NEW DATA SHOWS SD CRAFT BEER ECONOMIC IMPACT TOTALED $600 MILLION IN 2014

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NOTE FROM WC

Thanks to WC readers for helping us create this list of beer events happening in March.

March 6 Firestone Tap Attack @ KnB Wine Cellars
March 6 Reader on Tap Music Concert / Beer Tasting (feat. Burning of Rome) @ Observatory North Park
March 6 & 7 Stumblefoot Brewing Co. 3rd Anniversary Celebration / Sour Lover Saturday
March 6, 7 & 8 Craft Beer 2nd Anniversary Celebration @ Fall Brewing (3/6), @ Best Coast Beer Fest (3/7) and Societe (3/8)
March 7 Churchill’s Pub & Grille 6th Annual Renaissance Fest
March 7 Latitude 33 Brewing 3rd Anniversary
March 7 Best Coast Beer Fest @ Embarcadero Marina Park South
March 8 Game On! Beer Dinner @ The Patrons on Lamont
March 8 Taco Beer Pairing with Insurgente @ City Tacos
March 8 Brewster’s Brunch @ URBN St. Supporting International Women’s Collaboration Brew Day
March 10 - 32 32 North Brewing 5-Course Beer Pairing Dinner @ Tom Ham’s Lighthouse
March 11 Lost Abbey / Port Brewing Tap Takeover @ Regent’s Pizzeria
March 12 Baron’s Backroom Beer & Food tasting @ Baron’s Market Point Loma
March 14 Best Damn Beer Shop Night of the Barrels IV @ Downtown Johnny Brown’s
March 14 2nd Saturday w/ LA Breweries @ Hamilton’s Tavern
March 15 Collarmaker Beer Brunch @ Toronado
March 15 Soundbite 8.0 Beer, Food & Music Pairing @ Pizza Port Ocean Beach
March 15 El Cajon Craft Beer Invitational @ Main Parking Lot (El Cajon)
March 17 St. Patrick’s Day w/ House Corned Beef & Locally Brewed Irish Style Drafts @ Ritual Kitchen
March 17 Holiday Wine Cellar 50th(!) Anniversary Celebration
March 17 Chicks for Beer (Brewery TBA) @ The High Dive
March 17 Master Pairings: Black & Bleu @ Stone Brewing Escondido
March 17 St. Patty’s Day (Green Beer) @ White Labs
March 17 Blackout Kickoff Event @ La Bella Pizza
March 20 Bankers Hill Art & Craft Beer Festival @ The Abbey
March 20 Green Flash & Alpine Tap Takeover @ Tap That Taproom
March 20 Fiesta de Fisht @ Iron Fist
March 21 Stone IPA Madness Tap Takeover @ KnB Wine Cellars
March 21 Birdies and Beer Disc Golf Tournament @ Sun Valley Disc Golf Course
March 21 Beer for Breakfast with Bagby Beer Co @ Small Bar
March 21 Local Brews, Local Grooves @ House of Blues San Diego
March 25 URBN Street 5-Course Beer Pairing Dinner @ Tom Ham’s Lighthouse
March 26 Lost Abbey Beer Dinner @ Waypoint Public
March 27 Lupulin Against Lupus (Beer to the Rescue fundraiser) @ Aztec Brewing Co.
March 28 Stone Homebrew Competition and AHA Rally @ Stone Brewing Liberty Station
March 28 CityBeat Beer Club Birthday Bash @ SILO/Maker’s Corner
March 28 Bagby Fest Grand Opening Party @ Bagby Beer
March 28 Stone 51-Tap Takeover @ URGE Gastropub
March 28 Bikes & Beers 22-mile ride (bikesandbeers.org)
March 31 Chef Celebration Dinner Series Kickoff @ Pamplemousse Grille

The “Smokehouse Kings” of Camitas’ Snack Shack beat out Tornando and Smell Bar at Fall Brewing’s Chicken Wing Battle on Friday, January 13. Photos by Tim Stahl
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MARCH 17TH - St. Patty’s Day (Green Beer)
MARCH 19TH - Cask Night
MARCH 20TH - Trivia Night

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NEW BEER SPOTS

Lots of new locations came up on our radar for February. Here's a rundown of new places we've found and added into our directory:

- **East County**: Downtown Cafe in El Cajon (beer bar/restaurant)
- **Downtown**: Stella Public House (beer bar/restaurant) and Half Door Brewing Co. (brewpub)
- **Barrio Logan**: Border X Brewing Co. (tasting room)
- **Oceanside**: Flying Pig Pub (beer bar/restaurant)
- **National City**: Machete Beer House (beer bar)
- **Chula Vista**: Manhattan Lounge (beer bar)
- **Bay Park**: Solocas (beer bar)
- **Old Town**: Home & Away (beer bar/restaurant)
- **North Park**: Home Brewing Co. (brewery)

Lots of new locations are in planning, also. Announced in February:

- **Little Italy**: Bolt Brewing (tasting room/restaurant)
- **Miramar**: Mikkeller (brewery)
- **Del Mar**: Vigilante Brewery (brewery)
- **Encinitas**: URBAN Encinitas (restaurant/beer bar)

In addition, South Park Brewing Co., Full Bodgy Brewing Co., and Prodigy Brewing could all possibly open in the month of March.

FIRE AT PACIFIC BEACH ALE HOUSE

On Monday, February 16th a grease fire broke out in the kitchen of PB Ale House. The staff tried to battle the blaze, but quickly evacuated the 120 patrons inside when the flames grew out of proportion. Firefighters were quick to respond - the beachside brewpub is located across the street from the local fire station. Thankfully, there were no injuries but there was extensive damage to the brewing equipment. At time of press there was no word on when the brewpub will reopen.

MIKKELLER MIRAMAR

Hot on the heels of the recent collaboration with AleSmith, Danish brewery Mikkeller announced plans to set up shop in San Diego. In an interview with West Coaster, owner Mikkel Bjergest spoke highly of AleSmith - citing the brewery as one of his primary inspirations to get deeper into brewing. When AleSmith moves into their new location, Mikkeller will take over the current AleSmith brewery.

In an article for All About Beer magazine, Brandon Hernández reported that AleSmith will maintain a stake in Mikkeller Miramar. Opening is set for June 2015.

EVENT HIGHLIGHT: SECOND SATURDAY

The big monthly event at Hamilton’s will this month feature a “mini LA Brewery Showcase” complete with dueling casks of El Segundo’s Kauapu IPA and Golden Road’s Wolf Among Weeds.

The draught beer list also looks interesting for those looking to try more beer from our northern neighbors:

**+ DRAUGHT +**

- **Eagle Rock**: Solidarity black mild (nitro)
- **Nitro**: Lil Fred
- **Manitou**
- **Revolution XPA**
- **Populist IPA**
- **Unionist Belgian Pale**
- **Ginger Saison**

- **El Segundo**
  - **Kappa** IPA
  - **Hop Tanker DIPA**
  - **Milk Stout (not named yet)**
  - **Citra Pale**
  - **White Dog IPA or Mayberry IPA**
  - **Station No. 1 Red**

- **Golden Road**
  - **2020 Red IPA**
  - **329 Lager**
  - **Berliner Weisse**
  - **Bourbon Hudson Porter**
  - **Point the Way session IPA**
  - **Wolf Among Weeds**

- **Macleod**
  - The Session Gap Ordinary Bitter
  - The Little Spruce Yorkshire Pale
  - The King’s Taxes 60 Shilling
  - Barclay Perkins 1941 Stout

- **Highland Park**
  - **TBD**

**+ FOOD +**

Beer braised lamb shepherd’s pie, comed beef and caramelized cabbage flatbread, roasted broccoli with parmesan and pine nuts, dark chocolate stout cake salted caramel sauce
CHEF CELEBRATION 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Over the past 19 years San Diego’s Chef Celebration has raised over $150,000 in scholarship money and has helped over 100 chefs further their careers, many of which become staples within SD’s culinary community including Hans Cavin (Carnitas Snack Shack), Victor Jimenez (Cowboy Star), Denise Roa (Art Institute) and Lhasa Landry (Lion’s Share).

Starting in March and going throughout April, dinners will be held at various locations around town to raise more money this year. Details on exact timing and pricing for each dinner are still in the works, but typically a five-course menu is prepared with one chef assigned to each course, with beer and wine available for an additional fee.

+ TUESDAY, MARCH 31 @ PAMPLEMOUSSE GRILLE +

Jeffrey Strauss
Pamplemousse Grille

Bernard Guillias
The Marine Room

Jeff Jackson
The Lodge at Torrey Pines

Tommy DiMella
Del Mar Country Club

Stephane Voitzwinkler
Bertrand at Mister A’s

+ TUESDAY, APRIL 7 @ TERRA AMERICAN BISTRO +

Jeff Rossman
Terra American Bistro

Matt Gordon
Urban Solace, Solace & the Moonlight Lounge, Sea & Smoke

Sara Polczynski
The Blind Burro

Hans Cavin
Carnitas Snack Shack

Sam The Cooking Guy

+ TUESDAY, APRIL 14 @ TOM HAM’S LIGHTHOUSE +

Lance Repp
Tom Ham’s Lighthouse

Chad White
Común Kitchen & Tavern

Amanda Baumgarten
Waypoint Public

Jason McLeod
Ironside Fish & Oyster, Soda & Swine

Joe Magnanelli
Urban Kitchen Group: CUCINA urbana, CUCINA enoteca

+ TUESDAY, APRIL 21 @ LA VALENCIA HOTEL +

James Montejano
La Valencia Hotel

Jerry Warner
Café Japengo

Brian Brown
Cardiff Seaside Market

David Abella
West Steak and Seafood

Tina Luu
The International Culinary Schools at The Art Institutes

+ TUESDAY, APRIL 28 @ TIDAL +

Amy DiBiase
Tidal

Andrew Bacheller
CUCINA Enoteca

Karrie Hills
The Red Door Restaurant & Wine Bar

Matt Richman
Table 926

CLOSING EVENT:

Sunday, May 3 @ Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens – Liberty Station

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Attendees will enjoy 13 small-bite courses created by a number of local chefs from outstanding eateries, and each course will be paired with one of San Diego’s best craft brews.
As I mentioned in my article last month, it’s competition season in San Diego. Whether you bottle or keg your beer, almost every competition requires that you submit your beer in 10 to 14 ounce brown or green bottles. Sometimes it depends on the size of the competition, but typically two bottles are required for each entry. A competitions like Stone’s AHA Rally is one of the rare occasions where entries are only allowed in kegs because attendees get to drink the beers and vote on their top choices to send to the judges. Since I have the enough 5 gallon kegs, I will keg up everything but my sour beers. Whether I force carbonate with CO2 or prime the keg with sugar for keg and/or bottle conditioning will depend on the style of beer. Since it’s how most of us started out, we’ll look at bottle conditioning first.

When bottling for competition, you’ll need clean, label and glue free bottles for packaging. If you’re not willing to spend the time to cleanly remove labels from commercial beer bottles, now is a good time to buy a new set of 12 ounce brown bottles. The bottles will only need to be rinsed with water and then sanitized. When re-using bottles, always make sure they are clean before sanitizing. You may need to use a bottle brush to clean out dried beer or yeast. If you can’t get the bottle spotless, discard the bottle to the recycling bin. Cleanliness and sanitation is critical when bottling up beer you’re worked hard to create you don’t want the process of bottling to ruin a great batch.

Another way to ruin a bottle conditioned beer is to screw up the carbonation levels. Thankfully they are calculators online that help you reach your target carbonation level for the style of beer being bottled. The amount of CO2 in beer is typically referred to in terms of “volumes”. Volumes of CO2 are defined as the volume CO2 gas would occupy at atmospheric pressure at 0°C if it were removed from the beer. Temperature and volume of beer along with CO2 pressure will all affect the targeted volume value. Modern brewing software will usually have a carbonation tool for calculating the amount (in weight) of priming sugar you’ll need to add to your beer to create the desired volumes in the bottle. Websites like Brewer’s Friend also have beer priming calculators handy for those of you without brewing software. Just enter in the amount of beer to be packaged, the volumes of CO2 you desire, and the temperature of the beer at packaging. This will calculate the volumes of CO2 that is already in the beer and the amount of sugar that needs to be mixed into the beer prior to bottling.

Guidelines for carbonation levels for particular styles are available on the internet and in most brewing software programs. The guidelines will get you going in the right direction but figuring out where in the range to shoot for can be helped by referencing the BJCP style guidelines for that particular style. Generally speaking, English ales will have low carbonation, American ales and lagers will have medium carbonation, and German and Belgian ales and lagers will have high carbonation. Not all sugars are the same as well. Pay attention to whether you are adding in sucrose or a type of glucose as the fermentability of each will be different. The carbonation guide on BYO.com lists the differences between three different sugar types. Hopefully all this will give you a better understanding of how you can dial in your carbonation level for competition.

Carbonating beer in a keg is much easier and flexible. Keg conditioning is possible with the addition of sugar. The keg will be used in place of a bottling bucket. Rack the beer into the keg and add the correct sugar amount. At this point you can bottle from the keg using a bottling wand and picnic tap combination or a “beer gun”. Moving beer out of the keg only requires a few psi of pressure of CO2 and a CO2 blanket on top of the beer won’t hurt either. When using a bottling wand with a picnic tap, make sure the wand is snug in the tap spout to minimize oxygen pickup. While this option is the cheapest route to bottling from the keg, it’s really only good for when you are bottle conditioning. A beer
gun using CO2 is a more expensive piece of equipment but it's flexible for bottling either primed or force carbonated beer.

Force carbonating beer in a keg can be done slowly or quickly. How patient you are or how quickly you need to have the beer ready will be a factor on how you go about getting CO2 into your beer. Temperature, volume, and altitude are all factors in carbonating your beer. The Draught Quality website (draughtquality.org) has a handy chart showing the solubility of CO2 in beer via pressure-temperature relationships. As temperature decreases, you need less gauge pressure (psi) to get to the desired volumes of CO2 in the beer. Brewer's Friend (http://www.brewersfriend.com/keg-carbonation-calculator/) has a handy calculator requiring you to enter the temperature of the beer and the desired volumes. The result is the amount of psi you need set your regulator gauge to in order to carbonate the beer after a week of time.

If you are short on time or just don’t want to wait a week for the beer to carbonate, the shake method will get your beer carbonated in a hurry. For this method, you’ll want to crank up your regulator to 30 to 40 psi and roll around the keg on the ground. Doing this will force the CO2 into the beer at a much quicker rate than letting the keg sit still at a lower psi. Let the keg sit overnight at this high pressure and then bleed the CO2 out through the release pin before connecting your beer line. Set the regulator to your serving psi. Some brewers worry about beating up the beer with this method but your mileage may vary.

As always with packaging up beer, oxygen is the enemy. Minimize oxygen pickup by flushing out fermenters and kegs with CO2 to prevent oxidation and cause staling. An advantage to bottle or keg conditioning is that the yeast should take up any extra oxygen as they become active again with the addition of priming sugar. Often times with high gravity beers, the yeast gets beat up so you might want to consider pitching some fresh, active yeast into your beer before bottling. Ideally you’ll want to use the same yeast strain or at least a strain that will not further attenuate your beer beyond your final gravity which can lead to over carbonation or exploding bottles. You will likely have to make some adjustments along the way and figure out what works for you but hopefully dialing in the right carbonation level will help you produce more consistent CO2 levels. Doing so will help out your scores, particularly with the mouthfeel and flavor of the beer. The carbonic acid character from CO2 could be the difference between medaling or not when the competition is close.
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UT San Diego, October 2014

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MEASURING THE RISE OF SAN DIEGO CRAFT BEER, 2011-2014
BY VINCE VASQUEZ

By all accounts, San Diego’s craft brewing industry has undergone a rapid expansion over the last few years. As craft breweries take a growing share of beer market sales, San Diego brewpubs and breweries have noticeably increased production, creating jobs and new tasting rooms throughout the region. To what degree has this growth had an impact on San Diego’s economy, and how will it shape San Diego in the future?

While San Diego has attracted wide public interest and industry acclaim for its craft beer, little was previously known about its impact on the economy. To further study this issue, the National University System Institute for Policy Research (NUSIPR) began evaluating industry labor data and the economic dynamics of craft beer in 2011. Since that time, we have developed industry surveys, collected business records, and authored five reports on various aspects of local craft brewing.

Using survey data and business records from late 2014, NUSIPR has now updated its first analysis of the industry’s impact on San Diego County, which was released in 2013. I am pleased to share with you our key observations, with additional analysis and information that are exclusive to West Coaster.
Craft brewing’s economic impact has grown substantially. The industry’s economic value to the region has doubled in the last three years, from an estimated $300 million ($299.5) in 2011 to $600 million ($599.4) in 2014. To put these figures into context, $600 million surpasses the estimated economic impact of Super Bowl XLIX to the Arizona state economy ($500 million).

What exactly is an “economic impact,” you may be asking? Well, it counts the direct spending by breweries and brewpubs (and their employees) on goods and services in a geographic region, as well as the “multiplier effect” that is created when industry dollars are recirculated in the local economy, indirectly supporting more jobs and additional business activities. We use a specialized software program that calculates the economic effects within a region using economic models, proprietary algorithms and data we supply, sourced from public business records and survey responses from breweries and brewpubs.
Industry job growth has soared. San Diego breweries and brewpubs directly created 3,752 jobs in 2014, and overall created or sustained 6,203 jobs that year, an overall 122% increase since 2011, when the industry directly employed 1,636 workers and created or sustained 2,796 jobs. Year-to-year growth has mostly been driven by the expansion efforts of larger breweries.

We have all indications that the craft brewers are contributing to a vibrant, healthy economic climate in San Diego. The jobs being created are good jobs with competitive wages; as NUSIPR has previously reported, regional brewery wages ($38,598 average) are among the highest in the nation. In addition, fewer than 20% of industry jobs require a Bachelor’s or advanced degree, a plus for many workers who are seeking entry-level work and promising careers. As a relatively business-friendly region, entrepreneurship is a realistic option for many aspiring master brewers and brewery owners in San Diego, further expanding the talent pool and potential earnings of workers.
The number of breweries and brewpubs has more than doubled. At the end of 2014, there were 97 breweries and brewpubs in San Diego County, a 165% increase from 2011’s tally (37). Growth is driven both by new enterprises as well as additional expansions of established breweries and brewpubs. Breweries are now opening at a pace of once a month.

As San Diego approaches the opening of its 100th brewery, talk of a “beer bubble” persists. NUSIPR takes the opposite view. The demographic undercurrent that is propelling craft beer demand (Millenials) will only trend more favorably for the industry in the foreseeable future; Millenials have only recently emerged in significant numbers in the workforce, and their purchasing power (and strong preference for craft beer) will increase over time. We also project that San Diego’s craft brewing industry will draw increasing interest from outside brewers, who will open expansions in the region to participate in our dynamic industry and capture some of our talented workforce. This is not unlike what occurs in our local life sciences industry, with national and international biotech firms opening satellite labs and offices here to hire skilled local professionals and to engage in our world-acclaimed biotech cluster.
Total annual industry sales have reached more than $847 million. This figure reflects more than a $98 million increase from 2013 ($752 million) and a $160 million increase since 2011 ($681 million). This figure includes revenue from beer sales, food, merchandise, and all other products and services offered by local breweries and brewpubs.

In fact, $847 million is a conservative figure; with additional data supplied by brewery and brewpub owners, we suspect the true industry sales total is closer to $900 million. With greater distribution and more market share from macro-brewers, we suspect regional sales can top $1 billion soon.

San Diego’s craft breweries have made significant inroads in the marketplace, and that’s good for the regional economy. A talented industry workforce, and an established reputation for producing excellent beer, place San Diego in a unique position to capture a greater share of craft beer sales for the remainder of the decade.

Whether you’re a craft beer enthusiast, a civic leader, or a brewery worker, it’s important to note that the craft beer industry is directly impacted by policy choices facing San Diego today, many of which wouldn’t seem at first glance to be at issue. Topics such as economic planning, workforce development, redevelopment, community character and land use all demand the voice and perspective of craft brewers and their consumers. As San Diego looks now to plan for its regional future, craft brewing should be prominently included as part of it.

Vince Vasquez is the Senior Policy Analyst at the National University System Institute for Policy Research, an economic think-tank based in San Diego.
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PHOTOS BY TIM STAHL
BEER TO THE RESCUE
lupus-fighting campaign kicks off at benchmark

PHOTOS BY TIM STAHN

UPCOMING EVENTS (as of press time):

3/21: Lupulin Against Lupus Collaboration
Barley Forge Brewing Co. (Costa Mesa, California)

3/27: Lupulin Against Lupus Collaboration
Aztec Brewery (Vista, California)

4/TBD: Imperial Milk Stout with Chocolate, Orange
and Cascabel Chilies
Ballast Point (Little Italy, California)

5/01: Orange-Infused Gose
Coronado Brewing Knoxville (Bay Park, California)

5/16: Astral Scottish Export Ale
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observing the Willamette Valley from the air is a little surreal for a Californian. It’s so... well, green. Shire green. Rivers and steam crossing this way and that, carving up a mix of green fields and forests, with rolling hills surrounding everything. This was my view as the plane made its final descent into PDX last month. Our destination was the American Society of Brewing Chemists’ yeast meeting held at Widmer Brothers Brewing Company in Northeast Portland, with as many brewery stops as we could also fit into our one-night hit and run.

The American Society of Brewing Chemists (ASBC for short), founded in 1934, is a national organization of brewing industry professionals focusing on furthering the study and excellence of brewing science. The Journal of the ASBC is the premier source of published articles on brewing science, and the ASBC also holds events throughout the year including a large Annual Meeting that brings together scientists and brewers from all over the world to discuss the latest in brewing science and analysis methods. The meeting at Widmer was a smaller affair with several dozen people in attendance for an evening of seminars focused on the practical use of yeast in the brewery.

Propagating and maintaining clean, healthy yeast cultures is one of the largest challenges that small brewers face. Yeast is without a doubt the most challenging ingredient to work with in the brewery because it is alive—its needs must be carefully attended to in order for it to cooperate in making the beer that you want it to make. Three hours into the night and we were only scratching the surface. The group was mostly a collection of local brewers with a few from further afield. Coming from Central California, we were by far the most long-range.

Tom Shellhammer, professor of brewing science at Oregon State University and president of the ASBC, kicked things off with a talk on the organization itself. He then gave a crash course on fer-
mentation and yeast health, going over pitching rates, life cycles, oxygenation, analysis, and reuse of yeast. There wasn’t much new for me, but that’s inevitable in a large room with a wide spectrum of brewers, many from pubs and small breweries that might not even have a microscope to check the cell counts of their yeast slurries and fermenting beers. The big take-aways here were that all commercial brewers, no matter how small should get a microscope and practice regular yeast viability tests and cell counts. Using this information to dial in consistent pitching rates, along with consistent wort oxygenation, are absolutely key to consistent, repeatable fermentations and beer flavor.

Greg Doss from Wyeast Laboratories took the mic next to discuss yeast propagation. Microbrewers can easily order quantities of yeast from suppliers that are sufficient to ferment a batch of beer, but larger breweries must have a way to propagate yeast cultures in order to ferment a full-sized batch of beer. Breweries of any size can also propagate cultures from very small amounts such as homebrew pitches or lab plates if they have the proper equipment, potentially saving significant amounts of money by not buying full pitches.

At Firestone Walker, we propagate all of our yeast in-house from plates kept in the lab. Since taking over propagation duties last year, I have been seeking to further optimize our techniques, and was particularly interested in what Doss had to present. Doss outlined batch propagation techniques, which are typically in a small or medium brewery. Yeast need oxygen to synthesize sterols, which are needed for the growth of new yeast cells. Starting from the maximum amount of stored sterol content that a single oxygen addition allows, yeast can reproduce an average of three to a quarter times, equating a ten-fold growth in the total yeast count. Stepping up the volume ten times leads to a constant amount of cells per volume for the next step. Doss also recommended stepping up once 50-75% of the extract in the propagation has been consumed and ignoring cell counts as an absolute measurement due to the amount of yeast that can be on top of the beer during fermentation.

The last speaker of the night was Jamie DeMerritt, quality control manager for Widmer Brothers. Demerritt went over the methods that Widmer uses to propagate and analyze their cultures, as well as a few stories of the journey that their house yeast has taken over the years. When Kurt and Rob Widmer opened in 1984 they planned to brew an altbier as their flagship, and sourced an altbier yeast from Germany to make the beer as authentic as possible. When they decided to also brew a wheat beer, they used the same yeast strain and created what we now know as American hefeweizen, which melds the wheat character and cloudy appearance of a German wheat beer with a cleaner fermentation flavor devoid of the banana and clove aromas that define the German style. After several years of brewing with their yeast at the three breweries of the Craft Brewers Alliance, DNA analysis showed that the three yeasts had evolved into distinct variants of what was still one identifiable strain. They chose the best of the three and now regularly propagate fresh yeast from a master culture for each of the breweries.

While the speakers were the focus of the night, just as noteworthy
were the brewers that we got to meet and discuss yeast with. Double Mountain makes one of my favorite hoppy PNW pale ales, called Vaporizer, and they have the unique approach of using all pilsner malt and a Belgian abbey yeast strain. It was great to finally meet one of the brewers and talk about their take on brewing. I always find it amazing how many approaches there are to crafting great beers within each style.

Before leaving town, we got to visit a few breweries, and the highlight was without a doubt the Cascade Barrel House, which serves a ridiculously long list of their barrel-aged sour ales. The range of sour beers that they do well really shows what can be done when you throw in lactobacillus to add a little acid to a beer. Beers like Strawberry and Cranberry have a very culinary approach, using various ingredients to build a wholly unique flavor spectrum. This place should be at the top of the list for anyone visiting Portland. In fact, I already want to go back. ■
Located in the light industrial section of Rancho Bernardo (the northernmost community within the City of San Diego; 26 miles from downtown) Abnormal Beer Company is part of The Cork and Craft restaurant. Although The Cork and Craft has 41 taps pouring some amazing craft beers and mead, right now there is only one house-brewed beer available, and it was actually brewed collaboratively at Monkey Paw Brewery. I had just come off the road from a craft beer tour in the desert and was hoping to taste a brewery-fresh beer, but I’ll take anything brewed at Monkey Paw any time, anywhere. Once Abnormal gets their 10-barrel system up and running I’ll return, especially if they brew beers like this one—Monkey Paw/Abnormal Beer Co LABnormal Monkey, 6.5% ABV. Here’s my review of it:

Amber orange color, cloudy, with a sparkling white head and wet facing. Fragrant aroma of tangerine zest intertwined with floral and spicy hop scents. Medium body, tangerine, spice, and cracker flavors. Medium-high hop bitterness. This brew has a clean, crisp finish, typical of San Diego IPAs.

I did not eat while visiting Cork and Craft, but if I had, I would have paired this brew with the Grilled Octopus, Carlsbad Mussels, Citrus Cure Salmon, Game Hen, or “Faux Gras.”

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National City, Chula Vista, and Imperial Beach. For years these towns along the shores of San Diego’s South Bay have been mostly devoid of craft beer options. With a population of over 300,000 people that is (according to SANDAG) predominantly young, increasingly educated, and upwardly mobile as well as Latino and Filipino, it would appear that this region has an emerging consumer demographic that is to be desired. With misconceptions of a landscape filled with taco shops selling macro Mexican lagers shaping perceptions it would seem that a new group of visionaries is taking a leap of faith and changing the craft beer scene in the South Bay through actualizing craft beer breweries, bars, and restaurants in a renaissance that some are dubbing #SouthBayUprising. West Coaster spoke to Morise Gusmao, General Partner at a massive brewery in planning NOVO Brazil Brewing Company located in Eastlake - East Chula Vista as well as Ron Chapman cofounder of Coronado brewing company which recently opened a brewery restaurant in Imperial Beach which houses 16 taps serving Coronado’s locally brewed beer. In addition to these brewery owners we also spoke to publicans Eddie Trejo at National City’s first craft beer bar “Machete” located on Highland Ave. as well as Matt Cieslak new owner of a revamped Chula Vista mainstay “The Manhattan” located on Broadway and Tony Raso III who is building out Biere Cafe South Bay on 3rd Ave. in historic downtown Chula Vista.

Why is this South Bay craft beer renaissance happening now?

Eddie (Machete):
The revolution of the beer industry has played a major role in the economic progress of San Diego. Residents and governments of the county have taken notice, and see it not only as an opportunity to revitalize an economy, but also to revitalize the community. The craft beer community tends to pay attention to the origins and quality of what they consume, such as food, beer and culture and it fosters collaborative efforts to build and work for the community. The South Bay Uprising has been a long time coming. With such amazing things brewing in the surrounding areas, such as the multiple award-winning breweries directly to the North (San Diego and North County) and South (Baja California), it was only a matter of time until the beer revolution made its way into the southern communities in such a strong way. The craft beer community also serves as a platform to further bridge cultures, as it offers a welcoming convention of minds and taste buds. After all, isn’t beer a universal language?

Matt (The Manhattan):
There are a lot of people that come from the South Bay or live in the South Bay that are so passionate about craft beer. I have no idea why craft beer didn’t come to the South Bay sooner, but I think you are seeing a group of individuals now who are not only passionate, but have the confidence and desire to go out on their own and take the risk of being “the first” and debunk the myths about Chula and National City: too poor, too Mexican whatever it may have been. I also think that there is a strong desire by people who love craft beer to share that love with their community. For us, that community is the South Bay and the opportunity to develop a craft beer culture where we live outweighs whatever risks are associated with being on the front lines.

Morise (NOVO):
In looking for a location for our brewery, we found that Eastlake in Chula Vista has a lot of craft beer enthusiasts, but not many options. Our collective group has a great deal of expertise with recipes that have already been proven on the world stage, now we are happy to integrate them with traditional American craft beer recipes and integrating with the well-respected and award-winning breweries of San Diego. That’s what the South Bay was missing. We can tell by the vibe of the people looking into the brewery that they are thirsty! This will be good for Eastlake, the City of Chula Vista; the South Bay community.

Ron (Coronado):
The interest in craft beer by South Bay residents has been there for a while. Places like La Bella’s were really in Chula Vista were the only ones serving craft beer in an underserved market. I had been looking for a place for myself to go to in the South Bay, particularly Imperial Beach where there is almost no presence of craft beer, and we found an ideal spot. The Coronado IB location, I love, I’m there every day. There’s a lot of room for growth in this community. We didn’t roll the dice,
Tony (Biere Cafe):
I don’t know if I would call the new craft beer focused bars, and my current project, a South Bay renaissance quite yet. I am very excited about the opportunity to run my own place, and I hope other beer drinkers will also enjoy the space. I’m just not convinced that three or four different craft beer concepts can turn around the reputation of multiple neighboring communities, although it is a great start. I believe there is space within the communities of Imperial Beach and South San Diego as well. The South Bay really is a huge area geographically, and the population is huge. Hopefully, by the time that my partners and I get Biere Cafe South Bay open, there will be other concepts that have a passion for craft beer operating as well, nearby us, or even right next to us in the village of downtown Chula Vista. I go to East Village, Little Italy, South Park, North Park and other communities usually because of all of the great places within close proximity to each other, so I believe clustering works. Chula Vista, National City, Imperial Beach and other communities have a long way to go before we get overly saturated, if that is even possible. Is there a renaissance in the South Bay right now? I am not sure, some may call it that eventually, but it is definitely heating up.

What will your business bring to the South Bay, and the craft beer community at large?

Morise (MOVO):
We are Brazilian. Brazilians are a fun, festive, and passionate bunch. We want to bring that attitude and atmosphere to the U.S. and stay true to that culture. At the same time, however, we want to stay true to the existing craft beer culture in San Diego by integrating into the community. NOVO is comprised of a group of industry professionals from Brazil with years of experience and success in brewing, managing restaurants, as well as bars, brewpubs, and distribution. Our recipes all have a Brazilian spin. Our equipment is state of the art and made to the highest international standard by Brazilian based manufacturer Egisa, but we definitely recognize the relevance and caliber of San Diego beer and the many award-winning breweries who brew them. We want to take traditional American styles and give it our Brazilian touch by using Brazilian techniques and ingredients while pleasing and integrating with the existing craft beer community.

Eddie (Machete):
Craft beer went from a hobby to something I became truly passionate about. I worked with Brewery Tours of San Diego, and later in sales and distribution with California Craft Distributors. With Brewery Tours of San Diego I worked with all types of people, even those that were not fans of beer. I made it my purpose to challenge myself to find a craft beer for every person to enjoy. Later, this spirit of service served me well in my duties of sales and distribution. As for Machete, I grew up watching my dad run his own business and had that entrepreneurial spirit engrained in me. That desire couple with my experience in craft beer and distribution this was a natural progression. My partner of 13 years JoAnn Cornejo was born and raised in National City and has strong ties to the community. Though these cultural and emotional attachments were factors involved when choosing this as the location for Machete, it was clear that National City was lacking in craft beer. I truly feel that this project is for the community. Machete will change the dynamics of the community by focusing on a unique craft experience.

Matt (The Manhattan):
I have nearly a decade of operating experience of corporate America coupled with years of managing grass roots craft beer organizations Pizza Port and Blind Lady Ale House which lead me to this opportunity in the South Bay. I have always had a love affair with dive bars. They have so much character and history. When my wife Vanessa and I decided that we wanted to open a spot in Chula Vista, we knew that we wanted to marry everything that is awesome about the neighborhood bar with our love for craft beer and the San Diego craft beer community. We were lucky enough to find a bar for sale that is the perfect blend of old dive with great bones for a craft beer bar namely direct draw and a large cold box. With the Manhattan we want to give people a comfortable spot to get the absolute best craft beer they can find. Light and sessionable, hop bombs, rare and limited beers on draft and in bottle as well as a great spirits selection in an environment where there is always something going on...live music, pool, console games etc.

Ron (Coronado):
There was, and still is, a need for more family-friendly craft beer restaurants in the South Bay. Even with the proximity of our Coronado and Imperial Beach locations the demographics of our fans are different. It is clear that the Imperial beach location is attracting people from throughout the South Bay. That’s the future, the South Bay will grow by leaps and bounds. In fact, Coronado is looking for more spots in the South Bay and I am personally encouraging other brewery, brewpub, and restaurant owners to do the same. The South Bay has unlimited, untapped potential.
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My food fanaticism is of such a level that the mere mention of a dish’s ingredients can set my heart to beat faster and rile my salivary glands into action. Typically, such reactions occur while I’m belled up to a gourmet table covered in durably pristine, snow white linens or, when pork in all its succulent renditions is concerned, belled up to the bar at Toronado talking to multi-talented bartender, chef and swine savant Nate Sorensen (he of West Coaster cover defacement fame). But the most recent instance of the latter occurred out of the blue in a place that doesn’t even serve food: the tasting room at The Lost Abbey (or Port Brewing Company, or The Hop Concept, or whatever you want to call it these days).

There I was, enjoying tasters of brandy barrel-aged The Angel’s Share barley wine and the symphonically layered, cacao nib- and coffee-laced Track 10, when weekend bartendress and tour guide Stephanie Peterson whipped out her smartphone to show me a pornographic photo. Wait, perhaps I should have clarified. I’m talking about pure, unadulterated food porn, here. The imagery I was treated to showed strips of bacon lovingly arranged in a lattice pattern, waiting
Step 1: Make a Bacon Mat
Lay 2 strips of bacon on a clean surface in an "X" formation. Lay down additional strips, one at a time, alternating horizontal and vertical strips in an over-under lattice pattern, weaving them tightly into a 5-strip-by-5-strip bacon "mat." Sprinkle evenly with some of the spice rub.

Step 2: More Bacon!
Cook the remaining in a skillet over medium-high heat until the fat is rendered and the bacon is crispy. Drain on paper towels, then crumble and set aside.

Step 3: The Slab O' Sausage
Spread the sausage in an even layer over the bacon mat, pushing it out to the edges of the mat. Sprinkle the crumbled bacon, bell pepper, scallions and garlic over the sausage layer, then drizzle with a generous amount of barbecue sauce. Sprinkle more of the spice rub over all this deliciousness. Lift the portion of the bacon mat furthest from you and roll the sausage toward you as tightly as possible. Make sure there are no air pockets. Once rolled, seal the seam and ends to make sure none of the inner deliciousness escapes. Roll the sausage log forward with the bacon mat so it is completely wrapped. Lay it seam down seam down and sprinkle with the spice rub.

Step 4: Smoked Meat Log
Smoke or indirectly grill the pork log at 225 degrees Fahrenheit until it reaches an internal temperature of 165 degrees, 2 to 3 hours. If smoking, apple wood or cherry wood chips complement the sweet barbecue sauce, whereas hickory or mesquite chips will infuse a somewhat spicy smokiness. Ten minutes before removing the pork from the heat, coat the exterior with barbecue sauce. The final segment of cooking will allow the sauce to caramelize into a glaze. Remove from heat and let rest for 20 minutes.

Step 5: Gluttony
To serve, slice the Bacon Explosion into ½-inch thick rounds. Enjoy and prepare to lapse into a food coma.

to cradle loads of ground sausage and crisped up shards of cooked bacon. Even before I could grasp the full concept behind these ingredients, I found myself head-over-heels in love with it.

After wiping the drool off my chin, I asked Stephanie about the dish this work-in-progress photo depicted. She told me this family favorite was called "Bacon Explosion," a log of ground sausage encasing a filling of cooked, chopped bacon, wrapped in a criss-cross net of bacon that's tossed onto the grill and coaxed into a state of irresistibility. Like the arrow on the scale after consuming copious amounts of pig parts, my interest level shot up. Bacon explosion? How had I never heard of this? I mean, I know the Nate Soroko, he of the bacon-print wallet and underpants (don't ask me how I know this). How is it that I'd never heard of this dish?

Most likely, it's because I've lived my entire life in figure-conscious San Diego. Turns out, Stephanie and her dad, Alex (the "bishop of beer" for The Lost Ab-
Dry Spice Rub

Yield: About 1 cup

- ¾ cup brown sugar, packed
- ¼ cup sweet paprika
- 3 Tbsp freshly ground black pepper
- 3 Tbsp kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp hickory-smoked salt
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 2 tsp celery seed
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper

Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl and mix with your hands. Store in an airtight jar; it should last at least 6 months.

Unfortunately, I was just passing through The Lost Abbey (like so much rented beer from that establishment), so photos of Bacon Explosion had to suffice in lieu of a taste. Fortunately, I work with Stephanie, whose full-time job is as social media coordinator at Stone Brewing Co., so she offered to save me a slice of this Super Bowl treat. Over the 18 hours between that promise and me actually obtaining said sample, it was nearly all I could think about. Seriously, even in the midst of one of the most exciting Super Bowls in the history of the NFL, my brain kept replaying an Instagram video outlining the lattice of raw yet oh-so-delicious-looking bacon slices. By the time I finally got to taste it, I figured there was no way it could live up to the pedestal status to which I had propped it up in my mind. But you know what...it did!

Rich, decadent, oozing with pork fat and salty as the day is long, it benefits from a generous basting with tangy barbecue sauce and gentle two-and-a-half-hour smoke over hickory chips. It’s almost too much to take on by itself, so it’s best to carve off a slice and serve it between two fluffy hamburger buns halves. All that porous bread is good for soaking up any excess meat juices. As I ate this newfound delicacy and sure-to-be-lifelong staple, I imagined that, given the fact it is, essentially a patty made up of two quintessential breakfast ingredients—bacon and sausage—that it would be great topped with a fried egg with a soft yolk just waiting to burst on the first bite. And with its Wisconsin heritage, it only seems proper to stuff the thing with some cheddar, drape it in a molten layer of Mozzarella or at least serve it with a side of cheese curds.

The aforementioned ideas seemed prime for experimentation using leftover Bacon Explosion, but here’s the rub. This dish is such a hit (as demonstrated when Alex and Stephanie prepared it for a recent get-together at my humble abode), there are never any leftovers to experiment with. Therefore, the world may never know the full extent of Bacon Explosion’s tasty potential. Somewhere, Nate Soroko just shed a tear.
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pictured: Loki, pup of our Art Director Kayla and Into the Brew Columnist Sam. @apupnamedloki on Instagram.
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Warning: Thirst for a tasty, locally-brewed beer may occur.
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Our favorite #sdbeer photos will appear in the April issue of West Coaster San Diego
In the next issue...

THE BRAZILIAN CONNECTION

WITH NOVO BRAZIL BREWING CO. LANDING IN CHULA VISTA LATER THIS YEAR, SAN DIEGO’S LINKS TO THE SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRY CONTINUE TO MULTIPLY.

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