

IT'S ALL
ABOUT
THE



WHERE

IT ALL

BEGAN:

MUNICH,
GERMANY

BEER

Crisp-tasting,
golden-colored
ales. Thick,
creamy
stouts
rich
with
barley.



LOOKING

FOR a

Vacation

DESTINATION

focused on

tasty brews?

*Fill your next pint with
these experiences.*

By Deborah R. Huso and Ryan MacArthur

Crisp-tasting, golden-colored ales. Thick, creamy stouts rich with barley. Full-flavored, meticulously fashioned wheat beers. We live in an era rife with virtually endless possibilities for finding your perfect brew. Among them are vacations that are all about beer.

Whether you're into touring craft breweries, learning the history of the nectar of the gods or relaxing in a microbrew soak, chances are there's a getaway for the beer geek in you. From Munich, Germany, to Richmond, Virginia, here are a few beer-friendly destinations that will pour some deliciousness into your next vacation.



PHOTO BY A. KUPKA/MÜNCHENTOURISMUS

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN: MUNICH, GERMANY

Considered the beer metropolis of the world, Munich holds the unofficial title as the top destination for beer aficionados. As a city that hosts an annual event where visitors consume over seven million liters of beer, it's easy to see why.

And the city's Oktoberfest—known as the world's largest beer festival—is the main attraction. Held annually from mid-September to the first Sunday in October, or October 3, whichever is later, Oktoberfest brings in more than six million visitors from every corner of the globe. In 2018, the event runs from September 22 to October 7.

Back in 1810 when the first Oktoberfest was held, the festivities began on October 12 and concluded on October 17, but Munich Oktoberfests now take place in September because of the more favorable weather conditions.

Six different breweries are represented at Oktoberfest, all from Munich. The breweries include Augustiner, Hacker-Pschorr, Hofbräu, Löwenbräu, Paulaner and Spaten. Entry into the open area and beer tents is free, but guests must pay for any beer or food consumed. Though visitors can enter a tent without reservations, we recommend reserving seats to reduce waits.

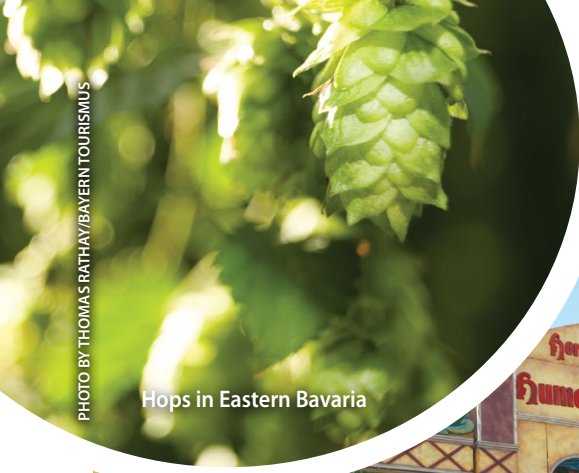


PHOTO BY THOMAS RATHAY/BAYERN TOURISMUS

Hops in Eastern Bavaria

PHOTO BY TOMMY LOESCH/MÜNCHEN TOURISMUS



Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany



PHOTO BY FRANK BAUER/MÜNCHEN TOURISMUS

On the first day of the event, the mayor of Munich taps the first keg of Oktoberfest inside the Schottenhamel tent. After the Official Tapping of the Keg, guests quench their thirst with a Spaten-Franziskaner-Bräu brewed, full-bodied Oktoberfestbier.

Oktoberfest takes place in a large open area called Theresienwiese within the Munich quarter Ludwigsvorstadt-Isarvorstadt, as it has for 200 years. Visitors have 14 big tents and 20 small tents from which to choose. A variety of Wiesn hosts and breweries operate the tents and offer different beers, entertainment and food options. For example, one of the marquee dishes at The Fischer-Vroni tent combines Augustiner beer with Steckerlfisch, a grilled trout or mackerel on a stick.

Other notable tents include the Augustiner-Bräu, the only spot where beer is served from rustic wooden barrels. For those seeking a blend of authenticity and entertainment, the Pschorr-Bräurols tent, managed for seven generations by the Hiede family, offers traditional Bavarian music played by the Ludwig Thoma-Musicians and beer from Hacker-Pschorr brewery.

When you aren't downing a giant mug of *Weißbier* (white beer) or munching on a wurst, a visit to the Munich Beer and Oktoberfest Museum provides a wealth of history about beer, brewing culture and, of course, Oktoberfest.

Occupying Munich's oldest townhouse, built in 1327, the

museum has four floors, accessed using a 500-year-old staircase or a small elevator on the lower level, that take visitors on a journey through the history of beer and the art of brewing. Exhibits include such items as historic beer mugs and beer-centric artwork as well as monuments to Oktoberfest and a film about Munich's rich brewing history and *Reinheitsgebot*, Germany's beer purity regulations brought into law in 1516. The law stated that only water, barley and hops were permitted for the brewing of beer. It also regulated the price of beer and allowed authorities to confiscate impure brews. Though a 1993 revision in the law loosened regulations, most German breweries continue to make their products following the older rules.

After you learn about some of the oldest brewing recipes ever discovered, you can taste that theory put into practice in the Museumsstüberl Tavern and Restaurant, where you can enjoy flavorful dark and wheat lagers from the Augustiner-Brauerei. The museum's experienced *biersommeliers* teach visitors how to professionally describe the subtle variations in color among different types of beer—from pale amber to dark brown—and to articulate the carefully calibrated tastes.

Hotel availability in Munich dries up fast, especially during events, so book early and as close to the central train station as possible for easy access to the festival.



A HISTORIC TASTE: ANTWERP, BELGIUM

Legend has it that a fearsome giant called Druon Antigonus charged a toll to those wanting to cross the River Scheldt into the area that would become Antwerp. A Roman soldier by the name of Salvius Brabo took it upon himself to slay the troll, cut one of his hands off, and chuck it into the river. With the Dutch phrase for “hand throw” being “*hand-werpen*,” the city found the roots of its name. Luckily, visiting beer lovers need not worry about slaying fairy-tale villains when they come to Antwerp to enjoy Belgian beer.

Lying at the crossroads of France, Holland and Germany, Antwerp is home to a cultural melting pot of beer tastes. The most notable beer and brewery in the city is De Koninck. With its distinctive chalice-shaped glass called a *bolleke* and rich, malty flavor, De Koninck is a local favorite and the company’s flagship brew.

The De Koninck brewery, founded in 1833, sits at the quiet intersection of Mechelsesteenweg and Boomgaardstraat. Guests can visit the modestly sized brewery and learn more about De Koninck’s other products, such as the powerful (8 percent ABV) full-bodied Triple d’Anvers or the seasonal De Koninck Winter. The brewery offers an interactive tour that takes visitors on an immersive experience through the active brewery before delighting them with a delicious tasting of one of De Koninck’s ales. Tickets are available online.

A visit to Antwerp is not complete without a stop at one of the city’s many beer-cafes. Found at almost every street corner and



De Koninck City Brewery, Antwerp, Belgium

public square, the sheer number of beer-centric cafes represents the country’s dedication to the art of brewing. Cafe Cabron, located just a few blocks from the iconic Cathedral of Our Lady, offers a lively mix of musical acts, from old-fashioned blues to heart-racing Latin beats. Cafe Cabron provides a wide array of food and drink choices, from scrumptious homemade soups to one of Antwerp’s other preferred beers: Seefbier, a yeasty and cloudy brew that foams like champagne and hits like a truck.

For those looking for a quieter night out with friends and family, Clodette is the place to be. The low but colorful lights and eclectic décor make for a cozy environment. While Clodette may lack the massive variety of beer choices that some of its counterparts possess, it makes up the ground with delightful Antwerp charm.



COURTESY OF DESCHUTES BREWERY

A beer dinner to celebrate the release of Collage by Deschutes Brewery, Bend, Oregon

AN INTOXICATING EXPERIENCE: SISTERS, OREGON

The Oregon brewing industry has experienced strong growth in the number of visitors at the state's breweries, pubs and tasting rooms. In 2016, approximately 19 million people visited an Oregon brewery, a 29 percent increase from the previous year. Nestled in lush forests on the flanks of the Cascade mountain range, Hop in the Spa is a unique fixture within central Oregon's craft-beer explosion and claims to be the only spa in the U.S. using craft beer-inspired ingredients.

Guests begin their microbrew spa experience at Hop in the Spa with a pint of beer from Deschutes Brewery, the spa's exclusive beer provider. Located in nearby Bend, the family-owned-and-operated brewery prides itself on supporting the local community through sustainability projects. For example, the brewery partners with the Deschutes River Conservancy to restore a billion gallons of water into the Deschutes River every year to offset what it uses to make beer.

After enjoying one of the brewery's finest suds, you can take a dip into a soaking liquid brewed with hops, barley and minerals. Originating as a relaxation treatment in the Czech Republic, the

treatment's therapeutic benefits involve the hot liquid opening the body's pores, allowing the absorption of minerals from the beer. The brew eases dry-skin complications and acts as an exfoliator.

After the soothing soak, enjoy a Swedish massage using hop-based essential oils. The 45-minute treatment winds down with more relaxation and another round of Deschutes beer. Hop in the Spa offers additional services, including customized massages such as Ayurveda, a 5,000-year-old healing system of therapies designed to stimulate immune function and circulation.

For a comfortable bed in a prime location after your spa experience, Sisters Bunkhouse, a local partner with Hop in the Spa, provides that and more. The rustic feel of the building blends nicely with the old-fashioned commitment to hospitality from owner-operators Michael and Kathleen Blesius.

When you're not tasting or soaking in local beer, Deschutes County offers a wealth of exploration and adventure for hikers, mountain bikers, anglers and outdoors enthusiasts while also providing an array of cultural opportunities such as the Deschutes County Fairgrounds, which hosts rodeos, rock and country music concerts, and festivals all year long.



WITNESS THE REVOLUTION: RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

For 400 years, Richmond has been the site of revolutions—political revolutions, a culinary revolution, an arts revolution and now a craft-beer revolution. From the city outskirts in rural Powhatan to the historic yet hip Fan District, the city is home to a smorgasbord of brews. As a result, the River City's craft-brewery scene has something for everyone, from novice beer drinkers to experienced beermeisters.

For a front-row seat to Richmond's breweries and its cityscapes, look no further than Richmond Brewery Tours, which begins downtown near Tredegar Iron Works and Brown's Island in the pub-like setting of Capital Ale House. This popular hangout among locals boasts more than 40 beers on tap and an additional 140 available by the bottle.

After a lesson in beer tasting and an overview of the Richmond brewing scene, the journey sets off to three of the city's best local breweries on a comfortable 14-passenger bus. The cost of the tour includes a flight of samples at the breweries and a personalized tour of facilities by a brewery staff member at one of the three stops.

Richmond Brewery Tours has several local partners and participating breweries. Among them is Hardywood Park Craft Brewery, which helped establish Richmond as a craft-beer destination, having earned international acclaim at multiple beer competitions, most recently taking home the bronze medal for Wood and Barrel Aged Strong Stout at the 2016 World Beer Cup.



Capital Ale House, Richmond, Virginia

Founded in 2011 by lifelong friends Eric McKay and Patrick Murtaugh, Hardywood produces beer ranging in style from conventional to experimental. Traditionalists flock to Hardywood's Singel, a Belgian Abbey-Style Blonde Ale known for its mellow, dry finish, while the daring might prefer an inspired choice such as the Hardywood Classic Loaf, a highly effervescent saison brewed with Virginia wheat and crusty bread.

And then there is Legend Brewing Company. Opened in 1994, it is the oldest craft brewery in Richmond and the oldest still-operating microbrewery in the state of Virginia. Legend produces both lagers and ales, one the few breweries in the area that does so. Its on-site pub and restaurant offer expansive views of the downtown skyline and play host to a variety of visitors, including European tourists who tend to like Legend's Lager, with its smooth taste and spicy hops, and Legend's Porter, a full-bodied brew that marries the flavors of chocolate, coffee, raisin and caramel.

If you want to venture out on your own without a formal tour, the Richmond Beer Trail includes more than 20 craft breweries. Trail maps are available at many of the local breweries.

To give your stay in Richmond a twist of style and sophistication, snag a room at the Quirk Hotel on Broad Street, where you can enjoy a memorable meal from the hotel's highly experienced and creative chefs or browse the works of the latest artists on display at the Quirk gallery.

Craft beer-friendly cities in the U.S., including Denver, Cleveland, Asheville and Portland, offer imbibers an array of breweries and tours. Whatever your taste for beer or vacation destinations, there's never been a better time to incorporate the combination of hops and malts into your travel decisions.