources to create these fine craft concoctions, but it also results in some unusable material brewers simply can't (or shouldn't) pour into a pint glass.

To get an idea of what breweries do with their waste, and how they're trying to reduce it, I sat down with Foundation Brewing owner and brewmaster Joel Mahaffey. Foundation Brewing has been a pleasant Portland staple for the last ten years. Joel and his business partner John both started out homebrewing in college and have since grown their dedication to drafts into something exceptional by pairing the science behind the brewing process with their curiosity regarding historical styles. With a wide array of lagers, NEIPA and stouts to offer, Foundation keeps the tuns packed and cans stacked. This, of course, produces a byproduct in the form of spent grain, which is grain that has been steeped in hot water, drawing out proteins and fermentable sugars necessary to make our favorite alluring ales. Despite this, "There's still protein,





fiber and carbohydrates left in the grain when we're done with it, so long as it's not a gigantic hassle for the farmer to get to you and get this grain, they're interested in it," Mahaffey notes. There are examples of places wherein it might be difficult for farmers to navigate the bustling city streets, like say New York City, but here in Portland we're never more than a short zip over to the countryside which makes grain pickup just about guaranteed.

For Mahaffey, his relationship with the longstanding Lyman-based Tibbetts family farm has been mutually beneficial. "They're taking our waste and the disposal process off of our hands. It requires some time on their end, but hopefully what they're getting out of it animal feed offsets their costs, and so far, it has been a great relationship." Tibbetts has been using the spent grain to feed their pigs and cows for a number of years now and have themselves been working on ways to adapt to the changing landscape regarding renewables and sustainability, contracting their sheep out to mow solar fields. Spent grain can be a useful resource for farmers and animal owners alike, as when hay season is bad (much like this past summer)



and prices jump. Spent grain can serve as an inexpensive alternative to costly feed. Returning to the refuse, Mahaffey notes that it was important to find a channel for the spent grain before Foundation brewed their first batch as they didn't want to simply ditch the grain in the dumpster. Foundation is tackling other aspects of their waste too. "We've also got what we call side-streaming waste ... all of our dry hops and yeast. We've been working with a company called Garbage to Garden since we've opened. They pick up weekly from us and take away hundreds of gallons of waste. That includes stuff like the fruit that went into beers too. Once we've sucked all of the goodness out of the fruit you're left with this organic matter that [Garbage to Garden] then turns into compost." Garbage to Garden is itself a Portland plant and went into business back in 2012 and now services a variety of New England communities compiling both commercial and residential compost for reuse. Other local breweries like Austin Street, Rising Tide and Battery Steele utilize their composting services to great effect, cutting their wastewater costs and doing the right thing for the environment at the same time.

Getting crafty with it, the Foundation team has also constructed a rig to capture trub or the sneaky slurry of sediments found at the bottom of the fermenter once the brewing process is complete. "We took an empty 55-gallon chemical drum, cut the lid off, put holes in the bottom of it and then took a really large grain bag filled with the stuff and placed it in there. [This lets the liquid] leak out of the bottom. Once it's cool, we lift it out using a forklift and into a Garbage to Gardens tote so as not to melt it," Mahaffey says. There are also some more unsavory forms of waste that even composters and recyclers won't touch. "There is [byproduct] that nobody really wants but that we've tried to be responsible about, and that's all of our chemical discharge from cleaning. Breweries often use really high and low-pH cleaners. We collect the wash water, mixing the acidic and alkaline wash to neutralize it and then let it cool to room temp before sending it down the drain." While this doesn't exactly keep the cleaning agent out of the wastewater, this process does good by avoiding the pouring of caustic waste right down the drain which would be back for both brewery and city systems. "We have a lot of inputs and a lot of outputs, some of its beer and some of its waste, so trying to be as responsible as we can is important."

It's not only Foundation that has taken such a bold approach to combating waste, but Portland pint powerhouse Austin Street has also been making strides to cut carbon as well. I was fortunate enough to chat with Co-founder and CEO Will Fisher who says the company is making a concerted effort to become a zero-waste facility. "Right now, we are

working with three different programs to recycle our waste and reduce our impacts ... we do anaerobic trub composting, trash sorting, and work with local farmers to pass our spent grain along." Austin Street's commitment isn't always exactly a walk in the park as handling the logistical processes involved with waste management can be a hassle, but for Will and his team, it's worth going the extra mile to do what's right for the environment and for the community. Austin Street, like several others including both Foundation and Rising Tide has been utilizing a large-scale recycling co-op put together by Allagash that sees those pesky PakTechs put to good use. If you're not familiar with the brand, it's what breweries commonly use to keep those craft tallboys in your fridge from falling all over the place. Unfortunately, the plastic used in the PakTechs is not traditionally recyclable (which was news to me) in nearly all zero-sort programs due to its composition. The Allagash program has seen a good number of local breweries buy-in and reduce waste costs.

Rising Tide Brewing Company is one of those to have made a commitment as well. Sitting down with owner and director of business operations Heather Sanborn, I found that they too have been utilizing composting services, recycling with Allagash, reducing wastewater, and working with a local farm (Hall Edge out of Windham) to offload spent grain. They've tried some other strategies like cutting energy usage by updating their lighting fixtures and installing energy-efficient equipment like a heat exchanger

to cool the hot wort. Rising Tide is quite well-known regionally for one of their flagship brews, the Maine Island Trail Ale (in my opinion one of the best session IPAs on the market right now) which itself has a unique tie to the local landscape and environment. Some of the proceeds from the sale of the Trail Ale goes to the Maine Island Trail Association which has been helping promote stewardship and preservation of Maine's wild islands since 1988. Through this support, alongside a partnership with Harvest Tide Organics, Rising Tide has doubled down on its commitment to support businesses and organizations that work to preserve Maine's unique natural resources whilst spreading awareness and fostering a cognizant community at the same time.

In truth, there's no magic bullet when it comes to sustainability. Rather it's a series of choices and processes that work to reduce waste and impacts coupled with a desire to do better for the future that lies ahead of us. In relation to brewing this might simply mean upgrading insulation or recycling a certain material that you once used to pitch. It might not seem as if these decisions have much of a ripple effect, but they do. By changing our approach and ideas surrounding what is an acceptable standard for waste we can hope to not only make a change that benefits the coffers, but the environment as well. Here in Portland, there is a unique community of brewers, one of the most concentrated on the East Coast, and an opportunity to build from the innovation of others and push for a more sustainable future. 🌱





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