



THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

BY KENDALL JONES

FINDING **GREAT BEER** OFF THE **BEATEN PATH**

The Seattle-Tacoma metroplex is home to more than 70 breweries. Portland boasts more than 50 breweries within its city limits. While those numbers are staggering by any standard, what's even more impressive about the Pacific Northwest craft beer scene is the number of breweries tucked away in less urbane locations. In some parts of the country, craft beer is a metropolitan beverage enjoyed almost exclusively by highfalutin city folks, but 'round here even the smallest rural community can support a brewery.

Perhaps the best thing about breweries in the boondocks is the adventure of finding them for the first time. Seeking them out sets us wandering down the road less traveled, giving us an excuse to abandon the hustle-n-bustle of the city, escape the humdrum of the interstate and meander down unknown country roads. The longing to explore is part of our human nature. It is what set Magellan upon the seas. It's what drove Lewis and Clark into the untamed American wilderness.

When it comes to beer and breweries, our corner of the world is rich with hidden gems that you will never discover unless you get out there and look. The search is its own reward and the beer is a bonus. There is a certain satisfaction earned by doing your own reconnaissance and making your own discoveries, and that is what I encourage you to do, but I also have some advice. Below I share a few of my favorite backroads breweries.



THE NORTH FORK BREWERY

DEMING | WASHINGTON

Along the Mount Baker Highway, about 30 minutes east of Bellingham, you'll find the North Fork Brewery and Beer Shrine waiting for you with great beer, humongous salads and delicious pizzas. Everything exceeds expectations at this charming little wayside, which seems to be a secret reserved for those who frequent this stretch of highway. Many people in nearby Bellingham are unaware of its existence. Dinner crowds are heaviest on the weekends, especially in the winter when there is snow in the hills—Mount Baker Ski Area is just 30 minutes up the road. In the summer, expect to see the parking lot full of cars topped with bike racks and kayaks. All ages are welcome and they sell growlers to go. You can even get hitched here. Vicki Savage, the owner and pub manager, is an ordained minister and can legally officiate your wedding at the Beer Shrine.

6186 Mount Baker Hwy, Deming, WA || (360) 599-2337 || northforkbrewery.com

LAKE CHELAN BREWERY

MANSON | WASHINGTON

Many people visit Lake Chelan for its awe-inspiring beauty and many recreational opportunities, including wine tasting at the area's wineries and tasting rooms. Fewer people make it an additional nine miles up the road to the town of Manson, which sits on the lake's eastern shore where State Route 150 ends. The Lake Chelan Brewery tasting room is next door to, and unmistakably affiliated with, the Village Market and Deli. The sons own the brewery and the parents own the deli. To accompany your beer, order some food from the deli's surprisingly diverse menu. The brewery is still very small, but Lee and Ray Medina are growing the business as fast as they can to keep up with demand. Located within walking distance of the Wapato Point resort, this brewery's tasting room welcomes kids and offers growlers to go. Nothing punctuates a day of wine tasting better than a cold beer.

50 Wapato Way, Manson, WA || (509) 687-4444
|| lakechelanmicrobrewery.com



NORTH IDAHO MOUNTAIN BREW AND CITY LIMITS PUB

WALLACE | IDAHO

People typically think of this small, historic mining town as nothing more than a fuel stop along Interstate 90, but it is also the home of North Idaho Mountain Brew and City Limits Pub. This might be the only brewery in America that is also an RV park. The Wallace RV Park offers RV sites, tent sites, cabins, showers and an onsite brewpub. The same people own and operate all of it. The brewery and pub have been serving guests and passers-by great food and beer since the summer of 2011. If you are looking to peddle along the Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes, fly-fish on the North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, or hike in the Idaho Panhandle National Forests, this is a great base camp for this remote region of Northern Idaho. Wallace is now more than a potty stop between Spokane and Missoula. At the very least, it's a place to have some lunch and fill a growler—the brewery is just a few minutes off Interstate 90.

108 Nine Mile Rd., Wallace, ID || (208) 556-1120



SOLERA BREWERY

PARKDALE | OREGON

From the back deck, Mount Hood looks close enough to reach out and touch. The glacier-encrusted peak is just eight unobstructed miles away. Solera Brewing is located in a historic building in the tiny village of Parkdale along a scenic byway known as the Fruit Loop (think orchards and fruit stands). Once the community's movie hall, the old theater enjoyed a second life as the Elliot Glacier brewpub until 2011 when the business went up for sale. The new owners and brewers brought with them a fresh approach to small town pubbing. In addition to beer, Solera offers a food menu of mostly vegetarian and gluten-free fare, but it is the large deck and the remarkable view of Mount Hood that drops jaws at this brewpub. Bring your kids and your empty growlers, yearning to be full.

4945 Baseline Dr., Parkdale, OR || (541) 352-5500
|| solerabrewery.com



TWISTED SNOT BREWERY

TOLEDO | OREGON

About 14 miles upstream from Newport, Ore., along the Yaquina River, you will find the logging town of Toledo, home of Twisted Snout Brewery and Public House. The brewery shares more than a common wall with its neighbor, Pig Feathers Barbecue. Stu Miller is a brewer, former Oregon State Grand Champion of barbecue and one of the owners of both businesses. Pair Stu's award-winning rack of ribs with a fresh pint of his Honey Oatmeal Porker (an oatmeal porter made with local honey), and you will discover that he manages the smokehouse and the brewhouse with equal skill. Toledo is located just off Highway 20, the main route between Corvallis and Newport, but consider taking the slow road—drive to or from Newport along the scenic Yaquina Bay Road. Growler fills available and hungry tummies of all ages are welcome. 318 S. Main St., Toledo, OR || (541) 336-1833 || twistedsnout.com



TERMINAL GRAVITY BREWING

ENTERPRISE | OREGON

Some towns are farther off the beaten path than others are. When you get to Pendleton, a remote town in its own right, you are still about two hours away from Enterprise, the home of Terminal Gravity Brewing. The brewery and public house sits in the shadow of the Wallowa Mountains, a small range of surprisingly big mountains in the northeast corner of Oregon. If you are looking to unplug, this is your place. Cell phone reception is occasional at best. While big city beer drinkers might be familiar with this brewery, they are surprised to discover that the beer comes from such a remote location as this. In the peaceful, grassy shade of the beer garden, hours pass like minutes and you can while away an entire afternoon in the blink of an eye. Along with your beer, enjoy a salad, sandwich or one of a few entrées, while the small creek babbling through the garden whispers, "slow down." 803 E 4th St., Enterprise, OR || (541) 426-0158 || terminalgravitybrewing.com



BLACKSMITH BREWING

STEVENSVILLE | MONTANA

About 30 miles due south of Missoula, you will find the town of Stevensville, which is recognized as the first permanent settlement in the state of Montana. There, amidst white picket fences and proudly waving flags, you will discover Blacksmith Brewing. The large tasting room is more like the neighborhood pub—a community assembly hall, a place where grizzled cowboys and leather-skinned mountain men mingle with hippies, artists and big city expatriates. This place draws the kind of eclectic mix of humanity that only Montana can accommodate. There will be conversation and you will be involved. Many people know the Bitterroot Valley because of its pristine beauty and abundant wildlife, but there's more than that beneath the big sky. Spend your days exploring the landscape and learning about the area's rich pioneer history, but spend your evenings getting to know the locals. 114 Main St., Stevensville, MT || (406) 777-0680 || blacksmithbrewing.com



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Whether you are touring as a couple, with a group of friends or as a corporate event, Butler will take the time beforehand to learn your preferences and expectations so your personalized tour will be memorable. They can arrange for you to meet the wine makers and learn first hand about their wines or sample straight from the barrel.

Whether you are a wine novice or an experienced connoisseur, Butler will customize a tour for you, as handcrafted as the wines you will taste during your journey.

BUTLERSEATTLE.COM



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