

JULY - AUGUST 2020

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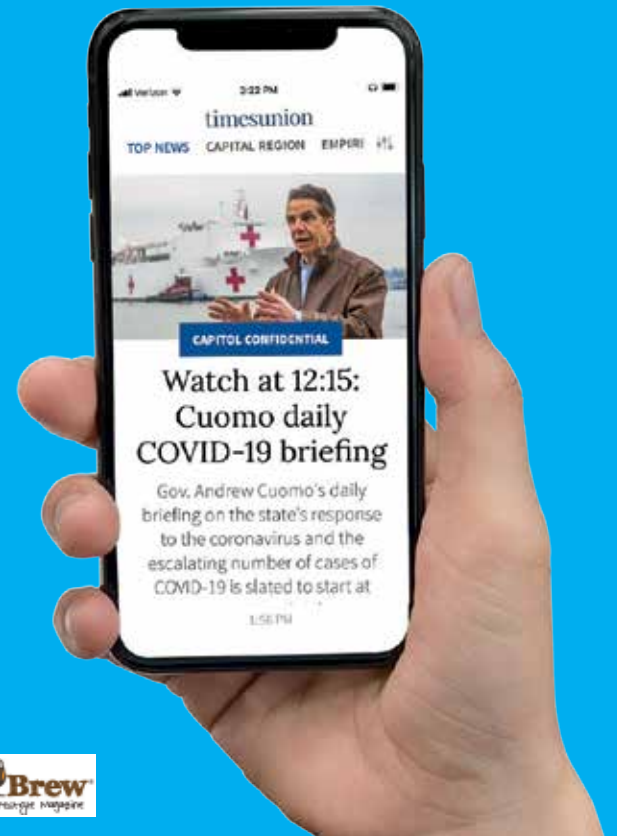
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**Published by**

Collar City Craft Media LLC.  
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[truebrewmagazine.com](https://truebrewmagazine.com)

Printed locally and sustainably by  
Times Union Press, Albany NY

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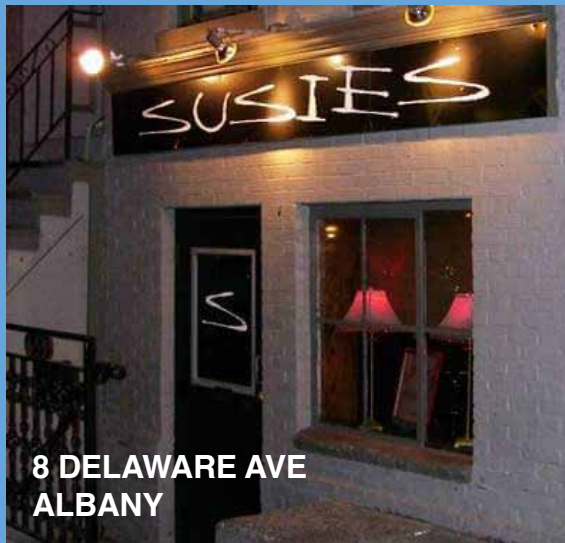
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# BEER OF THE MONTH JULY AMERICAN LAGER

Dom Weisberg

Some homebrewers regard the sometimes-insipid quality of American Lagers, which are usually Pilsner beers, with contempt and disdain. The seltzer-like, often nearly flavorless nature of these beers has been the reason homebrewers have created the quote, "I drink homebrew and P\*\*s Budweiser!" That being said there are also tasty examples of this style, unfortunately most are imports such as Pilsner Urquell and Weihenstephaner, which come from Europe.

In the mid-1800s German immigrants brought their traditional pilsner brewing styles to America as they emigrated here. One of the first breweries in the U.S. that began with German immigrants and German beer styles was Anheuser-Busch. Over time up to 25% of the grain bills of these beers had rice and/or corn added, which thinned the beers out and reduced the amount of overall flavor. American Pilsners cannot be sold or marketed as "Pilsners" in Europe due to this.

Although German immigrants had brewed traditional Pilsner-inspired beer in the United States since the mid-late 1800s, the modern American Lager style was heavily influenced by Prohibition and by World War II. Surviving breweries consolidated, expanded distribution, and heavily promoted a beer style that was appealing to a broad range of

the population. This became the dominant beer style in the U.S for many decades and spawning many international rivals who would develop similarly bland products for the mass market and the style was supported heavily by advertising.

The style generally has low malty sweet flavor, and low to medium hop flavor coming from noble European hops. It is typically a very pale straw colored to medium yellow beer and light in body with medium to high carbonation, low bitterness, and crisp dry finish. A bit of corn-like flavor may be perceived. According to the BJCP, American Pilsners have "significantly less flavor, hops, and bitterness than traditional European Pilsners." A bit of spiciness may be perceived. When served very cold this can be a refreshing "lawn mower" type of beer. Examples of the style are Budweiser, Yuengling, Coors and Pabst Blue Ribbon.

#### Vital Stats:

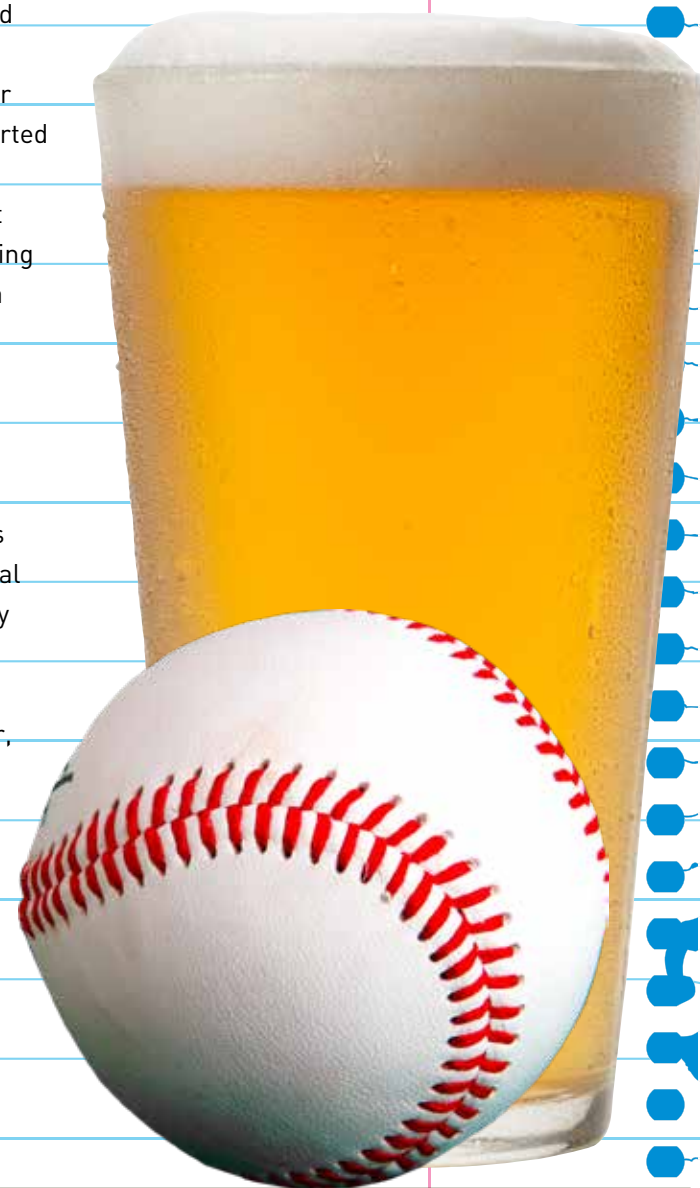
**OG: 1.040 – 1.050**

**FG: 1.004 – 1.010**

**ABV: 4.2 – 5.3%**

**IBU's: 8-18**

**SRM: 2-4**



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# BEER OF THE MONTH AUGUST

## ENGLISH I.P.A.

Roger Savoy

The traditional English IPA style gotten lost in the kaleidoscope of American IPAs, and that's a shame.

English IPAs tend to be much more balanced and drinkable than American IPAs have become, and their consistency is greatly missed by traditional IPA lovers.

In the late 1700s, India Pale Ale was created as the solution to the problem of providing fresh beer for the British Empire troops as they were colonizing India, where it was too hot to brew beer. English Pale Ales were the flavor of choice for the soldiers at the time, however, the beer suffering during the long hot journey around the southern tip of Africa. By the time it reached the troops, it was mostly undrinkable. At the time, British soldiers were given a ration of one gallon of beer per day. Spoiled beer meant unhappy soldiers. Nobody wants unhappy soldiers!

In the 1780s, a London brewer called Hodgson brewed a strong, heavily hopped beer called *October Ale* to the troops that would normally be aged before drinking. The beer not only survived the grueling six-month journey, but it also immeasurably improved the flavor profile. The soldiers loved it, but the locals also started to crave it. "That's the India Pale Ale" the brewers would say, and the new style was born. This prototype IPA gradually became paler and more refreshing to suit the Indian climate. With the coming of refrigeration, proper IPA itself began to

die out. Until, that is, American brewers and consumers rediscovered IPA as we launched into early 2000's.

Now, American IPAs dominate the scene as consumers have clamored for all things hoppy. Finding a true English IPA brewed by an American Craft Brewer is rare, but if you see one available on tap, order it. They are delicious when brewed true-to-style.

English IPA is pale to medium amber, clear to a bit hazy for unfiltered dry-hopped versions. A moderate to moderately high floral, earthy or fruity aroma is typical with hop flavor similar to the aroma. The malt should show an English character, be somewhat bready, biscuit-like, toasty, toffee-like and/or caramelly. Substantial hop character is balanced by malt flavor, body, and complexity. Finish is medium to dry, with a lingering, but not harsh, bitterness in the aftertaste.

**VITAL STATS: OG 1.050 – 1.075, FG 1.010 – 1.019, ABV 5 – 7.5%, IBU 40 – 60, SRM 8 – 14**

English IPAs offer great beer/food pairing opportunities. Strong English cheeses as well as grilled or braised meats, like pork, make tasty flavor experiences. Higher alcohol, hops and carbonation all work to cut through fat and cleanse the palate, keeping every bite be as tasty as the first. Hop flavor melds well with common Indian spices like tamarind, coriander, and cardamom. A balanced English IPA tackles a fiery Madras curry with cooling



bitterness and some heat-moderating malt. Hops amplify the spice at first, but ultimately whisk it away. It also cuts through creamy yogurt-based sauces in dishes like Chicken Korma.

Fire up the grill and burn some burgers and steaks. IPA is fabulous with caramelized crust on grilled meat matching the caramel malt in the beer, while hop flavor and bitterness provide umami-amping contrast.

Emporium Farm Brewery's English IPA is on tap now. Other commercial examples: **Samuel Smith's India Ale, Fuller's IPA, King & Barnes IPA, Brooklyn East India Pale Ale, Shipyard Fuggles IPA, Goose Island IPA, Berkshire Brewing Company, Extra-Hopped Lost Sailor India Pale Ale**

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# BEER STEAMED CLAMS

BY KAREN LOGAN

Serves 6 Appetizers

1 hour to soak + 15 minutes to steam

1 large pot with a lid

## INGREDIENTS:

- 3 dozen little neck clams
- ½ c. butter
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 1 12oz can/bottle wheat beer
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges
- chopped parsley (optional)

## DIRECTIONS:

Clam Prep: Discard any chipped or broken clams. To make sure the clams don't have sand in them, scrub them and soak in cold water for 1 hour in 1/3 cup of salt, changing the water and salt once. Scoop the clams out so the sand stays in the bottom of the bowl.

Melt butter and cook garlic on medium heat for 3-5 minutes until garlic softens. Add beer. Bring sauce to a gentle boil, add clams and cover pot. Cook over medium heat for about 8 minutes until clams open. Remove clams with slotted spoon or tongs and place in a big bowl, pour sauce on top and sprinkle with parsley. Serve with lemon wedges and with toasted crusty bread to dip into sauce.

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# BEER BRINED BBQ PORK CHOPS

Serves 4

Brine time: at least 6 hours

Grill time: 30 minutes

## INGREDIENTS:

4 1" thick pork chops (boneless or bone-in)  
1 12 oz can/bottle of lager or ale  
3 cloves garlic, chopped  
4 tbsp salt  
1 tbsp black pepper  
3-4 tbsp brown sugar  
1-2 tbsp onion powder (or ½ of coarse chopped onion)  
½-1 tbsp ginger (or ¼ cup of coarse chopped ginger root) (optional)  
¼-½ tsp cayenne pepper or red paper flakes  
¼-½ tsp liquid smoke (optional)  
BBQ seasoning  
BBQ sauce

## DIRECTIONS:

Throw all ingredients except BBQ seasoning & sauce in a leak-proof container or bag and stick in fridge for 6 hours or more. Rinse pork chops and pat dry. Rub pork chops in BBQ seasoning. Grill chops over medium heat for 12-15 minutes, turning a few times. During the last few minutes of grilling, baste chops with a little BBQ sauce that is separate from what you will serve on the side.  
*Adding too soon will cause burning.*  
Meat temp should reach at least 145° for medium rare or 160° for medium.  
Serve BBQ sauce on the side.

BY KAREN LOGAN

**Variations:** BBQ is something people are deeply passionate about and there are endless ways to make BBQ your own way. The brine is a good starting point to make your pork a little special from your average 'que. The brine works with ribs, pork tenderloin, and country-style boneless ribs.

**BEER PAIRING:  
AMERICAN  
BROWN ALE**

Fist of Karma  
Brown Ale, Druther's



# LOCAL BREWERIES KEEP CRAFT BEER A SOCIAL EXPERIENCE—AT A DISTANCE

By Colleen Onuffer and Erik Budrakey

Regions all across New York are slowly beginning to reopen and, for the first time in more than three months, our local breweries are allowed to finally welcome customers back into their tap rooms, brewpubs, and outdoor beer gardens. And consumers are itching to get out of the house and back to their favorite craft breweries. In fact, in a recent consumer survey by the New York State Brewers Association (NYSBA), 48% of respondents said they would “go to a brewery as soon as [it was] possible.”

But the craft beer experience will look different for now – at least for the foreseeable future. Some of these changes include limiting indoor spaces to 50% capacity, maintaining a distance of six feet for customers and employees, creating distance between tables, employees wearing face coverings at all times and customers wearing face coverings at all times except while seated.

While similar regulations have been in place for other establishments that opened in earlier phases, these guidelines are new for visitors to breweries. As responsible adults, we’re learning to form new habits. To assist, breweries are making sure consumers are aware of the new guidelines before even entering—with signage reminding the need to wear masks and easily accessible hand sanitizer.

“People are still getting used to things. A lot of this is not muscle memory for consumers,” said Erika Anderson of Unified Beerworks. “But we won’t let them stay if they are not following guidelines.”

## THE NEW YORK STATE CRAFT BEER PLEDGE

NYSBA debuted the New York State Craft Beer Pledge to help cement the new rules. With it, breweries pledge to practice safety and sanitation guidelines to safeguard the health and well-being of their customers. In return, consumers pledge to wear a face covering, maintain six feet of distance, enjoy beer and food while seated and wash / sanitize hands. It ends by asking consumers to be patient and understanding because this is new for all of us.





Fort Orange Brewing in Albany

“The NYSBA developed the NYS Craft Beer Pledge to educate consumers on the State Department of Health’s reopening guidelines that breweries must follow in order to remain open and avoid fines,” said Chloe Kay, Communications Coordinator for NYSBA. “The guidelines are strict, and we know that they may come to a shock to consumers. We want to make sure that enthusiasts know that these are the state’s guidelines, and that if consumers want breweries to remain open, they need to follow them.”

“It’s a respect thing,” explained John Carr of Adirondack Brewery. “Please respect my staff and we’ll respect you. It may feel different – but once customers come and realize that we’re taking it seriously, they can relax, have a beer and not worry about their health.”

Christian Weber, co-Founder of Common Roots Brewing Company echoed that sentiment. “Respect the guidelines. Whether you agree with the policies or not, please respect them. That has to be the best way to enjoy the experience.”

“Businesses are trying to balance the rules and restrictions while still maintaining the fun, positive vibe customers have come to love,” said John Westcott of Fort Orange

Brewing. “We’re all doing the best we can within the rules to try to replicate that experience.”

Breweries and businesses now, more than ever, need to be more creative with how their brand and personality shine through the mandated regulations. It will take some innovation and some vision, but the breweries that we talked to are up to the task.

“For us, we’ve been getting more creative with the types of beer we brew,” said Westcott. “We’re trying to find some of the more unique beers that folks aren’t as accustomed to having.”

## IT’S A GOOD CHALLENGE —WE’LL BE STRONGER COMING OUT THE OTHER END

“The biggest challenge for us is not being able to give samples. That was our best mode of sale – having customers being able to try a variety of beers,” said Anderson. “In a way, this challenges us to be better descriptors of our beers. It’s a good challenge – we’ll be stronger coming out the other end because of it.”

“We haven’t lost any of our soul at all. We have a lot of real estate to spread everyone out while still having a cozy environment,” explained Carr. “Our beer garden and outdoor patio have always been a cool spot to come and hang out. We’re known for an Adirondack experience – with campfires and stone walls – and you can still get that.”

Craft beer has always been about socializing. The taproom experience of talking to new people and chatting with the brewers, owners, and staff had all but been cut out while the industry pivoted for the pandemic. Now, we’re able to get back to enjoying that taproom experience again. Responsibly.

“I think we can all agree that one of the things that makes craft beer so enjoyable is

the social aspect of it, and I do not think that will ever change,” said Kay. “Although the shutdown certainly presented a challenge for keeping craft social, consumers and breweries alike found creative ways to remain connected through social media and virtual events.”

“Now that we have reduced capacity, it’s more important for us to preserve that connection and sense of community,” said Westcott. “With the ability to have fewer customers at one time, we can easily interact with people while maintaining the guidelines. We’re able to prioritize to make that experience a little more fulfilling for them.”

New York State breweries have been working hard to get through the shutdown and are excited for consumers to return. They continue to work towards making sure the experience is just as enjoyable for the consumer as it’s always been.

“You can still have a great experience while social distancing,” said Weber. “It’s a different experience – but that doesn’t mean it’s any less, any worse, or any better. It’s just different.”



Adirondack Brewery in Lake George

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Adirondack Brewery in Lake George

Weber is almost ready to open Common Roots' new facility, 16 months after it originally burned down. In preparing for the opening, Weber canceled his order for long, beer garden-style tables and changed it to smaller tables and Adirondack chairs. Regardless of what phase the region will be in at that time, the new facility will open in their own phases so Weber and his team can be strategic and methodical about it.

"This brand-new facility is going to be a destination," Weber said, "We're excited to show it off but want to make sure we can do it safely for our staff and customers. People before profits has always been important to us."

The shutdown required breweries to adapt, but that creativity and need to innovate isn't going away. So where does craft beer go from here?

"The spirit of craft beer is still there. We want that to shine through all of the restrictions and all of the guidelines," said Anderson. "Part of craft beer is how much we care about our customers and our staff and our fellow brewers. We want everyone to be safe and everyone to enjoy these amazing creations we're providing here in NYS."

## THINGS EVOLVE FOR THE BEST

"Breweries that pay attention and respect their staff and customers will do just fine," said Carr. "The craft beer community is different in that we know what each other are doing. There's a certain support network and we want everyone to succeed."

"Things evolve for the best. The companies that are the most

successful are the ones that can be nimble," said Weber. "The more that breweries are talking to each other and sharing ideas, that's how we have creative growth in the industry and create the best experiences for our staff and customers."

It's important to continue to support our favorite taprooms – the lifeblood of many smaller breweries. As we start to return, breweries ask to just relax and keep an open mind.

"With everything going on in the world and all of the hate, just come out, have a pint of beer and be respectful to everyone – your staff, the customer next to you, minorities, to everybody," said Westcott. "Just relax, have a beer, and talk about it."

So, as you prepare to venture back out to your favorite taproom, be sure to take a few extra minutes to look around and see what how the staff and consumers are interacting. Understand that taprooms rules and pay attention to "traffic flow" as you navigate through the experience. Give extra respect (and a huge tip) to the staff as the hustle around in the hot summer with their masks on, just to safely take care of you.

We are doing very well with handling the pandemic here in New York State. Let's all do our part to assure that we keep going in the right direction. Cheers to getting back out there! Enjoy!



Unified Beerworks in Malta

# Cool summer companions

Beat the heat with this perfect cool-me-down combo: Market 32 Summer Berry Salad paired with a glass of chilled cider, made by Albany's own Nine Pin Cidery. Available in our Foodfare department, our delicious, fresh berry salad features a bed of tender mesclun greens topped with garbanzo beans, crisp cucumber, crumbled blue cheese, whole blueberries and sliced strawberries. It finds its seasonal soulmate in Nine Pin Signature cider, crafted with a blend of New York apples from Samascott Orchards. This off-dry sparkling cider offers a crisp, refreshing taste that also complements a variety of other Market 32 salads including our Berry, Almond & Honey Goat Cheese Salad.



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# SUMMER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Capital Region - Breweries & Taprooms are open!

Days & Hours of operation are subject change, so double check before you go. **Don't forget to wear your mask.**

### Adirondack Pub & Brewery –

Wednesday – Sunday (in/outdoor seating).

### Back Barn Brewing – Thursday - Sunday

**Battle Hill Brewing Company** – Wednesday – Sunday (pick-up only)

### Brewery Ommegang – Thursday-Sunday (outdoor seating)

7/11 12-4pm Saison & Shibori \$30 – Organic indigo tie dying (BYO garment)

8/22 12-3pm Car Show

### Druthers Brewing Company – Wednesday – Sunday

(taking reservations at all locations)

Saratoga location - Live music Thursday – Sunday (weather permitting)

### Chatham Brewing – Wednesday - Saturday

### CH Evans – Wednesday – Sunday (dine-in too)

### Common Roots Temporary Tap Room – open daily

### Crossroads Brewing – Catskill & Athens Taprooms

– Wednesday-Sunday

### Fort Orange Brewing Company – Thursday-Sunday

Thursday night trivia 6:30pm

7/12 12pm Dog + Breweries 101

(train your dog to love brewery visits)

### Frog Alley Brewing Company – open daily

Live music most Fridays

8/9 Team Huge Heart Cornhole Tourney

### Good Nature Brewing – Tuesday - Saturday

### Great Flats Brewing - Tuesday – Sunday

### Honey Hollow Brewery – Thursday - Saturday

## Indian Ladder Farms Farm Cidery & Brewery –

Thursday – Sunday. Bottle Shop open daily

7/3 8am – listen to WEQX for on air tasting

8/29 Live Music: Off the Road Trio 2-5pm

## MochaLisa's Caffe – open daily. Open Mic Night every

Wednesday July 1-October 28 6:30pm

## Lake Placid Pub & Brewery – open daily

## Mad Jack Brewing Company – Monday – Friday

## Nine Pin Cider Works – open daily

## Northway Brewing Company – Thursday - Sunday

## Paradox Brewery – Wednesday- Sunday

## Rare Form Brewing Company – Wednesday – Sunday

(reservations preferred) new outdoor sidewalk seating

## Real McCoy Beer Company – Wednesday-Saturday

## Rip Van Winkle Brew & Beverage Festival –

8/29 11:30am – 5pm in Catskill

## The Hideaway's Taps & Tees Beer Tasting Golf

Tourney - 7/9 11am-6pm - Saratoga Springs

## Sloop Brewing Company – Thursday - Sunday

**Unified Beerworks** – Tuesday – Sunday with a Food truck on Fridays

## Wolf Hollow Brewing Company – Wednesday- Sunday

(in/outdoor seating)

7/3 & 7/4: Flaco's Taco's

7/10 6pm: DumDumb Stoopid IPA Release



# 7 QUESTIONS WITH BREWMASTER, MICHAEL BELLINI

By Erik Budrakey

**The Real McCoy** has been brewing up delicious, small batch beers in Delmar since 2015. Now in their fifth year, and recently having added a second taproom location in Balston Spa, the brewery is flourishing. Being that they are a New York State Farm Brewery, sourcing more than 20% of their ingredients from all over upstate, and servicing two separate communities in the Capital District, The Real McCoy defines the word LOCAL. I recently caught up with Founder and Brewmaster, Michael Bellini, to take a look around, share a few beers, and to ask him 7 QUESTIONS

**1) TBM:** When/What was the first batch of beer that you ever brewed? How did it turn out.

**MICHAEL:** At age 15 I brewed my first beer. It was a Pale Ale and it was awful. I'm surprised I ever gave beer a second chance.

**2) TBM:** If we were to get in your car right now to go on a beer-run, what music would be on?

**MICHAEL:** Arcade Fire - "Everything Now", Tame Impala - "Let it Happen", Vampire Weekend - "Step"

**3) TBM:** Is there a brewery or brewer that inspired you to "go for it" with a career in brewing?

**MICHAEL:** There were about 30 home brewers. I was in a Central New York Brewers Club which really gave me the push to go for it. Four NYS breweries came out of that club including Real McCoy - Delmar, Three Huskies Brewing - Rochester, IBU, North Syracuse, and Lunkenheimer Craft Brewing in Weedsport, NY

**4) TBM:** Wife? Kids? Pets?

**MICHAEL:** Yes, my wife Kristen, my 11 year old daughter, Lola, and our 16 year old cat Miss Scarlett. Both my wife and daughter's names can be found on The Real McCoy's original two fermenters.

**5) TBM:** What beer, that is not your own, is in your fridge right now, and on the regular?

**MICHAEL:** *Franziskaner Hefeweizen*

**6) TBM:** If you could go back in time and share a beer with 3 historic or iconic figures, who would they be, and why?

**MICHAEL:** Biagio Bellini, my grandfather! I was too young to remember him but I would love us to have a beer and I'd let him know that he raised an awesome son (my father) and has left behind a great legacy.

Ludwig Von Beethoven. Big fan, big fan.

Kurt Cobain. He spoke in a way that an entire generation understood. I bet he had a lot more to say.

**7) TBM:** Which of the brews that you have created at The Real McCoy makes you most proud?

**MICHAEL:** We are most proud of our *Delmartian NEIPA*. It's the one beer that came about by the community, they were asking for one and they stuck with us until we had something we all love. We use 100% NYS malt in the grain bill which we are proud of as well.

## BONUS QUESTION!

**TBM:** If you had three sentences to say whatever you'd like to Capital Region Beer Enthusiasts about The Real McCoy, what would they be?

**MICHAEL:** Our beers are unpretentious and delicious. We will always be a work in progress. We love beer as much as you do, which is why we make ESBs, Irish Reds, Northern London Browns, Cream Ales in addition to our IPAs, Stouts and Hefeweizen!





A Beautiful hand-crafted taproom awaits for a safe, exciting experience.

## RACING CITY BREWING CO. FOR THE LOVE OF BEER, AND HORSES

By Joanne E. McFadden

Saratoga's iconic racetrack may be closed to spectators this season, but there's still a great, relaxing yet energetic venue to enjoy the races in grand style. The Racing City Brewing Company has a 23-foot television screen in its production area, and if COVID rules allow, the owners' plan is to be the place to watch the races this summer in Saratoga (with all social distancing and other precautions in place).

Owners Tony and Debreen Oliva, who bred and raced horses in New Jersey, had been coming up to Saratoga since the 1990's. They fell in love with Saratoga's "health, history, and horses" culture, particularly the horses. "We came for Travers weekend, then the next year we came for the week, and the next year, we came for a month," Debreen remembered. "The next year, we bought a home." They owned the home for three years before

deciding to downsize and make Saratoga their year-round residence. “We were and still are, that tourist, in that we embraced everything about horses and horse racing when we came to Saratoga,” she said.

The tasting room reflects this love, as well as Tony Oliva’s hard work. He did all the renovation himself. He stripped carpet tiles off the floor and took down the dropped ceiling. He also built the bar, with its rustic corrugated tin front and contrasting hip lighting. All the tables, which includes the picnic tables outside, the tables with benches inside, and the high-topped tables that have boards for checkers and backgammon, are Tony’s craftsmanship.

The tasting room’s centerpiece is a large, steel-reinforced fiberglass sculpture of horse racing. The piece was originally décor at the City Center’s Hilton Hotel and then auctioned off to the owner of the Grey Gelding restaurant. Other racing artwork adorns the walls, adding to the Saratoga ambiance.

## **THE OVLAS HAVE COMPLETELY EMBRACED THE CITY’S HORSERACING CULTURE**

The brewery celebrated its second anniversary on March 16, just before New York went on Pause due to the pandemic. The March 16 date is significant, a nod to the Beer 3/16 pop slogan (which originated from the 3/16” hosing used in brewing). In fact, significance is somewhat of a hallmark of this brewing company because if you look for it, you can find it throughout the place, some obvious and some subtle.

The Olivas have completely embraced the city’s horseracing culture, and it can be seen not only in the establishment’s décor, but also in their interactions with customers who want to chat about horse racing. Connecting with customers is important to them. If a customer wants to talk about horses, Tony is happy to discuss horses and handicapping. For those new to the track, Racing City Brewing offers a place to get a primer on what to expect and look for there. “Last summer, they would come to visit us and then go to the track the next day,” Debreen said. “It really helps them to feel the connection to us and to Saratoga,” she said.

She notes that the couple wants to make sure not to lose that connection with the social distancing that’s now required.

“A lot of our customers are regulars and mug club members. We have conversations that flow through all their visits,” she said, noting that they make a point to talk to every customer, new and regular.



Visitors will find other nods to the racing culture around the tasting room. For example, the tasting room’s menu board is designed to look like a tote board from the racetrack, with different colored numbers for each beer. The #1, an American pale ale named “17 Minutes to Post,” is red, because the #1 horse at the track is red. The menu makes it clear that the couple has had fun naming their wide variety of beers, with names like “Black Beauty” for its nitro black lager, “My Paisan” for its saison, “Kentucky Classic” for its barrel aged dark cream ale, and “Starting Gate” for its sour.

## **WE LIKE TO HAVE A NICE VARIETY OF BEER FOR ALL PALATES**

The diversity of beer offerings speaks to the philosophy of the Olivas and their brewer, Jurij Owad, who has been with them from the start. “We like to have a nice variety so there is something for all palates and all levels of craft beer drinkers,” Debreen said. Owad and Tony decide on what to brew by sitting and talking about the yeasts and hops they like and then build flavors from there. It is important to them to have a selection that appeals to veteran craft beer connoisseurs as well as those who are new to craft beer. They also balance

**While people won't be able to visit the track this year, the Olivas hope that they will still gather to watch the races on the big TV or one of the three smaller televisions in the tasting room.**

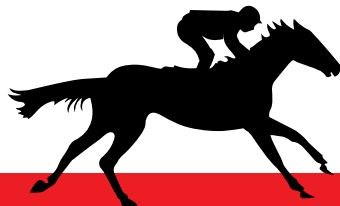
seasonal offerings with customer favorites, like the premium lager, "Racing City Lager," one of their most popular beers.

Having committed to their March 16 opening two years ago, the couple started out with one tap with beer of their own and one guest tap. The second weekend, they had two of their own beers on tap, and three by the third weekend. "There was a point where we had no guest taps," Debrean said, and it was a sense of accomplishment to be able to fill up all their taps with their own products. Now, just two years in, it's the norm, and their beers and tasting room have won accolades in the "Best of the Saratoga Region" polls by the Saratoga Today newspaper. In 2019, the brewery tied for the best locally brewed beer along with runner up wins in three other categories. In 2020, the brewery won first place for the best locally brewed beer, along with first place wins in the best after-track party and best beer selection categories as well as being runner up in the best local neighborhood bar category.

In addition to regular tasting room hours, the brewery had a growing special events business with caterer DZ Restaurants. That is now on hold because of the pandemic. It also hosts its own special events for customers. In past years, the brewery has done a "Triple Crown Series," where customers gather to watch the televised versions of the Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes, and Belmont Stakes. People even came dressed up with hats on Derby Day. "It's the 'next best place to being there' kind of thing," Debrean said. The brewery also hosted "Cornhole Thursdays."

One remarkable aspect of this brewery is its convenient location and abundance of parking. Its building is on a side street parallel to Route 50 and accessible from Exit 15 of the Northway. Just a bit removed from the downtown area, it offers an easy-to-get-to place away from the hustle and bustle of Broadway. In addition, it is right off the Spring Run Trail, a Victorian-era railroad bed bike and pedestrian path, so it does have some customers who ride in on bicycle.

While event hosting is not expected to happen at this point because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the couple has been working hard to make the brewery a place where people can gather safely and still enjoy this summer.



WATCH and BET horse racing with simulcast from Saratoga Race Course on our 23-ft. projection screen.



## SUMMER IN SARATOGA

There is a set of picnic tables with umbrellas outside, with possible plans to put more in its front parking lot (there would still be plenty of parking on the other side of the building), depending on how the reopening plans unfold in New York State. With space available, they want to be sensitive to guests' needs as far as social distancing and contact are concerned. They've developed a contactless menu with QR codes so that guests can view their menu and tasting notes, and place orders right on their phones. Depending on what a guest wants, orders can be brought to the table, or guests could come up to the service bar to get drinks and insert their own credit cards. "We're always going to do our part to make sure that they're safe and healthy," Debrean said. "A lot





of it is playing it by ear," she said. "What we've all learned with COVID, you need to be flexible," she said, noting that people have been understanding about the changes. "We've all learned to be flexible and adaptable." She pointed out that the best way to know the most up-to-date information about what's going on is via social media, which is managed by the couple's son, Anthony Oliva III.

The couple actually started out with Oliva Winery in 2012, having purchased a 100-acre farm in Fort Edward. "With all that land, we wanted to do something else with it," Debreen said. "Growing grapes was something my husband always wanted to do." They converted half the barn to production and converted the farmhouse to a tasting room, with a bank of windows overlooking the Hudson River.

They found that the winery was just a little too far out of the way to attract the traffic they wanted, so they sold the farm and moved the business closer to Saratoga. Now, visitors to the tasting room at Racing City Brewing Company can enjoy a selection of wines—red, white, dry, sweet, and sparkling—from Oliva Winery in addition to beer. "Somebody is always super happy that we also make wine," said Debreen about groups coming to the tasting room.

While people won't be able to visit the track this year, the Olivas hope that they will still gather to watch the races on the big TV or one of the three smaller televisions in the tasting room. "We love horses and we embrace everything about horses and horse races," she said.

So, come out of quarantine and safely sample some great beers (and wines) at the Racing City Brewing Company.

Visit them soon!



## **Racing City Brewing Company**

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518-886-1271

[www.racingcitybrewing.com](http://www.racingcitybrewing.com)

SUMMER, SUMMER, SUMMERTIME!

PERFECT YOUR PICNIC WITH CRAFT BEER PAIRINGS

Let's face it, Summertime brings certain foods to the table that we simply see less frequently during other seasons. Take watermelon for example. When's the last time that you had watermelon in January? It's just one of those foods that shines brighter in the summer. Chances are though, you won't be thinking too much about which beer you'll be pairing with your watermelon this summer. It's not important.

But when it comes to feasting around the picnic table, pairing the right beer with your main course is kind of important. We recommend that you take an extra minute to look for a beer that will pair perfectly with your Summertime meal. While doing so, there are a few principles that should be considered. According to The Brewers Association handbook: *American Craft Beer and Food – Perfect Companions*, these are the most important:

**Look for Harmonies** - Combinations work best when they share common flavor and aroma characteristics. Rich, caramelly flavors of an Oktoberfest lager and roasted pork; deep, roasted flavors of an imperial stout and chocolate brownies; the nutty flavor of an English brown ale and handmade cheddar cheese. These are all examples of finding harmonies.

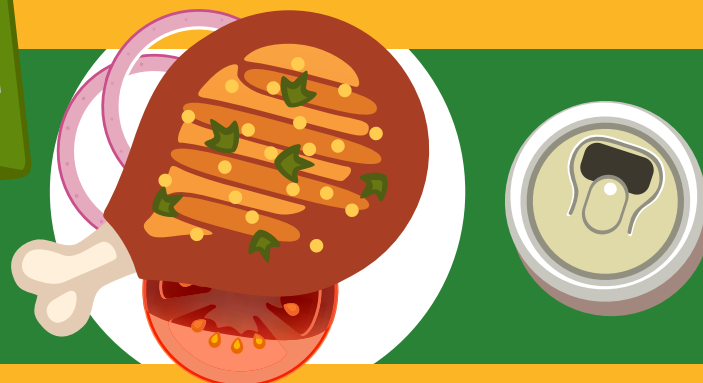
**Match Strength with Strength** - Delicate dishes work best with delicate beers. Strongly flavored foods demand assertive beers. Intensity of flavors include many aspects such as: alcohol strength, malt character, hop bitterness, roastiness, richness, sweetness, etc.

**Pay Attention to Details** – Consider sweetness, bitterness, carbonation, heat (spice), and richness. Specific characteristics of food and beer interact with each other in rather predictable ways. Taking advantage of these interactions ensures that the food and beer will balance each other, each giving you a desire for a taste of the other.

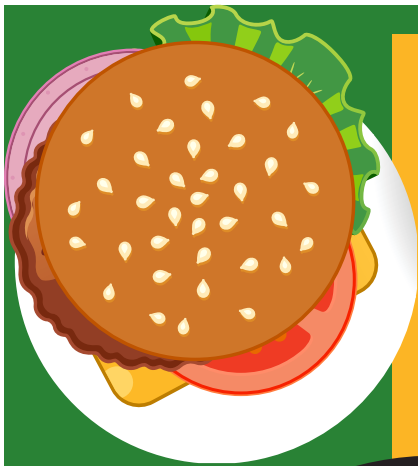
When it comes to pairing your Summertime fare with beer, don't be afraid to try something new and seek out creative possibilities. The best pairings have yet to be discovered! Remember, beer should always be a pleasurable experience, so have fun! Need a few ideas to get you started? **Check these out!**



**Grilled Salmon:** Try a **Witbier**. The citrus notes and tart characteristics found in Witbier intensify the natural flavors of Salmon. The beer perfectly lifts the oils and enhances flavors while not disrupting the essential qualities of Salmon. Not to mention, Witbiers, while a solid choice year-round, shine especially bright during the warmth of the summer. Be sure to pour these into a glass to get the desired flavors. Nationally, **Allagash Wit** is tasty. For NY brewed, look for **Ommegang Witte**.



**Barbeque Chicken:** Reach into the cooler and grab an **American Pale Ale**. The slight malt backbone found in Pale Ales pulls up the meaty, juicy flavors of the chicken while the noticeable hop presence dances nicely with the tangy, spicy flavors of various sauces. If you like to spicy hot food, kick it up to an IPA to really turn up the heat. I go with Pale Ales though, because they are just so damn easy drinking on a hot summer day. Seriously. **Sierra Nevada** is regularly ranked as one of the best beers on the planet. Locally, go get a growler of **Pete's Pale Ale** from Brown's Brewing Company.



**Burgers:** **Amber Ales** are a stud with grilled beef! The caramelly-sweet flavors in Amber Ales latch on to the fatty, juicy flavors in your burger. Ambers tend to be slightly sweet, medium bodied and go down just right after a day on the lake or while your chillin' by the campfire with your burger. The national leader, New Belgium's **Fat Tire**, is available in cans. Locally, grab a crowler of Amber **All The Way** from C. H. Evans.



**Mussels:** Go straight for a **Saison!** That's an order! OK, we can't really MAKE you drink anything, but if you are having Mussels this summer, you won't go wrong with a Saison. The combination of bright aromatics, lively bitterness, and spicy, peppery, earthy characteristics of Saison allow the beer a unique pairing opportunity that appeals to MOST dishes. However, with mussels in the Summertime, it's just a home run. Saison's possess the bitterness to cut through the fatty/salty flavors of the mussels while carbonation scrubs the pallet, leaving you craving your next bite/sip. **Saison Dupont** is the world-wide classic. Locally, **Ommegang's Hennepin** is no joke!



**Grilled Sausage:** Let's be honest, pretty much all beers work well with sausages. However, on a hot summer day, I recommend a Pilsner. While Pilsners flavors vary depending on whether they are German/Bavarian, Czech, American, or...otherwise, they all stand up well to Grilled Sausage. Pilsners are sturdy, clean, and simple in flavor. With hot sausages, the hop bitterness of the Pils chop right through the spice while the bready malt profile leads you to the hearty/meaty flavors. It's like a party in your mouth. Again, the scrubbing bubbles of the carbonation cleanse your palate, leaving you craving for more. It's what beer and food pairings are all about. On the world stage, **Spaten Pils** knows what's up. Locally, **Druther's Golden Rule Pils** is available year-round to fill your growlers.



**Tacos:** I know, I know. Tacos are a year-round food. But, they do bring California to mind and, when it comes to Summertime, they especially kick ass. On a hot summer day, I like to turn up the spice and go extra hot sauce on my tacos. Therefore, I recommend an **India Pale Ale**. Take a bite, take a sip, and then hold on! The spicy, citrusy hops in IPA's ignite the heat while the slight malt character grabs on to the meaty flavors and invites them to the party. It's a flavor extravaganza! As far as which IPA I recommend, I'll keep it simple. Either wait in line for 3 hours for the "**IPA of the moment**" or go the grocery store and grab **whichever catches your eye**. Most of them are pretty good.



By: Erik Budrakey  
Certified Cicerone



# COMMON ROOTS BREWING CO. THE REBOUND!

By Erik Budrakey

Back in 2005, father and son, Bert and Christian Weber brewed their very first beer together. The concept of brewing and enjoying beer was rooted in their family history and was a huge part of their family traditions and heritage, which trace back to the Old World. They viewed brewing beer as honoring their family roots. This mentality, combined with their mutual love of craft beer, brought Common Roots Brewing Company to life. They opened their taproom at 58 Saratoga Ave in South Glens Falls in December of 2014 and instantly were a hit. And not just a hit with their local community. They were seemingly a hit with the entire Capital Region (and beyond) craft beer enthusiast as beer lovers from all over began trekking up to visit their taproom.

Over the next 3-4 years they grew an even more loyal following. Their beer was distributed to stores, bars, and pubs all across the region and Common Roots became a local favorite. Soon, they began to outgrow their taproom and put plans in place for a major expansion that was to go live in 2019. And then the fire hit.

Like the many of us that love the local Craft Beer Community,

on the evening of March 25, 2019, we were saddened and horrified as the news spread that Common Roots Brewing Company was on fire. With the power of social media, reports were coming in live as it happened. It was tragic.

By the next morning, the collective wheels of the local (and beyond) craft brewers began to spin. Breweries from all corners of the region began to interact with each other to put their heads together to determine how they could help their fallen brethren. What came of it, was an amazing display of just how supportive, loving, and powerful our local Craft Beer Community is. Multiple breweries created brews and events centered around raising funds to help Common Roots. Committees were formed, events were held and hosted, love and camaraderie flowed. A group, comprised of mostly former employees, called "Help Common Roots" was quickly formed to help organize the brewing community's efforts and to communicate with those trying to help. The response was incredible and brought forth the true spirit of the craft brewing community in the Capital Region.



Father and son Bert and Christian Weber.

Bert, Christian, and their team wasted little time on getting started with their rebuilding efforts. They had already planned for an expansion, now they had to go back to the drawing board to design a complete rebuild of the brewery. In the meantime, they needed to find a temporary solution to stay in business during the rebuild.

Just a few days after the fire, Elizabeth Miller, the owner of the former site of Wallace Supply at 30 Saratoga St, approached the Weber's and told them that if they would like to use it, she had the space available. Her space was less than a quarter mile down the road from their brewery. Convenient for them and especially convenient for Common Roots' loyal fans.

The Weber's went to work on redesigning that space and utilized a smaller, portable brewing system created by Fronhofer Design that would fit in the new space. By May 8<sup>th</sup>, just less than 45 days after the fire, Common Roots new temporary taproom and brewery were up and running!

After working with the Phinney Design Group, on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Common Roots announced that they had completed design and received approval to move forward with building their newly designed brewery and taproom at their original location. Construction began immediately. Now, just over a year later, the construction is nearly finished, and the brewery is preparing to reopen.

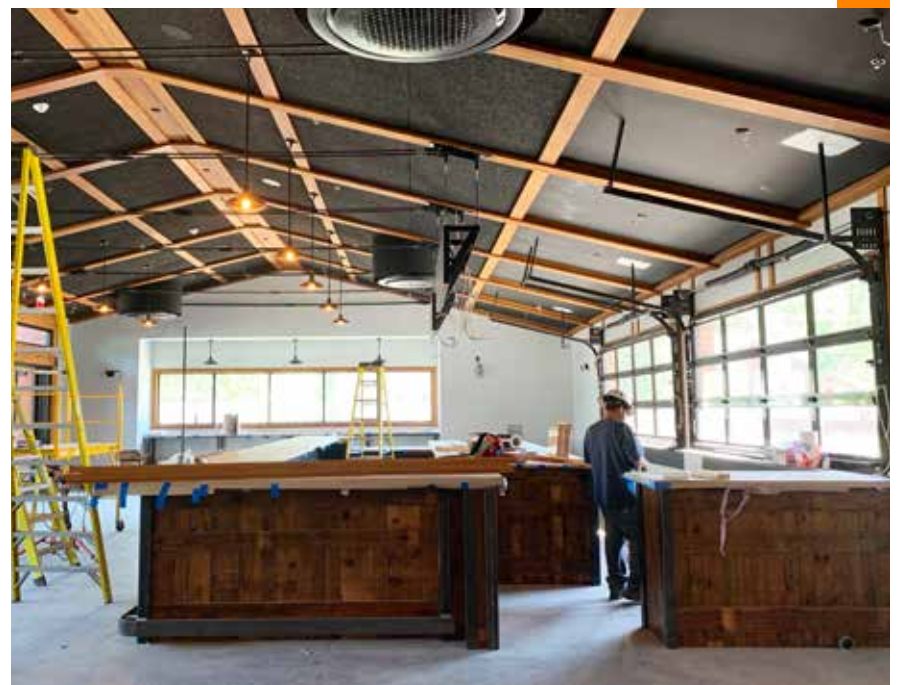
Naturally, we needed to get up there to get the scoop. We reached out to Christian and he invited us up for a sip of beer and a hard-hat tour of their new facility. So, we grabbed our notebooks and our masks and jumped in the truck for the 35-minute trip up the Northway to South Glens Falls.

As we pulled up to the brewery, we were greeted by an array of construction vehicles and workers moving in every direction. The place was abuzz with activity. "Our walk-in cooler is going in today!"

Christian explained as he approached for the, now-obligatory, elbow-bump greeting. "Come on inside and we'll show you around."

The first thing that I noticed is, well, Bert and Christian look good. I mean, you can see the enthusiasm and excitement in their faces and through their body language. They have endured and overcome a lot over the past 15 months and a sense of relief is in the air, blended with a sense of accomplishment, and a distinct bright outlook for the future. It's refreshing.

We go in through a side door of the new 14,000 square-foot facility and walk into the area that will host the brewing operations. Their 30-barrel brewhouse and massive fermenting tanks occupy one wall of the building. There is a huge open space to our left where the giant walk-in storage cooler is being installed.



The wood in the new brewery is repurposed and sustainable.

Christian proudly explains that the family took extra measure to build a brewery that is as super-sustainable. "There will be three silos on site. Two will hold base malt and the third will hold carbon dioxide used in the brewing process. We also have 16 photovoltaic panels on the roof that harness solar energy that will power our hot water tanks and heater. There will be solar charging stations and a big screen in the taproom that will allow patrons to see the positive environmental impact and progress of the brewing operations as they are happening. Truthfully, we will be generating more electricity than we use, which is great for the community. We'll be generating power for the grid."



Executive offices upstairs and a private event space downstairs

As we venture out into their new taproom we pass by a larger room with a separate bar and seating area. “This will be our private event space,” explains Bert. “It has its own bar, plenty of seating, and will have an 80-inch television that can be used for presentations, or for entertainment. Great for corporate events or for private parties.”

Upon entering the new taproom, we are greeted by an enormous bar that is horseshoe-shaped and has space for plenty of guests. The bar is gorgeous (if you are into that sort of thing), made from birds-eye maple and Millwood. The room itself is spacious and well lit as it is laced with windows allowing in light from the outside as well as light from inside the brewhouse. With a total building capacity of 500, the restaurant will allow for about 375 guests, including the outside. The restaurant portion is fronted by Route 9. Customers will be able to enjoy a large open seating area with wooden beams and exposed brick. “We were going for a rustic/industrial look,” Christian explains. “All of the wood in here is repurposed.”

I look up and notice that the high ceiling over the bar is lined with sound proofing panels, which prevents the loud noise of happy consumers and from bouncing back and making it overly loud. Bert explains, “We saw that when we visited Lawsons Finest Liquids over in Vermont, and thought it was a great idea! It really does help bring the noise level down, making the experience more enjoyable.” Plus, it looks cool. Also looking up, I notice windows looking out



Using sustainable and repurposed materials was paramount.

over the taproom from the second floor. This is where Common Roots will have their executive offices and meeting rooms.

People sitting in the seats in the back/left area of the restaurant will be able to look into the brewing area. “We wanted people to feel like they were sitting right in the middle of our production area,” Christian said. The rest of the spacious room will have tables and chairs to accommodate hungry plenty of thirsty beer lovers and offers great views of the bar and the outdoor area. The large outdoor beer garden will have seating and people will be able to place food and beer orders out there. There will be two large fireplaces in the courtyard, which will be laced with sustainable landscaping. There will be cornhole and other entertainment activities in the beer garden. There will also be a shuffleboard table inside.

As we wrap up our tour, I ask the Webers about the challenges of not only being a brewery, but also a restaurant. Christian explains that the kitchen will focus on simple and satisfying fare. Wood-fired pizza, sandwiches, salads, and beer-friendly “shareables” will populate the menu and change seasonally to allow the restaurant to maximize their use of locally sourced ingredients. The same balance between quality, accessibility and innovation that we achieve in our beer will be reflected in our food program.

“We are going to start slowly, and be very methodical about how we open the restaurant,” he continues. “We are new to the



Artist rendering of the new brewery provided by Common Roots.

restaurant game, but one thing that I am sure of is, the experience of coming to our brewery/restaurant has to be just as good as our beer. We are going to take our time to get it right when it comes to understanding our new digs. We need to learn the flow of the restaurant and bar, we need to learn our operations, and we need to develop exceptional customer service. Those things will take time, so we are going to roll out in phases that go at our own pace and pick up as we get more comfortable and fluid.”

- Phase 1 will be to simply open the doors and allow consumers to come in.
- Phase 2 will be to begin with our on-premise service outside in the beer garden only.
- Phase 3 will be to-go food that patrons can enjoy and eat in the beer garden.
- Phase 4 will be to fully open, when the data suggests that they can do so.

Finishing up, I ask the Weber’s if there is any message that they would like to get out to the craft beer community.

“We are truly humbled by the wonderful outpouring of support from the Local, Regional, and National breweries, and from the community,” Christian says as Bert nods with approval, “It has been overwhelming. It allowed for us to keep our staff on payroll. We have never been on the receiving end of charity, and it was truly a beautiful experience. It has led us to start our own chari-

table foundation called the **Common Roots Foundation**. We want to build on the momentum that we have right now to help others and pay it forward. The charity will be starting up very soon, it will be housed here and will be seeded with capital from the Rising from the Ashes events that were hosted to raise money for the brewery. We will have a board of directors that will oversee the fundraising and distribution of funds to individuals, families, and businesses in need.”

Typical Common Roots. Always looking out for others. It’s awesome.

Common Roots is targeting opening their new brewery/restaurant/beer garden in early July. Perfect time for all of us to take a staycation daytrip to go up for a few beers and to check out the new joint. Get on up there, raise a pint, and CHEERS TO THE REBOUND!





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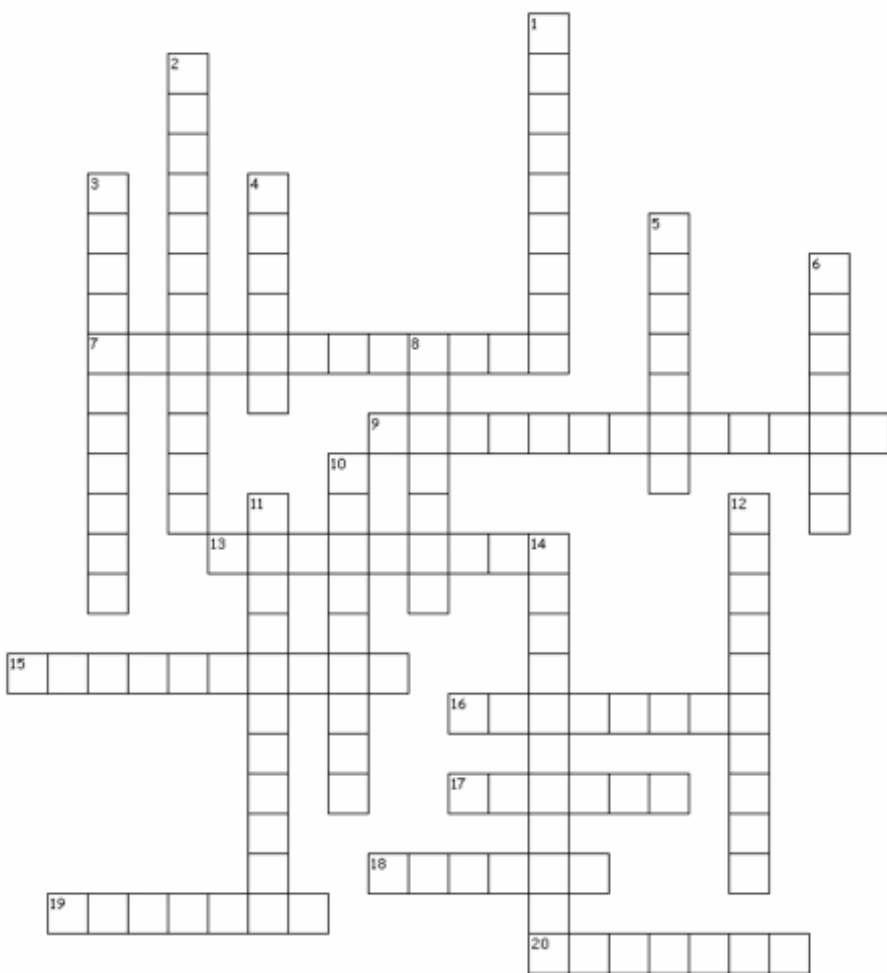


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9. OUR WAR FOR FREEDOM
13. 7/4 IS A \_\_\_\_\_ HOLIDAY
15. LARGE PICNIC FRUIT
16. NY BREWERY SUMMER ALE
17. PUBLIC PROCESSION/CELEBRATION
18. AMERICAS FIRST CRAFT BREWERY
19. COLONISTS DEFEATED THIS ARMY
20. STARS AND \_\_\_\_\_

### DOWN

1. AMERICAS OLDEST BREWERY
2. WEST COAST BREWING PIONEER
3. \_\_\_\_\_ OF INDEPENDENCE
4. PACKED MEAL EATEN OUTSIDE
5. FRUIT USED IN EARLY AMERICAN BREWS
6. STATUE OF \_\_\_\_\_
8. INDEPENDENCE EQUALS \_\_\_\_\_
10. SPECTACULAR EXPLOSION
11. BREWERY NAMED AFTER PATRIOT
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## SUMMER INDEPENDENCE

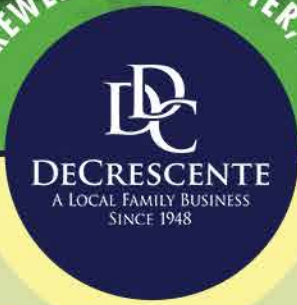
AMERICAN FLAG	S	W	U	C	F	E	A	B	L	H	Q	W	P	W	N	D	C	W	E	E	H	C	S	R	M	O	F	Y	S	E
ANCHOR	V	A	O	L	C	Z	W	V	I	F	N	W	A	L	L	I	H	A	M	Z	X	K	I	Y	O	E	Z	T	R	B
BRITISH	M	S	M	R	Z	W	W	C	C	V	L	T	D	Z	K	E	Y	B	A	B	L	I	G	T	P	H	O	F	W	J
BROOKLYN	L	H	N	U	R	X	D	R	N	Q	E	T	D	E	C	L	A	R	A	T	I	O	N	K	O	O	C	P	W	H
COMMON ROOTS	N	I	R	C	E	U	U	Y	S	R	S	E	P	I	R	T	S	N	F	T	L	U	C	Z	R	I	A	N	I	W
DECLARATION	T	N	V	U	C	L	L	N	M	O	V	J	U	Q	D	E	K	Q	R	E	W	G	G	N	N	W	R	H	A	F
FIREWORKS	S	G	J	A	N	K	A	E	J	Q	U	A	R	N	U	X	P	L	G	L	T	W	O	N	D	H	T	T	Y	X
FREEDOM	A	T	T	O	O	O	L	D	B	Z	B	P	J	W	I	I	T	F	X	Y	C	M	S	V	E	V	O	Q	A	A
LIBERTY	N	O	E	O	Y	O	T	X	A	R	C	D	D	Y	E	B	F	K	E	G	M	N	Y	A	F	C	B	N	P	P
PARADE	O	N	R	C	N	M	R	Q	D	M	C	Z	C	Z	N	P	X	Z	N	O	Z	W	A	F	V	V	X	K	T	R
PATRIOTIC	R	B	L	U	F	K	L	V	A	O	S	L	L	N	L	B	Z	J	C	K	F	Q	Q	C	S	T	L	N	A	Q
PICNIC	A	I	D	V	C	G	A	J	V	F	E	D	G	J	R	M	Q	X	H	D	O	N	M	S	K	Q	A	X	V	I
PUMPKIN	D	F	D	Y	Z	Y	N	C	E	T	R	D	Q	I	H	B	X	L	U	B	R	H	X	Z	R	J	C	E	E	U
REVOLUTIONARY	U	F	B	R	Z	J	J	K	N	A	D	E	T	Y	K	A	H	J	C	T	L	S	C	U	O	W	E	W	F	S
SAMUEL ADAMS	L	I	B	E	R	T	Y	O	A	E	H	I	E	R	D	D	M	C	I	I	P	B	N	O	W	P	L	H	Z	I
SIERRA NEVADA	D	M	V	S	P	T	L	W	R	G	S	P	W	D	C	J	Z	R	N	W	Q	Q	I	E	E	U	B	N	N	I
STRIPES	W	Q	G	W	R	E	A	Y	R	H	X	V	S	S	O	K	C	C	C	D	N	A	R	U	R	M	V	I	E	A
WASHINGTON	B	C	O	A	D	X	L	C	E	P	Z	Z	L	Z	W	M	I	M	I	T	J	T	X	T	I	P	R	D	G	O
WATERMELON	X	P	L	A	L	N	Y	F	I	Q	Z	J	V	P	B	R	K	S	P	K	W	J	Z	C	F	K	I	L	T	H
YUENGLING	Q	J	R	V	N	F	V	K	S	Y	Q	E	O	K	Y	P	J	V	K	A	V	O	I	J	Q	I	S	D	G	Q
	F	A	K	O	N	H	N	H	S	S	X	C	T	R	Z	Y	W	I	F	D	H	S	R	D	B	N	Y	H	N	Q
	P	N	Z	L	C	R	K	A	G	N	I	L	G	N	E	U	Y	A	B	A	W	L	S	R	J	Q	Z	I	D	E
	D	V	D	F	M	R	Y	V	C	N	E	C	T	Y	N	F	A	M	I	W	C	J	H	H	I	P	D	P	J	A
	U	F	Z	X	Y	L	J	U	R	I	L	D	J	J	G	F	W	A	G	M	K	P	W	V	A	U	H	R	L	A
	T	J	K	K	X	A	G	O	L	S	R	R	B	X	R	R	K	A	B	W	J	W	M	Y	I	R	J	O	Y	R
	Y	R	A	N	O	I	T	U	L	O	V	E	R	D	G	F	V	R	Q	C	X	F	Q	K	K	T	G	E	E	M
	G	S	K	N	B	V	R	C	L	P	V	N	M	C	G	H	B	R	E	W	J	W	N	J	V	A	P	R	L	S
	Z	F	V	U	O	M	J	L	X	T	X	V	X	A	J	K	R	T	X	X	G	Z	S	A	M	Y	Z	C	R	I
	P	J	U	D	N	S	X	X	J	Y	Y	W	J	K	L	W	F	T	D	Z	O	V	W	X	M	D	Y	E	M	C
	L	V	J	B	Y	K	R	E	N	Z	H	T	Y	O	E	Q	D	U	L	C	U	T	X	W	L	G	I	G	Q	Z





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