



CLOCKWISE FROM MAIN:
James Booth at Black
Dog Brewery; on tap at
Matilda Bay Brewing
Company; Little Creatures
in Fitzroy; at Bright
Brewery



n recent years, the burgeoning craft beer scene in Victoria has exploded with over 40 breweries now scattered throughout the state. From historic wooden shed locations in tiny country towns to modern industrial shells minutes from the city, the industry is booming.

Melbourne especially has seen the emergence of the brewery bar where customers can often get their swill straight from the tank and regularly see the brewer at work. Two have opened this year at Thunder Road Brewing and Temple Brewery, adding to stalwarts already operating, such as Mountain Goat Brewery and 3 Ravens.

It's something which hasn't been lost on the big players who are starting to follow suit.

The Melbourne brew house component of Matilda Bay Brewing Company, now owned by industry giant

Fosters, was once situated in the industrial outskirts, out of sight and out of mind of many drinkers. In April however, they opened a brewery bar in the trendy inner suburb of Port Melbourne, hoping to meet their customers.

"We love welcoming everyone in, to pull up a stool, share a story and a pint or two," head brewer Scott Vincent says. "One of the most exciting things is the special brews we have on tap — from the tanks. Sort of like market research on our new stuff — the tasters will help create the next beer!"

Beer industry expert and co-editor of *Brews News* (www.brewsnews.com.au), Peter Mitcham, says it's all about connecting with the consumers. "Some of our larger and longer established breweries are embracing the opportunities that size affords them in order to better connect

MAIN/BELOW:
Fitzroy's airy Little
Creatures Dining
Hall; Scott Brandon
of Bright Brewery



with their customer," he says. "It's one thing to have a range of beautifully well-crafted beers but it's another to have a real connection with the drinker."

Little Creatures, the famous Fremantle brewing company now with a dining hall in Fitzroy, has also just announced plans for a brewery to be based in Geelong. While there are currently no plans for a bar, the location itself is a way to embrace the community.

"It's easier for a beer drinker to grow an emotional attachment to a brand if they have had a hands-on experience, have visited the brewery, done the tour and chatted with the bloke who brewed the beer," Mitcham says.

When it comes to connecting with the people, no area in Australia has done it better than Victoria's High Country. Known for its scenic beauty and delicious farmland produce, in recent years the area has developed into a craft beer hotspot, due

to the emergence of four award-winning breweries. Their secret is in the location itself.

"We're right next door to the best ingredients for making the best beer," Christy Kemp from Bright Brewery says. Bright is a picturesque town on the banks of the Ovens River. "We use local farmers' wheat and then return the spent grains to his very grateful cattle!"

Peter Hull from Sweetwater Brewing, in the appropriately named town of Mount Beauty, agrees that quality comes from the location. "The clean mountain environment with some of the country's best water — clean, soft and upstream of any significant population centres — makes it perfect for brewing beer and getting away for an escape from city life."

Bridge Road Brewers' Ben Kraus, one of Australia's



MAIN/BELOW: Bridge Road Brewery's Ben Kraus and his hops; pizza and Bridge Road's beer

"The High Country locals have long enjoyed an exceptional level of local produce"

most highly awarded brewers, says that while many associate the region with food, turning to beer was a natural progression.

"The High Country locals have long enjoyed an exceptional level of local produce, wine and dining," he says. "It seems only natural the beer was to follow suit."

James Booth from Black Dog Brewery, located in the tiny town of Taminick, and named after Macca, the brewery's resident dog, says the region's reputation for fine produce works in their favour.

"People enjoy coming into your brewery knowing you use local ingredients," Booth says. "It tells a real story."

But while the location is a significant factor in producing great beer, it's also the connection between brewer and consumer that has become a highlight. Booth says the slower pace of life in the country and the interaction this affords can't be as easily found in the city. "I believe visitors like coming into our breweries to talk to the brewers and ask questions about the beers."

Kraus adds that the slower pace of life directly



JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH?

- ★ The Great Australasian Beer SpecTAPular (GABS), 11-13 May, will see Australia's and New Zealand's leading craft brewers showcased at the first GABS, in Melbourne during May's Good Beer Week (12-19 May). goodbeerweek.com
- ★ Beerfest Asia, 31 May-3 June, returns to the Marina Promenade in Singapore, with over 300 types of beer on offer, as well as food, performances and seminars from beer experts. beerfestasia.com

Explore Victoria's
High Country
Brewery Trail on
two wheels



influences the beer. "I'd like to think the beautiful high country environment and laid-back lifestyle also influences the way we do things up this way," he says. "I'm not sure how this translates into the beers, but I'm certain it does."

In March, Victoria's High Country Brewery Trail was launched, a downloadable map that combines the four award-winning breweries via scenic paths. Kemp says it's easy to see why tourists would want to visit.

"The High Country is an ideal destination due to the amazing landscapes that are here to be explored."

Indeed the area is one of the few destinations in the Victoria where fly-fishing, snow sports, hang-gliding, mountain bike riding and bushwalking can all be done. Peter Hull says craft beer ideally complements these attractions. "It's perfect for just relaxing with on a 'chill out' holiday or quenching a thirst and resting after your favourite activity on an 'adventure' holiday."

The High Country Harvest is a 10-day festival celebrating local produce from local producers (including beer!) 18-27 May. www.highcountryharvest.com.au ★

Jetstar has great low fares to Melbourne, visit Jetstar.com to book.

ビール醸造所へ

ヴィクトリア州の有名なビール製造者は消費者に新しい飲み方を提案している。それはハイ・カントリー・ブリューワリー・トレイルだ。

近年、ヴィクトリア州ではクラフト・ビールの醸造が始まり、40ものブリューワリーが次々と生まれ、州全体に点在している。小さな田舎町にある伝統的な木造のものから、市中心部から数分のところに構える近代的な醸造施設まで、この業界は今ブームを迎えている。

特にメルボルンにはタンクから直接ビールを注ぐことのできるブリューワリー・バーが急増し、ビール醸造の様子をいつでも見ることができるようになった。Thunder Road Brewing と Temple Brewery が今年オープンし、Mountain Goat Brewery と3 Ravens はもう営業を始めている。

フォスターズが所有する Matilda Bay Brewing Company のメルボルン・ブリューハウスは一時期忘れられていたが、四月には郊外のトレンドリーな場所、ポート・メルボルンに新しいブリューワリー・バーを開店させた。

今のこととオーストラリアでは、美しい景色と肥沃な大地に恵まれクラフト・ビールのホットスポットとして開発の進むヴィクトリアに勝る場所はない。賞を受賞した4つの醸造所がここであつた秘密はやはり土地にある。

「最高のビールを造るための最高の材料がすぐ隣に控えているんだ」とブライト醸造所のクリスティー・ケンプは語る。この醸造所はオープンズ川の川辺にある。

醸造の専門家として高く評価されているブリッジ・ロード・ブリューワリーのベン・クラウスは、その地域で育つ食材が良いビールを生み出す、それが自然の摂理だと語っている。

ブラック・ドッグ・ブリューワリーのジェイムス・ブース氏は地元のビールの評価はその土地の特産であるかどうかによるのだと言う。

素晴らしいビールを生産できるかどうかは、土地柄が大きな要素になる。そして醸造元とお客様のつながり、これがまた大切なものだと彼は付け加えた。

そしてスロー・ライフという地方のライフスタイルがビールに直接的な影響を与えるのだそう。

3月にはヴィクトリア・カントリー・ブリューワリー・トレイルがダウンロード可能なビール醸造所マップなるものを提供し、そこに賞を受賞した4つの醸造所も掲載する。そのマップをご覧になれば、なぜ観光客の人々がそこを訪れたいのか、その理由もわかるに違いない、と彼は語った。

TAKE ME THERE

BLACK DOG BREWERY

339 Booth Rd, Taminick,

tel: +61 (3) 5766 2282

BRIDGE RD BREWERS

Old Couch House,

Ford St, Beechworth,

tel: +61 (3) 5728 2703

BRIGHT BREWERY

121 Great Alpine Rd,

Bright,

tel: +61 (3) 5755 1301

LITTLE CREATURES

222 Brunswick St, Fitzroy,

tel: +61 (3) 9417 5500 89

MATILDA BAY PORT

MELBOURNE BREWERY

89 Bertie St,

Port Melbourne,

tel: +61 (3) 9673 4545

SWEETWATER BREWING COMPANY

211 Kiewa Valley Hwy,

Tawonga South,

tel: +61 (3) 5754 1881