



With the East Bay emerging as a brew lover's paradise, *Diablo* breaks down what's hopping in the local suds scene—from the top trends at area breweries, to must-know beer facts and sipping tips, to the best taprooms in town.

Beer wanna

• edited by **Lauren Bonney**

• photography by **Nat and Cody Gantz**



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LET'S GO HAZY: Unfiltered IPAs

Fieldwork Brewing Company, Berkeley

BREWMASTER BIO: ALEX TWEET, CO-OWNER/HEAD BREWER

Seven years ago, Alex Tweet left a career in HR to get his start in brewing at San Diego's Ballast Point Brewing. Afterward, he opened Modern Times Beer (also in San Diego) in 2013 before cofounding Berkeley's Fieldwork Brewing Company in 2015 with Danville's Barry Braden. While Ballast Point taught Tweet production brewing, and Modern Times helped him hone his distinct brewer's style, Tweet simply sums up his "brewing voice" as "beers you can drink three of"—typically meaning low bitterness, high aroma, unfiltered IPAs.

BEER TREND: Although people often point to Fieldwork as a brewery bolstering the popularity of "hazy" and/or New England-style IPAs, Tweet hesitates to use labels. "To me, hazy is just a synonym for unfiltered, whereas New England actually tells me the characteristics of that region's brewing history," he says. "I've never seen a style butchered so fast in my entire career."

WHY IT'S TRENDING: As for why New England IPAs are so hot right now, Tweet suspects that people may be following their noses. "If you get a high aroma beer at Fieldwork, you'll get people smelling the beer," he says. "And since the beer is that close to their nose, they're going to want to take another sip."

TASTING NOTES: Generally, with New England IPAs, think low bitterness, a lot of body, a little sweetness, lots of aroma, and uncharacteristic amounts of haze—but the haze should be a byproduct of the flavor, not the end goal.

"When you call a beer a hazy IPA, you're saying, 'I tried to make a beer look like this,' whereas when you're making a New England IPA, you're saying, 'I tried to make a beer taste like this,'" says Tweet. "That's why I prefer not to use those terms. ... We developed our own way of doing things, and we just keep doing things that way."

WHAT TO SIP: Although they probably aren't labeled as "New England" or "hazy," Fieldwork's Dancing in the Dank IPA and Pulp IPA are good examples of what people look for in these styles of unfiltered IPAs. 1160 Sixth St., Berkeley, (510) 898-1203, fieldworkbrewing.com. —Kristen Haney



Alex Tweet with his dog Hugo at his Berkeley brewery.



What's in a Name?

The backstories behind the most creative monikers for local brews.

Zombrew IPA

» Epidemic Ales, Concord

Epidemic Ales has been preparing for a zombie apocalypse since 2016, when it released Zombrew IPA as a crucial provision. The Lager at World's End is another tool created to fuel survivors while they outrun the undead. epidemicales.com.

Murphy the Pig Fresh Saison

» Mare Island Brewing Co., Vallejo

This saison recalls Mare Island commandant David Farragut's time as a prisoner at sea in 1814. Not yet 13, Farragut laid claim to an onboard pig named Murphy—but not before his British captors challenged him to fight another boy for the prized swine. Farragut emerged victorious, and Murphy became his. mareislandbrewingco.com.

Palace XXX Porter

» Faction Brewing, Alameda

This porter pays homage to a California beer pioneer: Alameda's pre-Prohibition Palace Brewery. The East Bay institution, which operated until 1907, was known for its XXX Porter, and Faction dug up an 1800s-era recipe to create a tribute brew. factionbrewing.com.

Squeeze the Peel IPA

» Novel Brewing Company, Oakland

In *A Moveable Feast*, Ernest Hemingway wrote: "I would sit in front of the fire and squeeze the peel of the little oranges into the edge of the flame and watch the sputter of blue that they made." That line inspired this IPA. novelbrewing.com.

Thin Blueberry Line Blueberry Wheat Ale

» Shadow Puppet Brewing Company, Livermore

Raise a glass to the East Bay law enforcement community with this limited-release brew, which gives a nod to the Thin Blue Line Foundation, a nonprofit supporting police officers around the country. shadowpuppetbrewing.com. —Jenna Valdespino



FROM LEFT: COURTESY OF EPIDEMIC ALES; COURTESY OF FACTION BREWING; LAURA MING WONG



Master Cicerone Nicole Erny.

Beer 101

Learn the basics—and some little-known facts—about your suds.

FOUR THE LOVE OF BEER

There are four key ingredients that make beer, well, beer: hops, malt, yeast, and water. While most people know about hops—the vining flower that can give beer its bitter, citrusy flavors—malt, yeast, and water also play a huge role in the brew game. According to Master Cicerone (a title bestowed upon certified beer experts) and Oakland native Nicole Erny, malt is an underappreciated ingredient that has a strong impact on a beer's flavor and color, while yeast creates more than 80 percent of its detectable aromas. The water composition can affect a brew's taste, as well.

IT TAKES TWO, BABY

Beer styles really break down into two categories: ale and lager. Nearly all brews can be organized into these groups (with the exception of hybrid varieties such as Kölsch and California common beers). For example, an American blonde and imperial stout fall under the ale rubric, while everything from a pilsner to a doppelbock is considered a lager. Typically, the beer style determines the type of yeast used and the temperature the beer is stored at during fermentation and aging.

IF YOU'RE HOPPY AND YOU KNOW IT

Most people associate hops with bitterness, and while they can impart that flavor profile on a beer, a hoppy beer doesn't necessarily equal a bitter beer. It just depends on how it's brewed. Think of hops as a flavoring agent that provides your suds with strong aromas and tastes. So if you're not a fan of "bitter beer," ask your beer-tender for a pint with high hop aroma and low bitterness.

NECTAR OF THE GODDESS

The oldest surviving beer recipe dates back to at least 1800 BC, when Mesopotamian women brewed the concoction in honor of Ninkasi—the goddess of beer. Detailed in an ancient Sumerian hymn, the recipe describes the production of beer through the fermentation of barley extracted from bread. —Lauren Bonney

Think of hops as a flavoring agent that provides your suds with strong aromas and tastes.

2

CASK MASTERS: Barrel-Aged Beer

Drake's Brewing Co., San Leandro

BREWMASTER BIO: TRAVIS CAMACHO, BARREL PROGRAM MANAGER

With any combination of barrels, ingredients, and souring agents at their disposal, Travis Camacho and his team are the mad scientists behind Drake's Brewing Co. But before he was a barrel-aging brewmaster, Camacho owned a screen printing company in San Diego; after relocating to Oakland, he decided to give beer making a shot. Now that he's worked his way up from the bottle line, Camacho manages the barrel program at the brewery, using both wine and spirit barrels to help create Drake's distinctive beer flavors and aromas.

BEER TREND: Barrel-aged beer incorporates grape skins, grape musk, and wine and spirit barrels to create a unique taste. During the barrel-aging process—which lasts on average from six to 18 months—the wine or spirits once held in the barrels infuse the beer with new life.

WHY IT'S TRENDING: The Bay Area's close proximity to Wine Country has facilitated the rise of barrel-aged beer and fostered an interest in cross-pollination. (Drake's sources its barrels from East Bay wineries.) The sour-brew style has proved especially alluring to vino drinkers, who find the taste familiar.

TASTING NOTES: Sometimes sour, sometimes wine-like, barrel-aged varieties bridge the divide between wine and beer. Their distinct flavors depend on the type of barrel used for aging: A bourbon barrel adds a rich sweetness and subtle hints of vanilla, cinnamon, and coconut, while an oak wine barrel calms the sharper, more bitter flavors sometimes found in sour beer.

WHAT TO SIP: Unholy Alliance is a collaboration between Drake's and Rock Wall Wine Company in Alameda. Rock Wall provided 2,000 pounds of lightly pressed Malvasia Bianca white grape skins, which Drake's then fermented in a small batch of Blonde American Sour. Look for aromas of honey and grass melding with slight citrus qualities from the sour base. 1933 Davis St., San Leandro, (510) 568-2739, drinkdrakes.com. —**Jessie Fetterling**



Travis Camacho in the barrel room at Drake's Brewing Co.



Beers Through the Years

You may have a favorite brew, but do you know the sudsy stuff's history?

8000 BC

Barley is domesticated. It will eventually be fermented to help brew beer.

5000-3000 BC

The first beer is produced domestically in Sumer, or ancient Babylonia.

1021

The world's oldest operating brewery, Weihenstephaner, is founded in Germany.

1642

Coke fuel is used to malt barley, allowing for paler brews.

1810

The first Oktoberfest kicks off in Munich, Germany. *Prost!*

1896

Anchor Brewing Company, the oldest operating brewery in California, launches in San Francisco.

1976-1983

America's first micro-brewery, New Albion Brewery, is established in Sonoma. —**Caitlin McCulloch**

TOM WOLLEY

Imbibing Block

Enjoy a good ol' fashioned bar crawl with a taproom twist, using *Diablo's* guide to the hottest hop stops in Uptown Oakland.

START: 19th St. Oakland BART Station

WALK: 0.2 mile (3 minutes) to ...

1: Lost & Found Beer Garden

ADDRESS: 2040 Telegraph Ave., lostandfound510.com.

DRINK: HenHouse Saison.

EAT: Spicy buffalo cauliflower "wings;" polenta fries.

BONUS: Outdoor games, including cornhole and Ping-Pong.

NEXT MOVE: Walk 0.3 miles (6 minutes) to ...

2: Drake's Dealership

ADDRESS: 2325 Broadway, drinkdrakes.com/dealership.

DRINK: 1500 Dry Hopped Pale Ale.

EAT: The Dub—a sausage, mushroom, and olive pizza.

BONUS: Bottomless "beermosas" at Wake and Drake brunch on weekends from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

NEXT MOVE: Walk 0.2 miles (4 minutes) to ...

3: Telegraph Beer Garden

ADDRESS: 2318 Telegraph Ave., telegraphoakland.com.

DRINK: Ghost Town Brewing Beeryland IPA (made exclusively for Telegraph).

EAT: Green bean, provolone, and pesto sandwich with a side of grilled mac and cheese; "2FAT2SK8" double-patty burger with grilled mac and cheese on top.

BONUS: Boozy slushies at the outdoor bar and patio graffiti by local artists.

NEXT MOVE: Walk 315 feet (1 minute) to ...

4: The Good Hop

ADDRESS: 2421 Telegraph Ave., Ste. 102, thegoodhop.com.

DRINK: Anything hoppy: June 16 is the annual HopFest, with at least 20 taps pouring beers ranging from pilsners, to IPAs, to dry-hopped sours.

EAT: Artisanal cheese plate and Righteous Felon beef jerky.

BONUS: Monthly sipping-session events teach patrons about beer styles, and the bar's Wall o' Beer contains more than 400 refrigerated bottles and cans.

NEXT MOVE: Walk 0.2 miles (4 minutes) to ...

5: Classic Cars West

ADDRESS: 411 26th St., classiccarswestbeergarden.com.

DRINK: Ghost Town Brewing Inhume IPA.

EAT: Hella Vegan Eats—prepared pesto "chicken" macaroni or "chicken" and waffles.

BONUS: A showroom filled with vintage cars, and an indoor art gallery featuring rotating exhibitions.

NEXT MOVE: Walk 0.3 miles (6 minutes) to ...

6: Commonwealth Cafe and Public House

ADDRESS: 2882 Telegraph Ave., commonwealthoakland.com.

DRINK: Spider Bites lavender cider—Commonwealth's collaboration with San Bruno's South City Ciderworks.

EAT: Chicken salad "butty" sandwich.

BONUS: No cover charge, early openings for live soccer (English Premier League, UEFA Champions League, and World Cup), and a pub quiz on Sunday nights.

END: After a fun-filled day of beer tasting, head home (via BART or designated driver, of course), and take a well-deserved nap. —**K.H.**



3

TART AND SOUL: Sour Beer

The Rare Barrel, Berkeley

BREWMASTER BIOS: JAY GOODWIN AND ALEX WALLASH, CO-OWNERS

What began as a home-brewing hobby for college roommates Jay Goodwin and Alex Wallash turned into one of the few sours-only breweries in the area. After the duo graduated from UC Santa Barbara in 2008, Goodwin found his way into the craft-beer industry by working for an Orange County brewery, as Wallash continued to pursue his home-brewing passion while doing sales for a biotech firm. The pair realized their dream by launching The Rare Barrel in 2013.

BEER TREND: As sours gain fans in the craft-beer world, The Rare Barrel is working to further expand the style's audience by producing more varieties with low to high acidity. "You need that right level of acidity, just like you would when making a meal," says Wallash. Sours can also incorporate tropical fruit characteristics, as well as experimental beer-wine hybrids to appeal to on-the-fence drinkers.

WHY IT'S TRENDING: Sours are rising in popularity because they offer a different type of flavor than standard beers. "Most beers balance bitterness and sweetness, but they don't satiate the appetites of people who like salty, *umami*, or sour flavors," says Wallash. Sours' potential to appeal to a range of drinkers has more brewers willing to experiment with the variety.

TASTING NOTES: Although yeast is used to ferment all beer, sours also involve bacteria that boost the pucker-inducing taste. To add a layer, The Rare Barrel's brews gain complex flavor profiles by fermenting—sometimes for nine to 12 months—in barrels that once held red wine, fruit, maple syrup, or even spirits.

WHAT TO SIP: Strangers to sours should give The Rare Barrel's Map of the Sun a shot. This accessible golden sour gets its sweet-tart flavor, earthy undertones, and warm coloring from its time spent aging in oak barrels with some 40 pounds of apricots—it's an easy one to appreciate. Just remember: Don't judge a sour on the very first sip. 940 Parker St., Berkeley, (510) 984-6585, therarebarrel.com. —J.V.



Alex Wallash at The Rare Barrel in Berkeley.



Getting Cheesy With It

We know what you're thinking: Beer and cheese? Together? But before you knock it, test it for yourself with these pairing suggestions from Bay Area cheese expert Kirstin Jackson, author of *It's Not You, It's Brie: Unwrapping America's Unique Culture of Cheese*. You won't be sorry.

The cheese: Bandage Wrapped Cheddar, Fiscalini Cheese Company

» Pair with: Hopocalypse Black Label Triple IPA (TIPA), Drake's Brewing Co.

Made from Holstein cow's milk, this cheddar has a rich, crumbly texture and an earthy flavor with a hint of tropical fruit, which pairs nicely with the guava, pineapple, and citrus undertones found in the TIPA.

The cheese: Estero Gold Reserve, Valley Ford Cheese and Creamery

» Pair with: Shoot the Moon stout, Fieldwork Brewing Company

The 16-month-aged raw cow's-milk cheese has a firm texture with protein crystals and a sweet, buttery flavor. The chewy American stout, meanwhile, gives off notes of toasty, rich chocolate.

The cheese: San Andreas, Bellwether Farms

» Pair with: Apricot saison, Temescal Brewing

This raw sheep's-milk cheese is lemony and grassy with nutty undertones and rich butterfat. Pairing it with the effervescent saison will soften the cheese's tartness. —L.B.

To learn more about beer and cheese pairings, check out Jackson's website for upcoming events. itsnotyouitsbrie.com.



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: ROXANNE PASIBE; CHANTAL BENNETT (3)



ROB LIGHTNER



MORGAN COX



JOHN ERNST



Beer by Dads, for Dads

Fatherhood calls for a cool brew.

Breweries across the East Bay are changing the idea that beers for fathers should be boring or tasteless by producing pints that would make Pops proud. *Diablo* caught up with three players in the local-brew scene who happen to be dads—Morgan Cox, cofounder and brewmaster at Ale Industries; John Ernst, director of marketing and brand at Altamont Beer Works; and Rob Lightner, cofounder of East Brother Beer Co.—to talk fatherhood, beer, and how the two intersect.

Q: WHAT IS A "DAD BEER"?

Rob Lightner: It feels like this group of "dad" phrases has a negative connotation—dad rock, dad pants, dad beer—like somehow it's old, tired, and out of style. [But] it also feels that—along with changing perceptions of fatherhood—the phrase "dad beer" is slowly moving to a more positive space.

Morgan Cox: I think at this point in fatherhood, my go-to dad beer would be one that doesn't stain clothes or carpet when spilled. Also, it's great to have the beer packaged in a can; cans don't break when dropped, so you can have your children fetch you beers from a younger age.

Q: WHAT'S A COMMON MISCONCEPTION ABOUT DAD BEERS?

M.C.: That they are just for mowing the lawn. Beer is a perfect accompaniment for washing the car with your kids, after they repainted it with mud; painting over your kids' art that they drew on the dining room wall; and even playing in the backyard, when Mom needs a rest.

John Ernst: [People think] dads are boring when they drink. Truth is, they're tired!

Q: WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR BREWERY'S "DAD-TEST" BEER?

R.L.: Our Bo Pils is an easy-drinking yet flavorful beer that allows you to relax and enjoy. It doesn't require you to think about it too much.

M.C.: Ale Industries' Uncle Jesse. Light enough as to not stain when spilled, and at just 4.4 percent, it still has a great hop kick, so you'll never miss the [alcohol by volume].

J.E.: [Earlier this year], we brewed up our first batch of a simple lager, which you could stereotypically call an ode to the dad beer: It's crisp, clear, and most importantly, easy drinking. Because at the end of the day, Dad just wants things to be a little easier—and the biggest piece of chicken.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY BEER-DRINKING ADVICE FOR OTHER DADS OUT THERE?

R.L.: Wait until Junior goes to bed before having that second pint.

M.C.: The best beer of the day is the one that you can drink while being active and present with your children.

J.E.: Never drink alone. Because guess what? You're never alone now—you had kids.

—K.H.



Never drink alone. Because guess what? You're never alone now—you had kids."

—John Ernst

4

FARMHOUSE FRESH: Saisons

Gilman Brewing Company, Berkeley

BREWMASTER BIO: SEAN WELLS, OWNER

What happens when two orthopedic veterinarian surgeons with a passion for beer join forces? You get award-winning saisons, of course. Sean Wells met Gilman Brewing Company's head brewer, Tim Sellmeyer, about 10 years ago while they were working together at a vet hospital, and the pair eventually decided to start a brewery while continuing their animal-surgery work full-time. But they're no brew newbies. Wells has been making beer since he was 17, and while that may not have been exactly legal, he says, "I brewed with my mom. It was fine."

BEER TREND: The saison is a farmhouse-style ale that breaks down into two distinct categories: Belgian and French. Traditionally, it was brewed and fermented during cold months from whatever grain was available, so by summer farmworkers had a light, crisp drink to help them cool off. Today, thankfully, it's produced year-round. "This type of beer can develop so many different flavors," says Wells. "If you use wheat or rye, for example, you get more peppery notes. And different types of yeast affect how dry and effervescent the beer turns out."

WHY IT'S TRENDING: "People who really like beer enjoy variety and tasting new things," says Wells, explaining the style's rising popularity and widespread exposure. He believes the beer world is suffering from what he calls "IPA fatigue," and the saison offers something different.

TASTING NOTES: Whether it's brewed in a French or a Belgian style, the saison packs a lot of flavor into a dry beer. "It's super drinkable," says Wells, "and doesn't wear out your tongue or stomach." The brew's flavor complex can range from full-bodied and bubbly, to refreshingly fruity, to oaky and bitter. And with its clean, carbonated characteristics, what's not to like?

WHAT TO SIP: For those new to the saison realm, Wells recommends the Maison de Campagne. The French-style farmhouse ale is high in alcohol content but remains light on the palate. "It has a nice, crisp, dry finish with a hint of peppery spice," notes Wells. "It's an easy beer to introduce new drinkers to." 912 Gilman St., Berkeley, (510) 556-8701, gilmanbrew.com. —L.B.



Sean Wells at his Gilman Street brewery.



FROM LEFT: COURTESY OF DIVING DOG BREWHOUSE; CALI GODLEY

The Buzz Factor

ABV, also known as alcohol by volume, signals the percentage of alcohol in a drink. To help you prepare for your next barbecue or night on the town, here's a roundup of some of the most common types of beer and how much alcohol they typically contain.

Blonde Ale
3.8-5.5%

American Wheat Beer
4-5.5%

American Lager
4.2-5.3%

American Amber Ale
4.5-6.2%

American Pale Ale
4.5-6.2%

American Porter
5-7%

Irish Extra Stout
5.5-6.5%

American IPA
5.5-7.5%

Double IPA
7.5-10%

Imperial Stout
8-12%

The East Bay's Top 10 Taprooms

Grab a pint at these friendly neighborhood alehouses.



Diving Dog Brewhouse in Oakland.

1. ALMANAC BEER CO., ALAMEDA:

Last fall—eight years after its launch—Almanac Beer Co. opened a permanent home for brewing and entertaining, where beer buffs can sip specialty sour or barrel-aged beers that tout Northern California ingredients. almanacbeer.com.

2. ALTAMONT BEER WORKS, LIVERMORE:

Known as Livermore's first craft brewery to open following Prohibition, Altamont Beer Works invites visitors to try the 10 rotating drafts available in its taproom. (Seven more are poured on weekends.) altamontbeerworks.com.

3. CLEOPHUS QUEALY BEER COMPANY, SAN LEANDRO:

On the second Saturday of each month, stop by Cleophus Quealy Beer Company's tasting room for its Saturday Socials, when the brewery—which specializes in barrel-aged and sour beers—raises funds for a local nonprofit. cleoph.us.

4. DANVILLE BREWING CO., DANVILLE:

Both a brewery and a restaurant, Danville Brewing Co. encourages beer drinkers to save room for dessert with its award-winning Oatmeal Raisin Cookie beer. danvillebrewing.com.

5. DIVING DOG BREWHOUSE, OAKLAND:

Learn to brew it yourself through this 30-tap tavern's Brew on Premises program. The Diving Dog team provides the equipment, recipes, and ingredients, and offers instruction so participants can learn to craft and bottle their own beer. divingdogbrew.com.

6. EPIDEMICALES, CONCORD:

Try a tasting flight of eight four-ounce pours to experience Epidemic Ales' wide range of beers, including the Hopslayer Double IPA (DIPA), Red Plague Red Ale, and Lager at World's End. epidemicales.com.

7. FACTION BREWING, ALAMEDA:

The views of the San Francisco skyline and Bay Bridge from Faction Brewing's tasting-room deck make this spot ideal for day drinking.

A crisp pint of Hipster Conformant lager sweetens the deal. factionbrewing.com.

8. JUPITER, BERKELEY: Jupiter's beer program features 12 house taps alongside 30 guest taps, giving beer drinkers several options to pair with the delicious wood-fired pizzas served in its patio garden. There's also live music on weekends. jupiterbeer.com.

9. OL BEERCAFE AND BOTTLE SHOP, WALNUT CREEK:

This local beer mecca offers a staggering selection, with 18 brews on tap and hundreds of bottles for purchase—all of which can be enjoyed inside the shop. beer-shop.org.

10. TEMESCAL BREWING, OAKLAND:

A rotating food-truck lineup and free popcorn amp up the fun factor at Temescal Brewing's beer garden and casual taproom, which flaunts colorful decor reminiscent of an ice-cream parlor. temescalbrewing.com.

—J.F.



Altamont Beer Works in Livermore.

Fun fact: WHETHER IT'S RESIDUAL OR ADDED, THE MORE SUGAR THERE IS IN A BEER, THE HIGHER THE ABV. THIS OFTEN MEANS THAT HIGHER ABV BEERS HAVE A SWEETER TASTE. —C.M.

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TREETOP TASTES: Fruit Beer

Calicraft Brewing Co., Walnut Creek

BREWMASTER BIOS: BLAINE LANDBERG, OWNER/HEAD BREWER; AND THOMAS VO, BREWMASTER

Raised in a family of craft-beer enthusiasts, Blaine Landberg grew up sneaking sips of the good stuff and pursued his passion while attending UC Berkeley, distributing beer among his dorm-mates under the label Buzzerkeley. He later spent 13 years working for Honest Tea, where he learned the ins and outs of the beverage industry, before starting Calicraft Brewing Co. in 2012. Landberg eventually teamed up with fellow self-taught home brewer Thomas Vo, who helped create Calicraft's new products and open its Walnut Creek taproom in 2016.

BEER TREND: It's a ripe time for fruit beers—but don't mistake these brews as cloyingly sweet or artificial tasting. Landberg and Vo are reinventing the fruit-beer concept by blurring the line between beer and wine to intensify that bright, fresh fruit flavor.

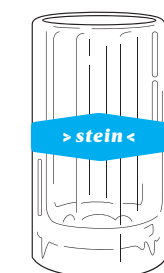
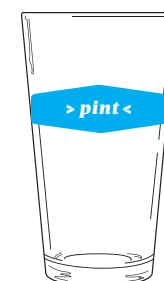
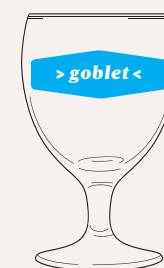
WHY IT'S TRENDING: Brewers have been combining fruit and beer for decades, but fruit beer has skyrocketed in popularity recently, as creative brewmasters seek to entice drinkers with unique flavor experiences. "People are more open to trying different things now," explains Landberg, "[and] we as brewers are getting better at using fruit in beer. ... The response for us has been tremendous." Indeed, Calicraft's fruit beers frequently sell just as fast as—if not faster than—its IPAs.

TASTING NOTES: When crafting fruit beers, Landberg and Vo ask themselves: *What if a wine cooler was fruity but dry, complex, and actually drinkable?* To achieve that, Calicraft uses the lineup of grains from its hazy IPA to produce a dry mouthfeel; mixes in tons of fruit; and adds wine yeast and grapes to create the flavors, dryness, aromas, and textures of wine.

WHAT TO SIP: Passionfruit Trees. This refreshing tippie is crafted with oats, Sauvignon Blanc, white wine yeast, and loads of passion fruit—resulting in a dry, tart brew with a fragrant aroma that transports you to the tropics. It's fruity, flavorful, and only 6.5 percent ABV, making it an ideal summertime sipper. 2700 Mitchell Dr., Walnut Creek, (925) 478-8103, calicraft.com. —Alejandra Saragoza



Blaine Landberg and Thomas Vo in their Walnut Creek taproom.



The Glass Menagerie

Before you reach for your next cold one, determine which vessel will best enhance your choice of beer.

Pilsner: Designed for lighter beers such as pilsner, this glass has a tall, thin shape that allows for head retention and accentuates the beer's fragrance.

Tulip: Like the pilsner, a tulip glass is ideal for producing a nice foam and bringing out the beer's aromas. You can also swirl the brew to further release its scent, much like you'd do with wine. The tulip glass resembles an elongated version of the flower from which it gets its name and is usually filled with Belgian-style beers.

Goblet: This glass looks like a bowl placed atop a stem. Though the goblet is thick and heavy, its wide design allows for lovely Belgian ale bouquets to come through.

Pint: The most common glassware used at a bar or restaurant, the pint glass is narrower toward the bottom and wider at the top. It doesn't offer as much of an olfactory experience as other vessels, so naturally aromatic beers such as IPAs, porters, and stouts are usually poured in it.

Stein: Typically used in partylike settings such as Oktoberfest, steins offer a classic quantity-over-quality experience. Their handles help drinkers carry multiple glasses at once.

Pro tip: The thinner the glass, the more aroma your beer releases. —C.M.

ILLUSTRATIONS: ROXANNE PASIBE; PHOTO: SEAN BRADLEY



Malt-Makers

An Alameda-based company offers sought-after barley malt to local craft brewers.

Ask casual craft-beer drinkers what's in their pint glass, and chances are they won't mention barley malt—an often overlooked but nevertheless crucial beer ingredient. Sometimes confused with hops, malt is primarily responsible for most of a brew's flavor, coloring, and sweetness. It's crafted by germinating and kiln-drying barley.

Even the smallest brewers typically source their malt from large-scale facilities, sometimes thousands of miles away. But Bay Area beer masters Dave McLean of Magnolia Brewing Company and Ron Silberstein of ThirstyBear Organic Brewery, along with head maltster Curtis Davenport, set out to bring malt closer to home. In 2017, the trio launched Admiral Maltings in Alameda.

The company works exclusively with California farms producing organically grown barley, or with those that use no-till farming practices, to establish regional terroir and offer beer-makers a rare level of locality—one unseen in roughly a century. "There was a lot of pent-up excitement for the idea that there could be local options, especially for malt," says McLean. Employing an intricate floor-malting technique—largely done away with decades ago—the maltsters rake and turn their barley by hand to ensure rich, controlled flavoring.

To highlight malted barley not just during brewing but also upon each pour, the founders recently opened The Rake, Admiral's on-site pub, which serves 22 beers including two cask-conditioned ales. Visitors can see floor malting in action and taste the fruits of the company's labor with Admiral-malted brews from the likes of Berkeley's Fieldwork Brewing Company and Oakland's Ale Industries. admiralmaltings.com. —J.V.

“There was a lot of pent-up excitement for the idea that there could be local options, especially for malt.”
—Dave McLean