



9 Up-and-Coming Beer Pioneers to Watch

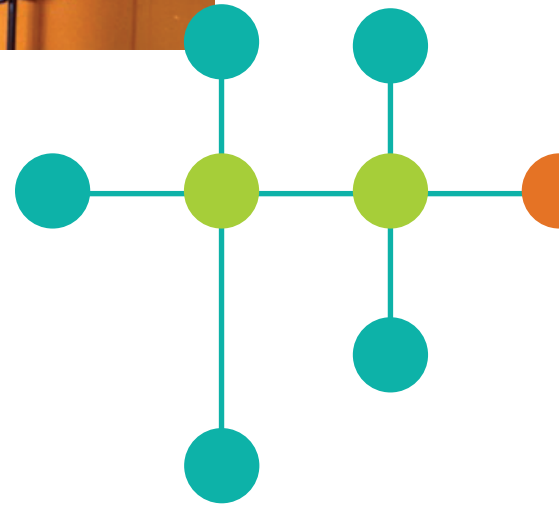
Raising the craft-brewing game with new techniques — and slow-aged apples

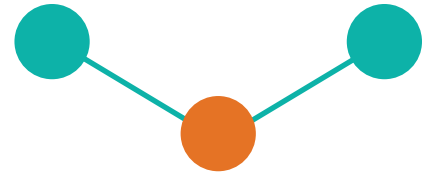
September 20, 2016
Zagat
By: Priya Krishna

The world of craft beer is heating up in a big way. With new breweries popping up in various parts of the country, it's never been a better time to bask in the business of beer. Take a look at some of the coolest breweries across America — and the individuals behind them with a passion for pushing the envelope.

David Walker and Adam Firestone Co-founders, Firestone Walker Brewing Co., Paso Robles, California

David Walker and Adam Firestone met when Firestone — yes, one of those Firestones — married the British-born Walker's sister. Both had a passion for beer, and so they decided to open a brewery together at Firestone's family vineyard in Santa Barbara. Twenty years later, Firestone-Walker is known for its complex and diverse set of brews — including an awesome set of English-style ales, a nod to Walker's background — that would delight even the most discerning beer geek's palate. The company recently entered the European market, predicting that it'll be able to spread the gospel of American craft beer on a new continent.





Ed Marzewski

Founder, Marz Community Brewing, Chicago, Illinois

A few years ago, Ed Marzewski was given the difficult task of revamping his mom's well-worn neighborhood bar, Maria, in Chicago's Southside. He turned the bar into Maria's Packaged Goods and Community Bar, which currently serves one of the city's most interesting and eclectic selections of beer, period. The bar's success — and his passion for home brewing — encouraged Marzewski to open his own brewery. Today, Marz Community Brewing isn't filled with fancy technology or uniformed lab rats; rather, it's got a few barrels manned by his friends, fellow home-brewing enthusiasts. There's the Jungle Boogie, a roobois tea-infused variety, or the Bubbly Creek, which gets its signature zing from yuzu fruit. Marzewski also runs Mash Tun Journal, a magazine focusing on all things — what else? — brewing.

Greg Hall

Co-founder, Virtue Cider, Fennville, Michigan

For Greg Hall, beer-making is a family affair. His father, John Hall, founded the Chicago brewery Goose Island, and Greg served as the company's brewmaster for 20 years. Many thought that Greg would eventually take over; in 2011, however, he left Goose Island to found Virtue Cider. Taking inspiration from the Slow Food Movement, Virtue Cider focuses on what it calls "European-style farmhouse ciders," with each brew made from apples from Michigan's cider coast that have been slow-aged in special barrels. Thanks to Greg's years of experience in aging beer, the company's ciders have been a hit, winning various industry awards and accolades.

Mark Ruedrich

President and co-founder, North Coast Brewing Company, Fort Bragg, California

Three decades ago, Mark Ruedrich had a degree in zoology and a career as a marine biologist in England. These days, he's considered a microbrew pioneer, having opened North Coast Brewing Company in 1988, when the interest in craft beers in America was still in its early stages. Ruedrich's beer empire is situated in Fort Bragg, California — he was attracted to the tidal pools there — and unlike a lot of his peers, he's a traditionalist; he doesn't add fruit, herbs or any extra ingredients to his beers. Instead, he focuses on producing the purest, highest-quality classics, including stouts and IPAs. The company recently acquired Acme Brewing Company, one of San Francisco's oldest breweries and is a major player in the local community, helping to bring multiple jazz festivals to the Mendocino Coast.



Piper Corbett and Robert Horner

Co-owners, Propolis Brewing, Port Townsend, Washington

Healthy and beer are two words not often found next to each other – but that’s exactly the premise of Propolis Brewing, which Piper Corbett and Robert Horner founded in 2012. All of the herbs in Propolis’ beers, including sage and wyrt, are locally sourced and specifically chosen for their health benefits. Corbett also blends all the teas that end up in the beers herself. In the beer world, Corbett and Horner’s strategy of selling seasonally inspired brews at farmer’s markets is a novel idea – but it’s one that has paid off in a big way, earning Propolis Brewing multiple awards and a solid grassroots following not only in Washington (where the brewery is based) but throughout the country.

Abby Titcomb

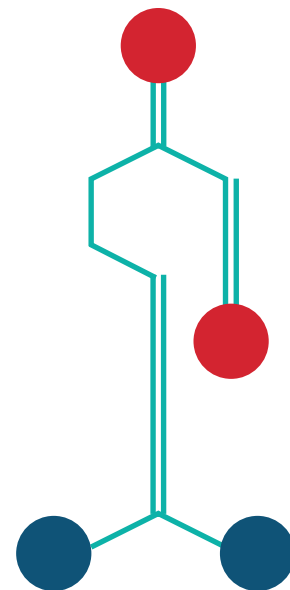
Brewer, 3 Floyds Brewing Co., Munster, Indiana

Abby Titcomb’s first job at 3 Floyds was folding boxes. She had recently dropped out of art school to attend brewing school at Chicago’s Siebel Institute of Technology, and was looking to get her foot in the door. The team took notice of her immense passion for beer, and quickly moved her over to the brewing side. Now she’s a principal member of the growing team in Munster, Indiana, and even has her own namesake beer: Das Kleine Schwarze Einhorn, which means “the Little Black Unicorn,” Titcomb’s nickname among her colleagues.

Tony Magee

Founder, Lagunitas Brewery, Petaluma, California

As many of the country’s craft breweries sell off to big corporations like Anheuser-Busch, Tony Magee is taking his wildly popular company in the opposite direction, striking partnerships with smaller craft breweries around the country and focusing a lot of resources on nonprofit work with the community. Lagunitas Brewing, which opened in California in 1993, is one of America’s largest craft breweries and one of the most recognizable names in the industry, known for its supremely drinkable beers and clever, irreverent marketing. In 2014, Lagunitas was announced as the fifth top selling craft brewery in the United States – thanks, in no small part, to Magee’s shrewd instincts for the business of beer.



Robyn Schumacher

Brewer/cicerone, Stoup Brewing, Seattle, Washington

Robin Schumacher is a trailblazer in many ways: In 2012, she passed the cicerone certification exam and became Washington State's first female cicerone (or beer sommelier). Then, she joined Brad Benson and Lara Zahaba to start Stoup Brewing, which has amassed an enormous following in the craft-beer world for its innovative melding of science with art (Schumacher was a biology major). As Seattle's craft-beer industry continues to grow, Stoup remains as a go-to beer of the region, and Schumacher a key voice in the craft movement.

Brad Dahlhofer, Kerri Dahlhofer and Paul Zimmerman

Co-founders, B. Nektar, Ferndale, Michigan

Seeing a lack of diversity in the craft mead, beer and cider worlds – Kerri Dahlhofer decided to found B. Nektar Meadery in 2006, along with her husband, Brad, and their friend Paul Zimmerman. The company originally focused on mead and cider, but the trio soon realized they could apply the same techniques and flavors to beer. Now, B. Nektar is one of the biggest trailblazers in beer, with offerings such as a Jasmine Green Tea Belgian IPA and a Sage Lime Wit, and new flavors released every month.

