

SUMMER BREWS TO SAMPLE

Collaborations, berry roasts make new seasonal favorites

BY WILLIAM DEAN

Hail summer, glorious season of possibilities. It's a time for beachcombing and barbecue, sailing and sun-worshipping. And, of course, enjoying a cold, crisp beer.

Fortunately for those of us in the Columbia-Pacific region, craft breweries have been working diligently to produce some of the best summer brews around. These gems run the gamut from simple and golden to amber and complex, but each is refreshing.

Here are six beers to try before they, and summer, are gone.

Cold Currents, Astoria Brewing Co. and North Jetty Brewing

Two local breweries have collaborated on a cold IPA, which, unless you're a total beer geek, you've likely never heard of. It's essentially an IPA brewed at colder temperatures that uses lager yeast to bring a special crispness to the beer without sacrificing the hop flavor.

Brewed by Andrew Brown of Astoria Brewing Co. and Titus Bentley of North Jetty Brewing, this beer is potent yet crisp, with a golden hue. It's built with traditional malt and a heavy dose of flaked rice, but the spicy flavor from Chinook, Centennial and Strata hops is unmistakable.

Vienna Lager, Buoy Beer Co.

Yes, Buoy Beer Co. is still brewing after the partial collapse of its waterfront facility – brewing a lot, actually. Vienna Lager is the second installment of the brewery's highly anticipated special lager series, following the spring release of its Maibock.

The new lager is copper in color with a frothy head made with Vienna and Pils malts, and Magnum and Saphir hops. The result is a smooth, balanced taste.

Beach Eagle, Fort George Brewery

This refreshing Mexican-style lager is pale, light and goes down easy. It's a perfect pick for a beach cooler on a hot summer day. Try it with a wedge of lime.

Wild Gooseberry Chase, Fort George Brewery

This special sour was fermented in French oak barrels with lots of tart Oregon gooseberries, then conditioned in the bottle for a unique flavor and is described as "funky" by its brewers. Translation? Awesome.

Brews & News

Fort George Brewery's Beer Pier made its debut on the Fourth of July, drawing a festive crowd and offering live music. The Astoria Riverwalk pier is long, well lit and dotted with family-friendly benches. The brewery hopes to host more events in the future.

No opening date has been set for Astoria's sixth craft brewery, Obelisk Beer Co., but there's good news: The 10-barrel brewing system is in place on the taproom off Bond Street is nearing completion. The upcoming brewery is a joint venture of Fort George Brewery alums Dave Coyne and Nathan Lampson.



Titus Bentley, left, and Andrew Brown celebrate the release of their collaborative cold IPA, posing with wooden keg hammers.

Gyotaku, Reach Break Brewing

Gyotaku is a Japanese art that began more than a century ago as a way for fishermen to keep a record of the fish they caught. They would apply ink to one side of a fish, then cover it with rice paper and rub to create an image.

Reach Break's namesake is a straw-colored, Japanese-style lager made with malt and flaked rice, and infused with a subtle hop flavor. The resulting brew is "clean and crisp," brewer Kyle Fosbinder said.

Kolsch, Buoy Beer Co.

This German-style lager is perfect for the season. It's crisp, golden and light, with notes of freshly baked bread. The beer is built on a combination of Heidelberg, Pils, Vienna and white wheat malt. Opal and Saphir hops add floral and bitter notes.

William Dean is an author with a passion for craft beer. His suspense novels, "The Ghosts We Know" and "Dangerous Freedom" are available in bookstores. Contact him at williamdeanbooks@gmail.com.



Kyle Fosbinder, a brewer at Reach Break Brewing, draws a sample of Gyotaku, a Japanese-style lager.

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