

SIP BEST OF THE NORTHWEST

CATEGORY BEER 2013

BY KENDALL JONES

BEST PALE ALE

FREMONT BREWING UNIVERSALE PALE ALE

[HOMETOWN] Seattle

[THE BUZZ] This brewery is gaining a reputation for bold, barrel-aged beers but remains grounded with its crisp and citrusy flagship Pale Ale.

fremontbrewing.com || (206) 420-2407

[RUNNER UP]

Deschutes Brewing Red Chair NW Pale Ale

BEST INDIA PALE ALE

OAKSHIRE BREWING WATERSHED IPA

[HOMETOWN] Eugene, Ore.

[THE BUZZ] Plenty of hop character — floral and bitter — define this truly Northwestern brew. Oakshire also donates one percent of sales to help preserve local watersheds.

oakbrew.com || (541) 688-4555

[RUNNER UP]

Silver City Brewing Saint Florian IPA

BEST BELGIAN-STYLE

AIRWAYS BREWING THIRD ANNIVERSARY DARK STRONG BELGIAN

[HOMETOWN] Kent, Wash.

[THE BUZZ] Fruity, spicy, dark and strong (9.9 percent ABV), this is Airways Brewing's first attempt at a Belgian-style beer. We think they did a superb job. airwaysbrewing.com || (253) 200-1707

[RUNNER UP]

Pfriem Family Brewers Wit





BEST AMBER

REUBEN'S BREWS REUBEN'S RED

[HOMETOWN] Seattle

[THE BUZZ] Tradition meets the modern world. This Irish-style red ale is brewed with a broad selection of Northwest hops to add a bit of local flavor. reubensbrews.com || (206) 753-9583

[RUNNER UP]

Ninkasi Brewing Believer Double Red Ale

BEST IMPERIAL OR DOUBLE INDIA PALE ALE

NINKASI BREWING TRICERAHOPS DOUBLE IPA

[HOMETOWN] Eugene, Ore.

[THE BUZZ] Profuse quantities of hops create an explosion of floral and citrus flavor that overwhelms the slight traces of malt sweetness. Not exactly balanced, but balance is overrated anyway. ninkasibrewing.com || (541) 344-2739

[RUNNER UP]

7 Seas Brewing Ballz Deep Double IPA

BEST LAGER OR PILSNER

FULL SAIL BREWING SESSION BLACK LAGER

[HOMETOWN] Hood River, Ore

[THE BUZZ] Just a hint of smoke on the nose, otherwise an exceptionally smooth and easy-drinking beer, especially for one so dark. Who doesn't love a stubby 11-ounce bottle? fullsailbrewing.com || (541) 386-2247

[RUNNER UP]

Hillard's Pilsner

BEST CASCADIAN DARK ALE

BELLEVUE BREWING BELLEVUE CDA

[HOMETOWN] Bellevue, Wash.

[THE BUZZ] Unlike many CDAs, it is not too sweet. Bellevue CDA balances a slightly roasted malt flavor with an assertive hop character, then finishes abruptly and leaves you wanting more. bellevuebrewing.com || (425) 497-8686

[RUNNER UP]

Pfriem Family Brewers CDA

BEST NORTHWEST BEER FESTIVAL



[EVENT]

WASHINGTON BREWERS FESTIVAL, REDMOND, WASH.

[THE BUZZ] Known as the Father's Day beer fest, this three-day event offers dad a chance to choose from 200+ beers brewed by 60+ breweries, served in a family-friendly, park-like setting. Festivities are surrounded by food trucks and beer paraphernalia. || washingtonbeer.com

BEST NORTHWEST BEER SELECTION



[BAR]

THE PINE BOX, SEATTLE

[THE BUZZ] Owned and operated by Seattle-area beer veterans (see Brouwer's Café and the creators of Seattle Beer Week) for the love of beer. Instead of focusing on local, west coast, or world beer, the emphasis is on good beer. If it's good, they'll pour it. No hype, no attitude, just beer. pineboxbar.com || (206) 588-0375



BEERKEEP'S CHOICE

Sarah Pederson || Publican and owner of Saraveza || Portland

"My most common go-to beer when drinking with friends in the last year is BURNSIDE BREWING'S SWEET HEAT. I'm a total sucker for a good chili beer and this one has the right alcohol, a good heat punch and a lovely little bit of tart that adds balance."

BEST STOUT OR PORTER

OAKSHIRE BREWING OVERCAST ESPRESSO STOUT

[HOMETOWN] Eugene, Ore.

[THE BUZZ] Rich and smooth with plenty of coffee character to push you through those grey, Northwest winter days. Surprisingly low on the Richter scale, clocking in at just 5.8 percent ABV. oakbrew.com || (541) 688-4555

[RUNNER UP]

(a tie) Ninkasi Brewing Oatis Oatmeal Stout and 7 Seas Brewing Belgian Imperial Stout



BEST BARREL-AGED ALE

FREMONT BREWING BOURBON BARREL ABOMINABLE WINTER ALE

[HOMETOWN] Seattle

[THE BUZZ] Fremont ages its regular winter ale in bourbon barrels to create the "B-Bomb." Ferociously strong, spicy and complex, it will warm you from the inside out. fremontbrewing.com || (206) 420-2407

[RUNNER UP]

Fremont Brewing Kentucky Dark Star Bourbon Barrel Imperial Oatmeal Stout

BEER INDUSTRY INFLUENCER

DARRON WELCH, PELICAN PUB & BREWERY

BY PETER SZYMCAK

Beer aficionados and aspiring brewers make a beeline for the Pelican in Pacific City, Ore., where brewmaster Darron Welch has crafted award-winning ales for the past 14 years — and counting.

Welch has been named "Brewer of the Year" four times (thrice at the Great American Beer Festival and once at the World Beer Cup). But perhaps Welch's greatest accomplishment is mentoring the next generation of craft brewers.

"Darron's emphasis on quality control and sensory analysis remains unrivaled in the craft brewing scene," says Travis Guterson, a



former assistant brewer who left the roost to start 7 Seas Brewery in Gig Harbor, Wash. "He instilled in me that we must critique, evaluate and form a coherent judgment on the beer we brew and drink."

Constantly improving one's palate and process is also cited by Ben Love, who was an assistant brewer in 2004. "Everyone in the brewery would get together almost every day and do sensory evaluation on beers in fermentation," recalls Love, who kick-started two Portland breweries, Hopworks Urban Brewery and Gigantic Brewing Company.

Welch is nowhere near being tapped out. Presently, he is building a larger production facility to quadruple the brewery's output and move it into the mainstream with six packs and wider distribution.

On the opposite side of the production spectrum, Welch gets psyched talking about his "Lone Pelican" nano-brew series. These one-offs, available only on draft at the pub, let brewery staff brew beers of their own design.

Welch pours a Belgian stout designed by Whitney Burnside, currently lead cellar person. "She designed a really nice, medium-strength stout, using our saison yeast to ferment it," says Welch with pride in his voice. "It has a great flavor profile, color and aroma. I try to give back, to keep the circle going. If it broadens the whole market for more flavorful beer, then that's a good thing."

[|| yourlittlebeachtown.com/pelican](http://yourlittlebeachtown.com/pelican)



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**BEST
NEWCOMER**

[BREWERY]

REUBEN'S BREWS, SEATTLE

[THE BUZZ] In less than a year this brewery earned a reputation for its unique way of blending tradition and innovation, adding contemporary flair to old-world ales.

reubensbrews.com ||

(206) 753-9583

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SUMMER ALE

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Visit our **Urban Beer Garden** 3409 Woodland Park Ave N, Seattle

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FREMONTBREWING.COM

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laurelwoodbrewpub.com

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