

WHAT'S ON TAP

For their handcrafted beers, area brewers find inspiration locally, from peach farms to fly-fishing.

By Oliver Sharpe



Beer has always been big business in Colorado. The Centennial State is home to the largest single brewery in the world and has also been at the forefront of the craft-brewing movement for decades—nurturing emergent brands as they brewed in the long shadows of Adolph Coors and the Rocky Mountains. The Roaring Fork Valley is home to a vibrant suds scene, with numerous local breweries crafting creative quaffs that pay homage to our mountain lifestyle. Here's what to taste at your next taproom session.

Like so many Aspen locals, This Season's Blonde from Aspen Brewing Company (aspenbrewingcompany.com) came for a winter and hasn't left town. This citrusy English-style blonde ale debuted as a seasonal offering, but scored a permanent place in the brewery's rotation due to its popularity.

The Green Drake IPA at Basalt's Capitol Creek Brewery (capitolcreekbrewery.com) is a great choice, whether you spend the day roll-casting for trout on nearby Gold Medal waters or not. This IPA is hop-forward with a smooth malt finish.

Casey Brewing & Blending (caseybrewing.com) in Glenwood keeps it seriously local, crafting all of its barrel-aged beers using 99 percent Colorado-sourced ingredients. Get your hands on a bottle of the Leaner, a fruit-forward saison featuring dribble-down-your-chin juicy Western Slope peaches.

Fly-fishing enthusiasts know that freestone streams flow seasonally, their levels dictated by snow melt and runoff. In Carbondale, the Roaring Fork Beer Company (roaringforkbeerco.com) crafts many of its brews to match the seasons, but in an ironic twist, the brewery's signature Freestone Extra Pale Ale flows freely year-round.