

## BEST BREWPUB & BEST PIZZA

### Fort George Brewery

Astoria, Oregon

#### BEST BREWPUB

**Runner-up:** Buoy Beer Co., Astoria

**Honorable Mention:** North Jetty Brewing, Seaview, Washington

#### BEST PIZZA

**Runner-up:** Fultano's Pizza, Astoria

**Honorable Mention:** Baked Alaska, Astoria

By NANCY MCCARTHY

Just in time for its 10th anniversary, Fort George Brewery & Public House has received two anniversary presents: two Readers' Choice Awards for Best Brewpub and for Best Pizza.

While the brewpub is being celebrated for its original brews and the pizza for its yumminess, company president Jack Harris believes Fort George's customer service — which strives to make the restaurant's patrons comfortable — is also being recognized by the awards.

"We get a lot of tourist traffic, but we really cater to local residents," he said. "We work really, really hard on service. That's the reason we're here; we're here for hospitality."

The staff even pays attention to online reviews and emails. "We try to learn from them," Harris added.

Brewed on the same site as the pub, the beers range from the Fort George regulars, including Vortex IPA and Cavatica Stout, to the seasonals, such as Cascadian Brown Porter and Sunrise Oatmeal Pale Ale. Through their new Sweet Virginia Series project, brewers will produce limited runs of barrel-aged and rare beers regularly. Fort George beers are also distributed to stores and other locations throughout the Northwest.

Then, there's the pizza.

First comes the flour



PHOTO BY DANNY MILLER

Fort George's Sucker Punch sour beer, available seasonally in May and June, has a refreshing lemon-lime flavor.

sourced in the Pacific Northwest. Making the dough takes patience. "It's a three-day process," Harris said. "We have a rotation going all the time."

Next, the wood-fired oven: "We have to burn a ton of firewood," he said.

Finally, Chef Jeff Graham: "He's always tweaking the recipes. He works on the dough, the sauces, the nitrate-free meats," Harris added.

Ingredients such as truffle cheese, chipotle hanger steak, house-smoked pulled pork, seasonal mushrooms, house-made sausages and a variety of cheeses add to the tantalizing pizza choices.

But during the past 10 years, Fort George has become an integral supporter — and hub — of local efforts.

"We have an amazing staff; we are here to make this a better community," Harris said.



PHOTO BY NANCY MCCARTHY

Housed in a former automotive facility built in 1924, the Fort George Brewery + Public House in downtown Astoria offers its own beers and gourmet pizzas.



FILE PHOTO

Fort George bakes its pizzas in a wood-fired oven located on the second floor. The pizzas are made with organic flour sourced in the Pacific Northwest, and toppings include house-made sausage, pulled pork, truffle cheeses and more.

Harris and his fellow co-founder, Chris Nemlowill, revitalized two dilapidated buildings in downtown Astoria and turned them into a thriving pub and brewery. A weekly Thursday lecture series is offered on a wide range of topics; the Troll Radio Review, sponsored by Coast Community Radio, is broadcast live from the pub on the last Saturday of the month; the Fort George Benefit Night on last Tuesdays assists local nonprofits — more than \$96,000 has been raised; and the one-day Festival of Dark Arts in February gath-

ers together enthusiasts of Fort George's black stout to enjoy the beer, local music and crafts.

Harris calls the Readers' Choice Awards a "great honor" and a "nice anniversary present."

The staff's goal is to have customers "leave here with a smile on their face," he said.

"We strive to make people happy," Harris added.

*Fort George Brewery, upstairs pizza and Lovell Taproom are at 1483 Duane St. Check [fortgeorgebrewery.com](http://fortgeorgebrewery.com) or call 503 325-7468 for information.*



PHOTO BY NANCY MCCARTHY

Golfers play a round of golf at the Astoria Golf & Country Club.

## BEST GOLF COURSE

### Astoria Golf & Country Club

Warrenton, Oregon

**Runner-up:** Peninsula Golf Course, Long Beach

**Honorable Mention:** Highlands Golf Club, Gearhart

By NANCY MCCARTHY

One reason, among several, that the Astoria Golf & Country Club won the Readers' Choice Award for Best Golf Course: It's a fun course to play.

"It's not a cookie-cutter golf course," said Ed Leinenkugel, manager. "Thanks to the terrain, it's the kind of golf course that no one would get tired of playing."

Founded in 1923 on a former cranberry field, the private 18-hole golf course runs between the dunes and along the rolling terrain of the Clatsop Plains. The local weather on the course — less than a mile from the Pacific Ocean — makes the course even more challenging year round. Yet it's playable for all abilities.

"It provides plenty of challenge for skillful players, but if you hit a bad shot, you can recover," Leinenkugel said. "It is regarded as among the top five golf

courses in Northern Oregon."

The course is home to the eight-day Oregon Coast Invitational Tournament, which attracts nearly 400 golfers from throughout the country.

In addition to offering a fun, challenging course, the staff "embraces the spirit of hospitality," he added. "We enjoy what we do; we are enthusiastic; we are engaged."

After a round of golf, members and their guests head to the clubhouse for a meal. Full breakfasts, lunches and dinners are listed on the menu.

Receiving a Readers' Choice Award gives the club's staff a sense of pride, Leinenkugel said. "It's always nice to be recognized," he added. "I think this course has a strong connection to the community."

*Astoria Golf and Country Club is located at 33445 Sunset Beach Lane in Warrenton.*