

## The NFL Playoffs' Best Breweries

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For football fans, there's no better time than those few weeks of January that see the arrival of the playoffs. It's like the Christmas of football: The games stretch across the entire weekend, rather than just occupying a single Sunday afternoon. Even fans without a playoff representative are still invested in framing their week-end plans around football.

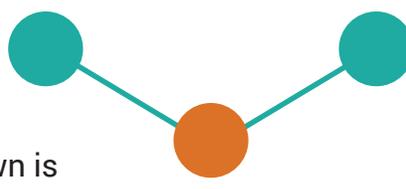
That's because the stakes are high. While every game in the NFL regular season seems important, the playoffs are one-and-done. Loser goes home. There's no best of seven. There's no tomorrow. With this added stress, it means the beer fridge must be slightly more packed than usual.

Luckily, NFL cities around the country are not only filled with passionate fans, but with plenty of great beer, too. Load up your fridge at the taproom or watch the game at your favorite breweries and pray to the beer gods the bounces go your team's way.

### Kansas City Chiefs

Kansas City is well-known for three things: BBQ, wild home crowds at Arrowhead, and great beer. Boulevard is the constant around town and for good reason. If you're looking to diversify





and head out to a brewery for game day, the best scene in town is probably K.C. Bier Company, where you can slug German lagers while watching the playoffs . If you're looking just to stay home and catch the game from the couch alone or with buddies, we highly recommend BKS Artisan Ales. Pick up a four-pack of something from the Counterculture Series of New England IPAs, or the Holstein Series, a chocolate milk stout brewed with a different additive every time.

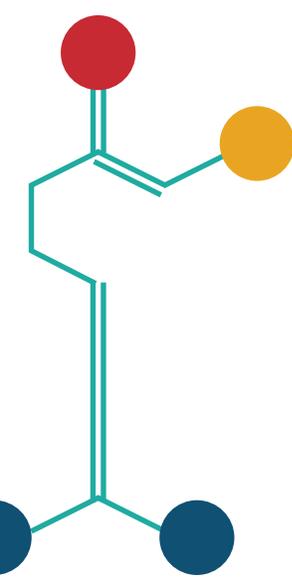
### **New England Patriots**

The Patriots represent a six-state region. Choosing the best brewery within such a vast area is difficult, especially with heavy-hitters like Tree House, Hill Farmstead, and Notch pouring world-class beers out of their taps. But in honor of the Greatest of All-Time, Tom Brady, our pick to represent the New England region is Allagash Brewing Co. The Portland, Maine outfit is just like the quarterback: It puts up great stats, wins awards, and it's the ultimate team player. Allagash is the GOAT.

### **Houston Texans**

Outside of NRG Stadium, the best place to catch the Texans play is at Houston mainstay St. Arnold Brewing Company. The brewery's beer garden is home to picnic tables and faithful Texans fans outlined against the city skyline, but the focal point is the 16' x 8' projection screen on which to watch the game alongside the Fancy Lawnmower Kölsch and Art Car IPA. Or "for the early games," according to Public Relations Manager Priscilla Walker, "we suggest the French Press Imperial Coffee Porter."

### **Baltimore Ravens**

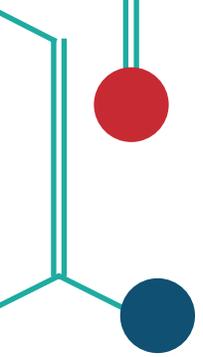


Diamondback Brewing Company began as a brewery that focused mainly on ales. While it still brews them, it has also introduced a series of lagers. This fits well alongside the dynamic Ravens team, which relies heavily on running the ball and good defense. The slow pace of a lager fits with an afternoon of play-off imbibing. As with a well-oiled rushing offense, it takes a true aficionado to appreciate the nuance and complexities of a finely crafted lager. Plus, the low ABV can help keep the tailgating going all afternoon.

### **Indianapolis Colts**

The Colts went from being a little under-the-radar this year to finding themselves in the postseason, so we're going to go in the same direction for our beer pick. Indianapolis is well-known as Sun King Brewing territory, and rightfully so (try their barrel-aged stuff, please) but our pick is Black Acre Brewing Company in near-





by Irvington. Saucy Intruder, a rye IPA, is the perfect introduction to the beers at Black Acre: bold with a prevalent citrus character and the typical spiciness of the rye. It's the dark beers that this brewery crushes, though: One 10 Coffee Stout and Beard Tax are both worth your time.

### **Los Angeles Chargers (AFC); Los Angeles Rams (NFC)**

Los Angeles' two teams play their home games at the StubHub Center, but because both the Chargers (via San Diego) and the Rams (via St. Louis) are new to the city, it's tough to tie a brewery to a specific fanbase. The best we can do is offer the top brewery at which to do some nearby pre-game, in-game, or post-game drinking. For us, it's Smog City Brewing Company, just about four miles from the stadium. "For game day activities, Little Bo Pils [features] low alcohol and drinkability (clocking in at 4.4% ABV) and offers the perfect 'game day beer' experience," said owner Laurie Porter. If things go sour for either team, well, there's a Smog City sour for that, too.

### **New Orleans Saints**

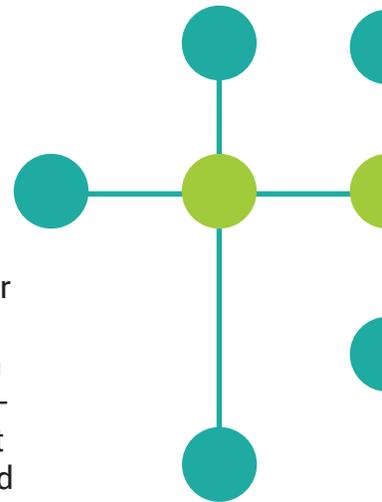
The Saints are known for their score-in-a-hurry offense and their ruthless efficiency. That's why it's good that Courtyard Brewery is close enough to the Mercedes-Benz Superdome that you can make the short trip while the opposing team has the ball. Courtyard is the most buzzworthy brewery in the Crescent City, and it brews the best IPAs in the Bayou. As an added bonus, Courtyard typically houses some of New Orleans's other great beers as guest taps.

### **Chicago Bears**

Revolution Brewing is as ubiquitous a name in Chicagoland than any other brewery. When we think Monsters of the Midway, we think about surviving bitter blasts off Lake Michigan at Soldier Field and keeping warm with beer. "If you're going to take a drink every TFL, sack, or turnover we'd recommend something light and refreshing, like a tasty Rev Pils," says Revolution's "Barrel Guy" Marty Scott. "If themed drinking is what you're after, you can't go wrong with the warm enveloping embrace of Straight Jacket, as our D is inescapable."

### **Dallas Cowboys**

Legal Draft Beer Company is exactly one mile from AT&T Stadium, where the Dallas Cowboys call home, but you can still hear the noise from those 100,000 seats. At Arlington's Legal Draft Beer Co, it's much nicer. The brewery shows the game on five big-screen televisions and hosts food trucks for the game. It's not



unusual to see an opposing team's fan saddle up to the bar for a pint, so be nice. Try one of Legal Draft's eight year-round beers or get into something a little heavier like Barley Legal, a barleywine with notes of dark chocolate.

### Seattle Seahawks

Stoup Brewing is a little bit of a hike from CenturyLink Field, but the atmosphere for the Seahawks games are the best in the city. The taproom features 21 taps and a 120-inch projector screen so that everyone in the brewery has a view of the game—and that's just downstairs. Outside, a steady rotation of food trucks keeps bellies of the 12th Men full. Oh, and the beer? "I'm sticking with the Citra IPA all day," said Lara Zahaba, co-founder. "As a dedicated ale girl, this refreshing IPA delivers everything my NW palate could ask for. It's light, yet flavorful and hoppy but not too bitter. Perfect for game days."

### Philadelphia Eagles

2nd Story Brewing has been pouring beers in the City of Brotherly Love since 2014 and has established itself as one of the cities' best breweries both before and after the Super Bowl LII win. Go for the brisket poutine, of course, but definitely try Fritzie's Lager, a soft Vienna lager, or the Wicked Quaker, an English oatmeal stout. It's hard to repeat as Super Bowl champion, but it's a little easier to endure the stress of a title defense with good beer

