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JULY - AUGUST 2018

FOOD ISSUE



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**A Taste
For**

Adventure



BREWED




Awakenings

By Bryan Richards



CRAFT DRAFTS



IN THE CAROLINAS

With the brewery count in the United States eclipsing 6,000 and no glimpse of a slowdown, it's a wonder how any brewery can differentiate itself from those located across the street or across town. However, advances in the brewing process, a quest to revitalize forgotten beer styles, and the general community feel of a brewery have demonstrated that no two beers or brewery experiences are the same.

In the Carolinas, we are privy to a craft beer movement that's uniquely its own. To showcase the vibrancy of our local breweries, we've highlighted four breweries that through rehabilitating old landmarks or incorporating local terroir into beer are providing a true taste of Carolina craft beer.



BENFORD BREWING CO. LANCASTER, SOUTH CAROLINA



The drive out to Benford Brewing — South Carolina's first certified agricultural brewery — in rural Lancaster County is the kind of drive where you want to roll down your car window and take in the fresh country air as you pass by fields of corn and horses

grazing. The kind of drive that you never want to end, and, if you're not looking for the small, stainless steel sign marking the drive to Benford Brewing, might not.

"One of the things people love is if you really want to unplug," says Bryan O'Neal, brewery owner and brewmeister. "There's only one spot on the property where your cell phone works. We won't tell you where it is unless you really want to know."

Once you sit down on a picnic table with a pint of Irish Honey Ale — a golden pale ale brewed not only from water sourced from the property's three natural springs but also with locally produced honey — you won't want to use your cell phone anyway. Before you make the trek, remember that Benford is only open on Saturdays from 1 p.m. – 7 p.m.



CAROLINA BAUERNHAUS

ANDERSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

"Our brewing philosophy is regional and seasonal ingredients," says Keston Helfrich, co-founder and head brewer at Carolina Bauernhaus. "All of our yeasts are wild caught locally. We're trying to capture a sense of place in our beers."

That sense of place is epitomized in Carolina Bauernhaus' Source Series Opuntia — the mixed culture rye saison that won the brewery a coveted gold medal at the 2017 Great American Beer Festival in the Experimental Beer category. The farmhouse ale is aged in wine barrels and then finished with a second aging on a bed of prickly pears, which are plentiful in Anderson.

Coming out of the gates brewing mostly sours and wild ales is a bold move for the first brewery in a town the size of Anderson. However, the nuanced beers fit in well with the revitalization the rest of downtown Anderson is embracing.

"We want you to feel like you're in the brewery," says Helfrich of the taproom experience. "You come in and see a forest of barrels. Turn the corner, and the bar is right there. That adds to the education process. You can see it, smell it and hear it."



CULTURAL ADVENTURE

№28

The original "Unto These Hills" is soaring again.

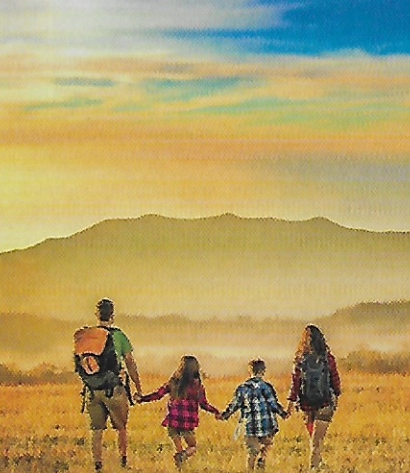
The original Kermit Hunter version of "Unto These Hills" is being performed live again, under the stars, at Mountainside Theatre. Nightly, except Sundays.

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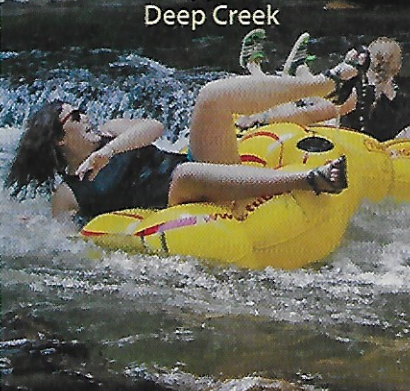
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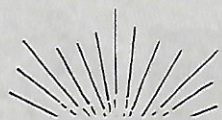
FONTA FLORA BREWERY MORGANTON, NORTH CAROLINA

Alpha vs. Beta Carotene IPA with carrots and Beets, Rhymes and Life Appalachian saison with beets may sound like odd beer offerings to most, but they don't to fans of Morganton's Fonta Flora Brewery. The brewery, which specializes in incorporating local flora into their beers, has become so popular that they've outgrown the downtown Morganton space that has become a pilgrimage for craft beer aficionados. Fonta Flora plans to open a second brewery up the road in Nebo this summer.

"We love teaching people about why we brew the way we do — to teach people about agriculture and foraging and the community around those activities," says Sara

Maya, manager at Fonta Flora.

That mission will continue on what was once a portion of the Whippoorwill Dairy Farm. The property will not only host the new brewing facility and tasting room, but it's also home to a small farm where the brewery team has planted beets, carrots, sweet potatoes, scuppernong grapes, wild plums, paw-paw and elderberries — all under the backdrop of Shortoff Mountain and Linville Gorge. Completing the education process is a walking trail highlighting flora found in Western North Carolina that can be foraged for medicinal and food purposes.



BURIAL BEER CO. ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Tell me if you've heard this story before. A brewery opens, quickly outgrows its humble beginnings, and opens a second facility even more impressive than the original. Oh, wait...

Much like Fonta Flora, Burial Beer saw their utilitarian taproom on Asheville's South Slope grow from a brewery popular among locals to one of North Carolina's most visited breweries. Soon, demand for Burial Beer's culinary inspired brews like their coffee saison and coconut brown ale grew so much that they opened an additional brewhouse with eight times the original brewing capacity.

Opening this summer, Burial's new home — dubbed Forestry Camp — was built in the early 1900s as the home to the Civilian Conservation Corps who helped build the Blue Ridge Parkway. The six-building craft beer mecca allows brewery visitors to get up close and personal to the brewing process with a viewable brewing space and barrel



aging facility. The main draw though is the two-story tasting room, highlighting beers from Burial and other craft beers curated locally, nationally and internationally.

The original brewery and tasting room will remain open as Burial's wild fermentation facility (so you can still take a selfie in front of the Tom Selleck and Sloth mural that beautifully decorates the outside wall).

These are just a few of the many delicious breweries across our region. Don't be afraid to hit the road this summer with a diversion or two at a new-to-you brewery. ♥

➤ For more inspiration on breweries and restaurants in the Carolinas, visit AAA.com/AAATalks.