

# EXPLORING THE CRAFT BEER ROUTE

## Oregon's North Coast Craft Beer Trail offers a taste of regional breweries

BY PETER KORCHNAK

Oregon's North Coast Craft Beer Trail is back on track. Like many favorite gatherings, the program promoting local beermasters' bounty has been ramping up.

Locations throughout the region, totaling 13, currently participate in the North Coast Craft Beer Trail. These include breweries, taprooms and bottleshops from Astoria to Cannon Beach.

Visitors can collect stamps from participating locations on a passport found at each location, and can claim a souvenir glass mug as a keepsake if they visit at least 12 locations.

The passport is "a gamified checklist to guide people as they're trekking around," Regina Willkie, Astoria-Warrenton Chamber of Commerce marketing manager, said. Willkie oversees the trail, designed to promote the region's brewing scene. The chamber is one of three locations where visitors can claim their prize, alongside locations in both Seaside and Cannon Beach.

During the pandemic, a digital passport

was launched, requiring just 10 redemptions. Hundreds of travelers and locals signed up for the pass, with most living nearby. "The majority of folks were from Oregon and Washington, which lines up with pandemic travel trends," Willkie said.

The North Coast Craft Beer Trail emerged in 2009, when former Dan Bartlett, former Astoria city manager, Jeff Kilday, Wine and Beer House proprietor and Alan Smiles of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce drew inspiration from similar programs and sketched out the program over pints.

Two years later, the trail kicked off with a beer festival. In its first year, the Brewers Association named the trail as one of 10 best in the nation. Since then, participants have come and gone, but a handful of mainstays remain. Plus, the trail has nearly doubled since its launch.

Smaller, newer breweries, which haven't reached the status of destination locales, especially benefit from the program. "A lot of people use (the passport) as a tour guide," Josh Allison, owner of Reach Break Brewing, said. "They'll use it as a way to discover places that might not have been on their radar."



Peter Korchnak

Customer Mike Todd gets a passport stamp from Dwayne Smallwood, owner of Bridge & Tunnel Bottleshop & Taproom in Astoria.

See Page 7

## arts & culture



**Custom Handcrafted Furniture & Home Decor**

Visit our showroom @ 229 14th St. In Astoria  
Or view our gallery at [www.ashriverwoodworks.com](http://www.ashriverwoodworks.com)

Specializing in Reclaimed & Epoxy Furniture  
Custom orders available!





**Golden Whale Jewelry**

Gemstones • Silver  
Gold • Navajo • Earrings  
14kt Gold & Sterling Charms  
Quality jewelry in gold and sterling silver by nationally known artists

194 N. Hemlock  
Cannon Beach  
(503)436-1166  
(800)548-3918



IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING UNIQUE, VISIT THE GOLDEN WHALE



**Custom Handcrafted Furniture & Home Decor**

"Am I able to choose what color epoxy I want in my new custom piece?"

-Yes, for the most part. We have lots of amazing colors to choose from.



Visit our showroom @ 229 14th St. In Astoria  
Or view our gallery at [www.ashriverwoodworks.com](http://www.ashriverwoodworks.com)

Specializing in Reclaimed & Epoxy Furniture  
Custom orders available!



**ADVERTISE  
YOUR  
BUSINESS  
HERE!**

**Call us at**

**503-325-3211  
to learn more**