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Yet the brewery isn't afraid to experiment and try out fresh ideas even with its core products. This spring, Deschutes introduced Raspberry Black Butte Porter, a fruit-infused variant "inspired by dessert using our traditional Black Butte Porter recipe boosted in alcohol and silkiness." This limited edition specialty twist on the classic ale is available in bottled four-packs.

I reached out to Deschutes to find out how Raspberry Black Butte came to be and got answers from brewer James Scott.

"We asked ourselves what we could do to play with Black Butte Porter to enhance it that we'd never considered before," he wrote via email. "With pastry stouts delighting craft beer fans, we wanted to bring some of that dessert driven inspiration to this specialty, landing on the intriguingly bright contrast of raspberry to the roasty chocolate of Black Butte."

Naturally, I wondered if there was any trepidation in altering an iconic beer such as Black Butte.

"Not really," said Scott, "we really just wanted to have some fun with it and give our signature porter a contrasting specialty twist."

"(Raspberry will) be the first Porter variant, but we hope it's not the last," Scott said. "When it comes to fruited beers, raspberry is classic, but it's especially cool to play with it on a dark beer backbone. The tartness and

Top 5 Beers of the Week

Sahati — The Ale Apothecary
Will o' the Wisp Irish Red Ale — Immersion Brewing
Landform Pils — ForeLand Beer
The FNG Abbey Ale — Monkless Belgian Ales
Old Stock Ale — North Coast Brewing

acidity with the chocolate roast of BBP really hits."

Raspberry isn't the first twist on Black Butte Porter from the brewery; Deschutes releases its barrel-aged imperial porter, the Black Butte XX series each year for its anniversary, for instance. And occasional variations have emerged as pub specialties, including Whiskey Butte, a blend of Black Butte with whiskey aged imperial porter which will arrive in bottles later this summer.

Deschutes acquired the raspberries from Stahlbush Island Farms in Corvallis, which sources its fruit from the Willamette Valley. About ten pounds per barrel of fresh frozen raspberry puree was added to the brew "right as it neared the end of fermentation — about 45 beautiful buckets worth," according to Scott.

The base recipe is an amped-up version of regular Black Butte Porter, 6.8% alcohol by

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— James Scott, Deschutes brewer

volume versus the regular 5.5%. (Both beers have 30 IBUs.) The addition of unmalted wheat and flaked oats adds an element of creaminess to the mouthfeel and helps offset the natural tartness of the berries.

The beer has the classic Black Butte appearance. It's black and nearly opaque, with a creamy tan head. It's the aroma where you first notice the difference; it reaches your nose even before you lift the glass, full of big, bright, jammy notes of sweet raspberries. There are milder notes of medium-dark chocolate, hints of nutty coffee and raspberry pancake syrup.

The flavor is gently roasty and brings the familiar flavors of regular Black Butte (coffee, bittersweet chocolate, dry-roasted grain, and perhaps a hint of dark cherry) with an earthy whole-berry fruitiness that's sweet



Submitted photo
Deschutes Brewery recently introduced its Raspberry Black Butte Porter.

and fresh. At the same time, there's a touch of green berry astringency drawn out by the chocolate malt, a bit reminiscent of a flavored, fruity coffee.

The raspberry fruit character reminds me of Lindemans Framboise (raspberry) Lambic, or more accurately, of pouring a half-and-half of Lindemans with Black Butte Porter or perhaps an oatmeal stout.

Adding fruit to a beer can be a tricky process to achieve the right balance, and in my estimation, Raspberry Black

Butte Porter successfully manages this. If you're a fan of fruit beers, or fruit and chocolate desserts, then I'd recommend giving this beer a try.

■ Jon Abernathy is a beer writer and blogger and launched The Brew Site (<https://www.thebrewsite.com>) in 2004. He can be reached at jon@thebrewsite.com.

Cimarron Boardman, of Stephenville, Texas, dismounts his horse during the tie down roping event during a previous Sisters Rodeo.

The Bulletin file



Sisters Rodeo canceled for 2021

For the second year in a row, the Sisters Rodeo has been canceled due to the rise in COVID-19 cases and local and state event restrictions, according to a statement released by the Sisters Rodeo Association.

"We were not able to meet all of the standards and protocols established by the state of Oregon's health authority," said SRA President Curt Kallburg in the statement. "With the limitations placed on events for capacity,

we had to make our decision based on our financial capabilities to try again next year to have a full capacity rodeo."

Any tickets already purchased for the 2021 event — held the second weekend in June — will automatically be rolled over to their equivalent 2022 dates.

Contact: sistersrodeo.com or 541-549-0121

— Makenzie Whittle, The Bulletin



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