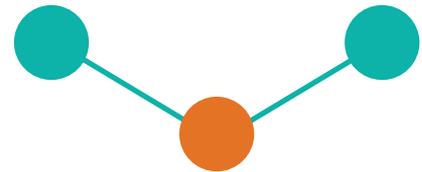


The 13 Best Breweries Washington State, Ranked

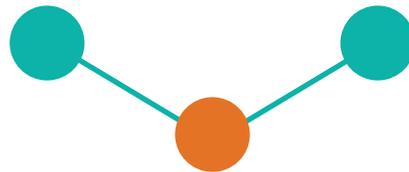
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Thrillist
By: Chona Kasinger



In the words of Homer Simpson, “Beer. Now there is a temporary solution.” Unless of course the problem is ranking Washington state’s best breweries. The solution to that one takes beer and beer experts, so we put together a panel of beer-lovers to pick the 13 best breweries in Washington.

Each panelist (see below for bios and beer cred) submitted a ranked list of breweries from 1 to 10, with first place votes receiving 10 points, second place votes receiving 9, and so forth. Individual votes were kept anonymous to ensure the kind of brute honesty that often also accompanies drinking lots of beer. Drink in the results below...





13. Elysian Brewing Co., 9pts

Various locations

One of the most creative and prolific Seattle sud-makers, Elysian Brewery Co. opened up on Capitol Hill in 1996 and now boasts four locations in the 206. Never ones to shy away from unique flavors, it's become well-loved over the years for its seasonal offerings like its Superfuzz Blood Orange, as well as old standbys like the Jasmine IPA.

Beer picks: *The Immortal IPA, Night Owl Pumpkin Ale (seasonal)*

T - 12. Maritime Pacific Brewery, 10pts

Ballard

Boasting a pirate-inspired taproom from which they sling their renowned libations/pimped out pub eats (fried bacon anyone?), this (relatively) venerable brewery boast a seriously solid range of brews like the Yakima/Czech Republic hops Islander Pale Ale, the Salmon Bay ESB with four types of malt, and the subtle roast flavored Night-watch Dark Amber Ale; there're also rare/seasonal brews like the Navigator, which you can't find anywhere else, probably because it's hiding with Max at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico.

Beer picks: *Jolly Roger Christmas Ale, Imperial Pale Ale*

T - 12. Two Beers Brewing Co., 10pts

SoDo

Opened eight years ago after an argument settled over guess how many beers, this outdoorsy South Seattle beer-slinger... um, slings six year-round brews and close to a dozen other seasonals on shelves/in bars throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska, Vancouver, BC, and Michigan (?), as well as from its rough-hewn taproom, The Woods, which is presumably named after a place you probably go wandering around after one... or two... beers.

Beer picks: *Fresh Hop IPA, Immersion Amber Ale, Ascension Triple IPA*

T - 12. Pike Brewing Company, 10pts

Downtown

Opened under Pike Place Market in 1989 (with a four barrel copper kettle that was custom made by Seattle's Alaska Copper and Bass Company) Pike brews robust, accolade-heavy suds highlighted by unique beers like the Scotch-style Kilt Lifter, the Old Bawdy barley wine, etc., and when they're not doing that they're hosting sweet events that often involve guest chefs and guest brewers, though hopefully not Robin Yount.

Beer picks: *Kilt Lifter Ruby Ale, Naughty Nellie Golden Artisan Ale*



T - 12. Epic Ales, 10pts

SoDo

One of Seattle's most creative suds-makers, EA aims to produce "strange and wonderful" brews like their Tom, which has pretty Major spice notes 'cause it's brewed with peppercorns (and also a hilarious reference to a fictional astronaut), all of which you can pair with a menu of locally sourced/personally foraged eats in their experimental 20-seat Gastropod in Seattle's historic K.R. Trigger building.

Beer picks: Interesting Picture of Animals IPA (just 'cause of the name), their signature Solar Trans-Amplifier.

8. Bellevue Brewing Company, 11pts

Bellevue

This Eastside brewery opened its doors to the public at the end of 2012. Specializing in ales, BBC covers all the flavor bases with everything from an ESB to a Scotch Ale that sits at 7.7%. This brewery's selection includes a flagship series, a brewer's series (red ales, blonde ales, etc.), and a seasonal series, which includes a Belgian WitBier and malty brown ale.

Beer picks: 425 Pale Ale, ESB

7. Stoup Brewing, 16pts

Ballard

Founded by two scientifically minded people (a chemist and former biology teacher) and a thirsty connoisseur, the now almost two-year-old Stoup has quickly become a cult favorite. The Ballard brewery was the ninth of its kind when it opened in 2013, further cementing the neighborhood as the best spot in town for beer-lovers. Big ups for beaker-style measurement systems on their glasses – it's almost like high school all over again... minus the hydrochloric acid, and spotty report cards.

Beer picks: IPA, Winter Warmer

6. Chuckanut Brewery & Kitchen, 22pts

Bellingham

Chuckanut brewmaster extraordinaire Will Kemper worked at a number of legit breweries all around the US, as well as operating his own in Mexico and Istanbul before settling down in Bellingham in 2008. From fruity and complex to flowery and effervescent, you're bound to find something here your taste buds will love.

Beer picks: Pilsner, British IPA



5. Georgetown Brewing Company, 23pts

Industrial District

What would we do without our beloved Manny's? Located in the industrial area of Seattle, this well-loved brewery doesn't have a brewpub quite yet (or maybe ever?), but drop by the brewery for all the samples you need to decide which one you'd like to take home in a growler. You won't find bottles of this stuff, but a bar that carries 'em is never too far away.

Beer picks: Lucille IPA, Manny's

4. Black Raven Brewing Co., 25pts

Redmond

Based in Redmond and brewed using a 15 barrel brewhouse, these guys keep it real when it comes to the sudsy stuff -- they only brew beers they would want to drink. With all the awards they've won, they've clearly got excellent taste. Black Raven releases a few special brews every year that tend to go fast, so keep your ear to the ground.

Beer picks: Bourbon Barrel-Aged La Petite Mort, Trickster IPA

3. Holy Mountain Brewing, 26pts

Interbay

Just having released their brews to the Seattle market in October of last year, the guys at Holy Mountain Brewing spent some serious time perfecting their recipe, and the wait was worth it, as evidenced by their arsenal of brews so delicious they refuse to have a traditional flagship ale... so you have to try them all.

Beer picks: Astral Projection, Kiln & Cone

2. Reuben's Brews, 28pts

Ballard

Opened in a converted warehouse by a 2012 National Homebrew Competition/2013 US Open Beer Championship winner, this Kick-starter-funded taproom is serving some seriously sweet small-batch suds, all of which are posted on a stat board listing things like price, ABV, IBU, and OG, which is the likely culprit if IBU ends up in the ICU. OMG. If that sounds too complicated you can also find Reuben's in its taproom, plus around 36 bars and 50 stores in the Seattle area.

Beer picks: Imperial Rye IPA, Crikey IPA



1. Fremont Brewing Company, 34pts

Fremont

Ahhhhh, Fremont, center of the universe. And arguably the center of Seattle's brewing universe, thanks to its series of small-batch artisan beers made with local ingredients made by a long-time environmentalist/community organizer in a seriously sustainable way. Highlights include the Universale Pale Ale, a distinct Northwest twist on the classic pale ale, and the Interurban Pale, which is named after Fremont's most famous outdoor sculpture. They also brew a slew of seasonal beers and make the occasional "wonderbeer" that they only sell at its Urban Beer Garden, or UBG.

Beer picks: Summer Ale (seasonal), Bourbon Abominable Winter Ale (seasonal)

The Judges

Andy Arguelles -- Andy is the Head Brewer at Two Beers, but that has nothing to do with the fact his brewery made this list. We swear.

Steve Body -- Steve is a beer aficionado, and a prolific beer writer as evidenced by his work at The Pour Fool and the Seattle PI.

Charles Finkel -- Before he founded Pike Brewing Charles was an beer importer/exporter, a label designer, and one of the foremost suds experts in the country.

Todd Garrett -- Todd is the head brewer at Hilliard's, one of Seattle's most popular breweries, and a stop on it's best "bar" crawl.

Sarah, The Danny Bonaduce Show & Sarah's Beer of the Week -- The co-host of one of Seattle's most popular morning radio shows, Sarah also regular features beers on KZOK, presumably 'cause she works with Danny Bonaduce.

Chuck Shin -- The owner of Seattle's best beer retailer, Chuck's Hop Shop, Chuck regularly hook's Thrillist up with his beer expertise, and his customers with great beer/food trucks.

