

Portland Brewpubs

If you're looking for the best in coffee, you go to Seattle. For wine, you visit California. When it comes to the best in beer go to Portland Oregon, where a quality brewpub is never more than fifteen minutes away.

Since

the days of the pioneers, the Willamette River in western Oregon has been the center of hop growing and beer brewing. The area had a big advantage over other cities when the microbrew, because the history was already there; along with hops, the grain, the spring water and the fruit for summer beers. Regional brewers and microbreweries began to open across the region, and brewpubs soon followed.

While the brewery landscape of

Portland was changing, something was also happening to the beer. It wasn't just for chugging anymore. These micro brewed and regional creations were all grown up. Hand crafted beers were being used in cooking, just like wine, and Portland brewpubs were adapting their menus to incorporate more of their beers. Salad dressing, marinades and even desserts were boasting micro brewed flavours.

If you visit a brewpub, you'll often be

offered a sampler of the best in their owned micro brewed creations. Think of it as a wine tasting, but without the spitting. Sip on a variety of brews, from light and hoppy to dark and sweet, and try to choose your favorite from the resident brew master. Here is what to look for in a good micro brewed pint:

Good Head

Consider this the crown to your

liquid jewel. Having a good on the pint ensures that you'll get a strong smell of the brew, so be sure to pour your pint carefully.

Use a

Glass

Your pint glass should be crystal clean. Most reputable brewpubs

will hand wash and hand dry the glasses to keep them spotless. Even a tiny spot of grease can deflate the head and leave soapy-looking bubbles behind.

Vocabulary

You've

heard of people talking "wine talk". Beer has a vocabulary, too. A good brew has a "mouth feel", which describes the body of the brew: light, medium, or full. Don't assume that a dark beer is full-bodied or heavy; colour can be misleading and even light bodied beers can have full bodied taste.

Chill Out

The English have always tried to tell us that

refrigeration makes beer too cold. Now our brewpubs are proving the point.

Typical refrigeration leaves the beer too cold to fully appreciate the taste. Brewpubs serve beer at cool, not cold temperatures. Chilled and iced glasses are reserved for martinis.

Beer#it's not just for

college kids and tailgate parties anymore. A pint of modern microbrew is savored as much as a glass of fine wine. In the Portland, Oregon area where it all began, there is a cluster of microbreweries where homemade brews are the star attractions. Next time you're in the area, stop in for

a pint. You'll see why Portland microbrews are rated among the best in the United States, and the world over.