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# MILWAUKEE BREWERY GUIDE



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Welcome to the world of Milwaukee's breweries, where tradition meets innovation in a symphony of hops, barley, and yeast. Often fondly referred to as the "Beer Capital of the World," Milwaukee's history is steeped in the art of beer brewing.

From traditional German lagers to the flourishing contemporary craft brew scene, Milwaukee has firmly established itself as a premier destination for beer enthusiasts and casual drinkers alike.

Once upon a time, Milwaukee was home to four of the world's largest breweries: Pabst, Schlitz, Miller, and Blatz. However, the beer scene has since evolved from large-scale industrial production to an innovative craft beer landscape that champions originality, quality, and community.

Though the colossal brewing companies etched their names in the annals of the city's history, the current beer scene is defined by the smaller craft breweries that continue pushing the boundaries of brewing while respecting its deep-rooted traditions.

And if our guide leaves you thirsting for a delicious brew, consider joining us for one of our [Milwaukee Brewery Tours](#).

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## Understanding Milwaukee's Beer Scene

**To truly appreciate Milwaukee's beer scene, it is crucial to understand its unique beer culture. Steeped in its German heritage, beer is more than just a beverage in Milwaukee: It's a way of life.**

Milwaukeeans are known for their love for good beer, with traditional styles like Pilsners, Lagers, and Bocks still commanding a significant presence. Yet, the surge of contemporary craft brew styles—such as IPAs, Sours, and Stouts—is now also an essential part of the city's beer landscape.

The city's beer scene is characterized by a strong sense of community and collaboration, with breweries often working together on unique brews and supporting each other's endeavors. Breweries also serve as community gathering spaces, hosting events and contributing to local charities, reflecting Milwaukee's civic pride and tight-knit community spirit.

Craft brewing in Milwaukee has also become a hotbed for innovation, with brewers fearlessly experimenting with different ingredients and brewing techniques. This creative spirit has led to a diverse beer selection catering to every palate.

Each brewery has its own story to tell, a unique approach to brewing, and its way of contributing to Milwaukee's vibrant beer scene. This guide will take you on a journey through six of the city's most notable craft breweries, offering a glimpse into their histories, beers, and what makes each of them an integral part of Milwaukee's beer scene.

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# Wizard Works Brewery

As you might expect from the name, things at Wizard Works Brewery are a bit magical.

The brainchild of Chris Ivanovich and Jenny Higgins, this is a laid-back, brick-lined brewhouse that specializes in magic-inspired craft beer.

But the magical element doesn't only come from the name. In addition to 35 years of brewing experience, Chris has been a performing magician for more than 40 years.

It's no wonder, then, that Wizard Works' traditionally styled, hand-crafted beers have that extra touch of magic.

The Wizard Works brewhouse is in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward, on Buffalo Street. It's renowned for its friendly, welcoming atmosphere, and an approach to customer service that understands an enjoyable experience is much more than the beer in your hand.

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## Dead Bird Brewing Co.

The best way to understand what [Dead Bird Brewing Co.](#) is all about is through their motto: ‘Outstanding Beer by Upstanding Gentlemen’.

And they’re going above and beyond to live up to these words. First, there’s the beer. Dead Bird Brewing specializes in high ABV craft beers with a spotlight on locally sourced vegan ingredients – and their range ticks the box for ‘outstanding’.

As for being upstanding gentlemen, Dead Bird Brewing goes to great lengths to participate in charitable events, fundraisers, and community outreach projects in its distribution area. Their link-up with Bay View Printing is just one example of their work.

This collaboration produces a poster series each month, with 100% of all poster sales donated to charities that are important to their team and the community.

You can find Wisconsin’s only all-vegan brewery and winery on North 5th Street.

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# 1840 Brewing Company

1840 Brewing Company, an urban farmhouse brewery, is a charming gem tucked away in Bay View, one of Milwaukee's historic neighborhoods. This unique establishment crafts a range of high-quality ales, lagers, sours, and stouts, focusing on barrel aging and blending.

The name "1840" isn't just a random choice—it's a nod to Milwaukee's rich brewing heritage, marking the year the city's first commercial brewery was established. They proudly wear this name, representing their dedication to classic brewing techniques imbued with a touch of modernity.

"Slow Beer Sold Here" isn't just a slogan for 1840 Brewing—it's at the heart of their entire philosophy. This slow beer approach is both a methodology and a vibe, a testament to the careful attention to detail that goes into every aspect of their brewing process. Some of their brews may take over 24 months to make, but each sip is worth the wait, reflecting the fine ingredients and time-honored brewing techniques they employ.

So, when you're at 1840, they invite you to slow down, unwind, and savor every sip of their meticulously crafted beer. In the words of the 1840 Brewing family, "Cheers!"

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## Lakefront Brewery

The inception of [Lakefront Brewery](#) is a testament to brotherly love, healthy competition, and an unwavering passion for beer. The story begins with two brothers, Russ, and Jim Klisch. After surprising his brother Russ with a high-quality homebrew, the pair engaged in friendly rivalry, brewing better beers and winning local homebrewing contests.

Prompted by the encouragement of family and friends, the Klisch brothers decided to turn their hobby into a business in 1987, establishing Lakefront Brewery in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood. The humble beginnings saw them brewing with 55-gallon stainless steel drums and repurposed dairy equipment, with their first barrel of beer being sold to a tavern within "rolling distance." As the brewery's popularity soared, so did its production, with sales doubling yearly.

Lakefront Brewery's current building, a former coal-fired power plant, was purchased in 1998 when the city decided to repurpose the industrial space. With the new location came new additions to the brewery and a proper brew house, which increased Lakefront's production substantially, reaching 46,848 barrels by 2017. Today, the brewery offers an impressive array of beers distributed across 30 states and internationally.

With a trailblazing spirit, Lakefront has introduced many industry firsts, such as the first beer made from 100% in-state-grown ingredients (Wisconsinite Summer Weiss), the first certified organic brewery with the country's oldest certified organic beer (Organic E.S.B.), and the first government-certified gluten-free beer (New Grist).

Beyond brewing innovative ales and lagers, Lakefront also hosts one of the most popular brewery tours in the U.S., welcoming over 80,000 visitors annually with its signature Milwaukee hospitality.

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# Eagle Park Brewing Company

[Eagle Park Brewing Company](#) is the brainchild of two brothers, Max & Jack Borgardt, with a shared passion for music, beer, and the magic that happens when the two intertwine. Founded in their garage amidst music creation and beer appreciation sessions, the duo decided to fuse their love for the two arts, leading to the birth of Eagle Park Brewing.

This is not just a brewery—it's a testament to the brothers' dedication to craft, quality, and community. They believe that much like music, beer has the power to tell stories, bringing people together in shared experiences and narratives.

Though a relatively recent entrant into the business, Eagle Park Brewing Company has firmly established itself as a passionate player in the craft beer industry, not a "fly-by-night label." Their commitment shines through every pour, every toast, and every taste, as they continuously strive to deliver high-quality beer. They see the beer business as a community endeavor where everyone plays a part, from the brewer to the consumer.

The company operates two welcoming taprooms in Milwaukee off of Hamilton street and Muskego, extending their dedication and love for the craft to the wider Milwaukee beer-loving community.

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## Indeed Brewing Company

**Indeed Brewing Company** is not just a craft beer brewery. It's a socially conscious establishment that infuses community engagement into its core ethos just as much as it does the brewing of top-notch beer.

The backbone of their community engagement efforts is a unique charitable initiative, Indeed We Can. This program transforms employees into benefactors, allowing them to direct the company's charitable giving to local non-profit organizations that hold meaning for them. Indeed Brewing Company is just as passionate about brewing quality beer as they are about enriching and supporting their community, intertwining their love for craft with their desire to make a positive impact.

Through Indeed We Can, every Tuesday in Milwaukee and Wednesday in Minneapolis, 100% of net proceeds from the company's taprooms go to a local nonprofit selected by an Indeed employee. This initiative serves two main purposes: to create enduring connections between the brewery and local non-profit organizations that strengthen and uplift the community and to raise awareness for these causes over a shared pint.

Representatives from the chosen organizations often join the taproom events, making them an excellent platform for sharing their mission and engaging with the local community. The brewery also leverages its social media platforms to feature these events and cross-promote with nonprofits. The Indeed Brewing Company stands as a testament to how businesses can blend their trade with impactful community work, making every beer served a delicious indulgence and a sip towards a stronger, happier, and healthier community.

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# Component Brewing Company

Family is a cornerstone of [Component Brewing Company](#). When one of the Kowalske family took up beer brewing as a hobby, it soon became a collective obsession between this group of three cousins.

As a result, Jon, DJ, and Steve Kowalske created Component Brewing Company. Their craft beer hall concept honors Milwaukee's rich history of brewmasters.

The cousins have dedicated years to experimenting with various ingredients, styles, and flavor profiles. And the fruits of their labor are 20 tap lines devoted to their own craft beers, which range from true to style to more off-the-wall concoctions.

And while the artfully (and scientifically) crafted beers hit all the right notes, family and connection are at the heart of the Component experience.

Whoever you are and whoever you visit with, Component Brewing Company can't wait to pour you a beer and welcome you like one of their own.

Component Brewing Company's inviting beer hall is on S 1st Street.

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## A World of Beer to Explore in Milwaukee

As we wrap up our Milwaukee Brewery Guide, one thing remains clear: the city's craft beer scene is vibrant, diverse, and deeply rooted in a sense of community. The six breweries we've chosen—Central Waters Brewing Company, Hacienda Beer Co., 1840 Brewing Company, Lakefront Brewery, Eagle Park Brewing Company, and Indeed Brewing Company—each tell a unique story of passion for the art of brewing and commitment to their community.

From embracing sustainability to redefining brewing methods, to focusing on community engagement, these breweries don't merely serve excellent beer—they contribute to the fabric of Milwaukee's society.

Their taprooms offer more than just the chance to sample a vast range of brews; they provide a window into the heart and soul of the city's brewing tradition and the remarkable people behind it.

But this guide is only the tip of the iceberg. We could have selected numerous other local breweries that we love. In Milwaukee, there's truly a world of beer to explore.

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So, stop by these incredible breweries next time you're in Milwaukee.

Discover the passion, the craft, the people, and the stories that make each one unique. You'll leave with a deeper appreciation for craft beer and the amazing people who dedicate their lives to brewing it.

After all, the true spirit of Milwaukee lies within its beer!

If you have any questions, please [get in touch](#).

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