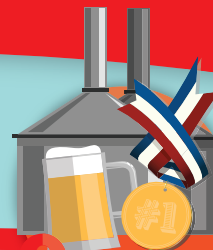


2016

Craft Beer Guide



SHERIDAN



TEN SLEEP



BUFFALO



THERMOPOLIS



PLAN YOUR
*Beer*cation



SADDLE BRONC BROWN ALE BOMBER MOUNTAIN AMBER ALE HOT STREAK I.P.A. CAUGHT LOOKIN' BLONDE ALE



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2016 Craft Beer Guide

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ABOUT THIS SECTION

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The Little Goose Vienna Lager at Black Tooth Brewing Company is served in a "Drink the West" pint glass on June 4 in Sheridan. (Jenna VonHofe, Star-Tribune)



JOSHUA WOLFSON | CASPER STAR-TRIBUNE

Wyoming is home to more than 20 breweries. Here are the Star-Tribune's top five, based on a reader poll and staff picks, along with our reader's favorite beers and the best places to enjoy them.

The Psychotherapy session IPA is served in a Clear Creek Brewing Company pint glass on June 4, 2016, in Buffalo. The brewery is located in the heart of the small, northern Wyoming town.
(Jenna VonHofe, *Star-Tribune*)



Favorite Brewery

1
BLACK TOOTH BREWING
➤ **Location:** Sheridan
➤ **Date opened:** Fall 2010
➤ **Number of beers:** 3 flagships, 1 seasonal, 8-12 in tap room, plus limited release
➤ **Most popular beer:** Saddle Bronc brown ale
➤ **2015 ranking:** No. 1
➤ **Trivia:** It opened in 2010 as a 10-barrel brewhouse with local distribution. Now, Black Tooth is in three states.

2
TEN SLEEP BREWING CO.
➤ **Location:** Ten Sleep
➤ **Date opened:** October 2013

➤ **Number of beers:** 5
➤ **Most popular beer:** Speed Goat Golden Ale
➤ **2015 ranking:** No. 4
➤ **Trivia:** It just moved in a 1951 international dump truck for a music stage.

3
LANDER BREWING CO.
➤ **Location:** Lander
➤ **Date opened:** 2008
➤ **Number of beers:** 5 full time, plus numerous seasonals
➤ **Most popular beer:** Half-Tanked Hefeweizen and Atlantic City Gold right now
➤ **2015 ranking:** No. 9
➤ **Trivia:** Lander Brewing Company is the second most isolated brewery in the United States, in terms of distance from brewery to brewery.

4
SNAKE RIVER BREWING CO.
➤ **Location:** Jackson
➤ **Date opened:** 1994
➤ **Number of beers:** 6 package beers, a nearly endless number of specialties and small-batch beers
➤ **Most popular beer:** Pako's IPA
➤ **2015 ranking:** No. 7
➤ **Trivia:** Snake River is Wyoming's oldest brewery.

5
LUMINOUS BREWHOUSE
➤ **Location:** Sheridan
➤ **Date opened:** November 2013
➤ **Number of beers:** 10 on average
➤ **Most popular beer:** Red Grade Ale
➤ **2015 ranking:** No. 2
➤ **Trivia:** Luminous started out as a joke between a couple of home brewers. They had a chuckle about starting a brewery but did a couple of years later.

Favorite beer

SADDLE BRONC

- **Brewer:** Black Tooth
- **Style:** Brown ale
- **ABV:** 4.8 percent
- **What it's best with:** Steak and burgers — good hearty food.
- **He said it:** It's nice and dark in color. It has chocolate tones, but it finishes soft and creamy. It's really approachable. For people who don't normally like dark beers, they like it. — **Jesse Woods**, general manager

SPEED GOAT GOLDEN ALE

- **Brewer:** Ten Sleep Brewing
- **Style:** Golden ale
- **ABV:** 5.8 percent
- **What it's best with:** Anything salty. It's such a refreshing beer. We do a lot of barbecue up here.
- **She said it:** It's brewed with local honey. To me, it just gives it a smooth finish. It doesn't sweeten it. It just smooths it. — **Paula Fauth**, retail sales manager

2X4

- **Brewer:** Melvin Brewing
- **Style:** Double IPA
- **ABV:** 10 percent
- **What it's best with:** Thai and Indian, hot and spicy foods, grilled fish, or enjoy a four-pack as a meal replacement
- **He said it:** It's the only double IPA to win gold at the Great American Beer Festival, Alpha King Challenge and World Beer Cup. — **Jeremy Tofte**, owner

PAKO'S IPA

- **Brewer:** Snake River Brewing
- **Style:** American IPA
- **ABV:** 6.8 percent
- **What it's best with:** It's a good, crisp, clean IPA, so it goes with a quite a bit. Lighter spicy food.
- **He said it:** Pako's is named after a dog who lived across the street from the brewpub. He was a brewery mascot. — **Derek Beardsley**, sales director

JENNY LAKE LAGER

- **Brewer:** Snake River Brewing
- **Style:** Vienna style lager
- **ABV:** 4.8 percent
- **What it's best with:** It's the chameleon of beers. It can go with real, heavy robust foods, pizzas and pastas and really light foods. It plays up or down really well.
- **He said it:** Portion of proceeds from the sale of the lager go to Jenny Lake restoration in Grand Teton National Park. — **Derek Beardsley**, sales director



Grains used in the brewing process, held by Assistant Brewer Steve Lipetzki on Jan. 7, 2014, at Blacktooth Brewing Company in Sheridan. (File, Star-Tribune)

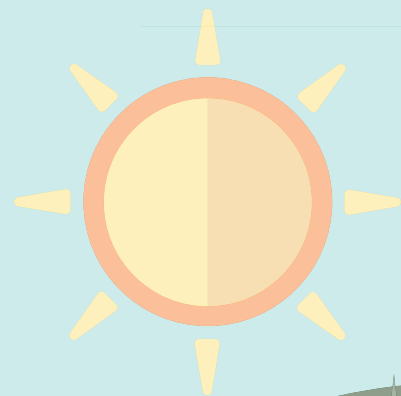
Best places to enjoy a Wyoming brew

- Ten Sleep Brewing Co. in Ten Sleep
- Casper Mountain
- Rafting the Snake River
- Black Tooth Brewery in Sheridan
- Road House in Jackson
- Atop a good mountain
- FireRock Steakhouse
- Stone's Throw in Thermopolis
- Wind River Brewing Company in Pinedale



The 400-mile pub crawl

In far-flung Wyoming, how many breweries could you visit in a day?



BRENDAN MEYER | CASPER STAR-TRIBUNE

The words stress and beercation should never be used in the same sentence, yet here I am, telling you this story.

It was a dream assignment, a road trip focused on beer. Of the 20-plus breweries spread throughout Wyoming, how many could one reasonably visit in a day? I volunteered my efforts, and so did Star-Tribune photographer Jenna VonHofe. We looked at a map and drafted our route.

The plan was to visit five breweries, taking turns drinking a pint at every other one (on a beercation, you must drink responsibly). But this isn't Colorado, where it seems like there are five breweries down the same street.

This map was a 400-mile road trip.

The first stop would be Black Tooth Brewing in Sheridan, then Clear Creek Brewing in Buffalo, then Ten Sleep Brewing in Ten Sleep, then One Eyed Buffalo in Thermopolis and finally, Lander Brewing in Lander.

It would be a nice, relaxing drive to visit five unique breweries across the state.

Easy, right?





Black Tooth Brewing

SHERIDAN

It's just after 1 p.m. on a Saturday, and Black Tooth Brewing is already packed less than two hours after opening. There's a reason.

Beers like Saddle Bronc Brown Ale and Bomber Mountain Amber are well-known in bars across the state. Last summer, Black Tooth started canning those beers, making an already recognizable beer that much more accessible.

This summer, Black Tooth released yet another can: Caught Lookin' Blonde Ale. The brewery is expanding, as evidenced by the giant silver fermenter tanks standing tall like skyscrapers in the back.

"We have the biggest fermenters in the state, the 120-barrel fermenter," said Brandon Penrose, a sales rep for Black Tooth.

On their older system, Black Tooth produced roughly 2,500 barrels per year. Since expanding their Sheridan facility last summer, the company is on track to produce 10,000 to 12,000 barrels.

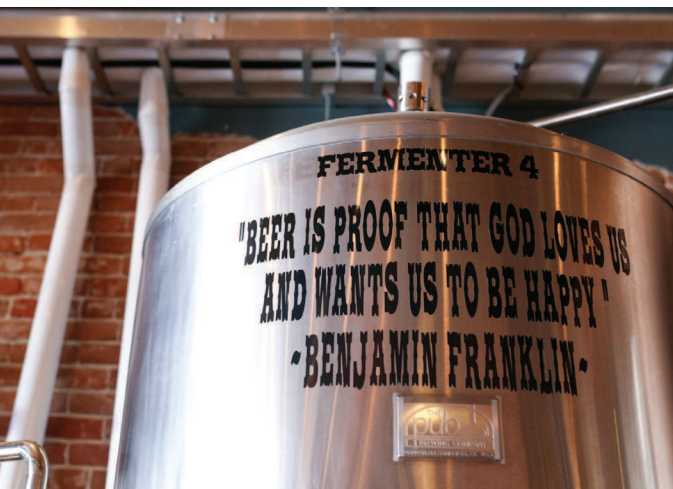
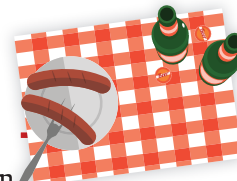
Black Tooth was my turn to drink. Instead of selecting one of their more recognizable beers, I opted for the Little Goose Vienna Lager. It's an amber lager, smooth and sweet. It had a nice caramel and biscuit-like flavor and was only 5.3 percent alcohol. I was impressed, and I'm not the only one. Little Goose won a gold medal at the 2015 U.S. Open Beer Championships.

Black Tooth was a great stop, but we spent roughly an hour and a half there. We still had 250 miles to go if we wanted to hit four more.

Monica Reisch, an employee of Black Tooth Brewing Company for the last seven months, fills up a pint glass for a customer on June 4 in Sheridan. Black Tooth has become one of Wyoming's most popular beer makers. (Jenna VonHofe, *Star-Tribune*)

Clear Creek Brewing

BUFFALO



Fermenter 4 at Clear Creek Brewing Company has a Ben Franklin quote on its side that reads, "Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy." (Jenna VonHofe, Star-Tribune)

Just like everything in Buffalo, Clear Creek Brewing is a charming, quaint feature in this tourist town.

Buffalo attracts all types of people during the summer: motorcyclists, backpackers, hikers, you name it. It also attracted, and held onto, Ramsey Brown. The 34-year-old is one of the bartenders at Clear Creek. She moved here from Los Angeles roughly six months ago to visit her dad.

"I thought I'd come out for a couple of months and then go back, and once I got here, I didn't even realize how much I loved the openness, the space, being able to breathe," Brown. "So here I am."

It was Jenna's turn to drink. She ordered a pint of Psychotherapy, a session IPA that was 4.7 percent alcohol.

"It seemed very summery," Jenna said. "I went for something lighter since we're on a beercation." She classified the beer as not overly hoppy or bitter.

Clear Creek had 14 beers on draft. It also had homemade cream soda and root beer, because this isn't your average brewery.

"People bring their own food, and kids are running around," Brown said. "We want it to be family friendly. Last night we were doing root beer floats randomly because somebody brought ice cream."

Before Jenna and I drove to Ten Sleep, we made one more stop in Buffalo. A few doors down from Clear Creek is Up In Smoke. It's a barbecue restaurant known for brisket. After our beercation, Jenna and I planned on camping in Lander City Park, and we wanted to make an epic campfire meal.

We bought smoked buffalo sausages and yak sliders to grill over the fire. They smelled amazing, and we couldn't wait to eat them.

Too bad we never made it that far.



TEN SLEEP

Ten Sleep Brewing

It's a barn at the foot of red rock hills. Is there a more unique brewery in Wyoming?

Louie Smith and his dad, Cole, built it roughly 20 years ago. Its purpose was to store hay. But Louie always fantasized about something else.

"(Country singer) Chris LeDoux was my big idol growing up. 'Cadillac Ranch' is one of his songs. And he talks about 'bar in the barn and the place stays packed,'" Louie said.

"And I was just like, 'I want a bar in my barn, just like LeDoux.'"

The brewery opened in October 2013 in this town of less than 300. Since then, one of their beers has become a statewide favorite. Seventy-percent of Ten Sleep's production is from Speed Goat Golden Ale.

"It's got local honey in it. I don't know, it's just crisp and refreshing," said Paula Fauth, who works at the brewery. "It's a Wyoming beer. We're in Budweiser country. Speed Goat just kind of hits that market. But it's richer, with a little bit more depth."

I love Speed Goat, so I wanted to try something new. I ordered a pint of Red Cliff Red, an Irish ale. It's a seasonal beer, only brewed around springtime. It was clean and crisp, malty and smooth, bursting with flavor. I also tried a sample of the Outlaw Amber, which was sweet with hints of caramel.

I could spend all day at Ten Sleep Brewing. Their beer garden features corn hole, patio seating and a food truck. You can even camp in the grass outside of the brewery for \$3. I didn't want to leave, but it was 6:45 p.m.

We had only hit three breweries, with two and a half hours of driving and two more breweries to go. As we left Ten Sleep and headed for Thermopolis, I wondered: Why should we feel stressed for time? Wasn't this supposed to be relaxing?



ABOVE: The facilities at Ten Sleep Brewing Company are inside the Smith Family barn at the base of Signal Cliff in Ten Sleep. LEFT: Patrons play a game of corn hole outside of the Ten Sleep Brewing Company. Whilst on the beercation, we stopped to take photographs on the picturesque route from Buffalo to Ten Sleep. (Jenna VonHofe, Star-Tribune)



The Cory McDaniel duo featuring Jimmy Harper plays inside One Eyed Buffalo Brewing Company on June 4 in Thermopolis. One Eyed Buffalo's brews are only available on-site. (Jenna VonHofe, Star-Tribune)

One Eyed Buffalo THERMOPOLIS

Hints of sulfur from the nearby hot springs wafted our way as we opened the doors to One Eyed Buffalo Brewing.

The brewery began last May. It's owned by Damien and Tanya Oliver. Damien had always been fascinated with the idea of opening a brewery. When the decision was finally made, he sat with a group of friends, drank beer and brainstormed a name.

Damien wanted something with a Wyoming link. What better than a buffalo? After a couple beers, the group started throwing out names: Gray buffalo? White buffalo? Crazy buffalo? Nothing excited them.

"A few more beers later," Damien said, squinting one of his eyes as if he was drunk. "Eventually it became, 'What about the one eyed buffalo?' And that's how we came up with it."

Jenna ordered a Protest Pale Ale, and was pleasantly surprised. She had no idea what to expect. That's because One Eyed Buffalo does not distribute. The only place to try Damien's creations is Thermopolis. He works on a three-barrel system in the back of the brewery, drafting up different recipes as he continues to hone his craft.

"We have seven beers on tap that are ours," he said. "We're kind of off the beaten path. Because we don't distribute, our name isn't really out there yet."

It was nearing 8:30 p.m. by the time we left One Eyed Buffalo. Jenna and I had an hour and a half drive to Lander.

Soon, the sun would set. We still needed to stop off at Lander Brewing. We still needed to find a campsite. We still needed to cook our dinner. And we were already exhausted. Jenna and I weighed our options. Together, we decided to pull the plug and head home. Driving nearly 300 miles takes it out of you.

We managed to hit four breweries in one day, and probably could've hit five if we spent less time at all four locations. But I wouldn't recommend it. This isn't a race or a contest. The whole point of a beercation is to try new beers, meet new people, enjoy the beautiful Wyoming landscape and relax. In hindsight, we should have picked three breweries and spent more time at each.

The beercation was still a success. And so were those buffalo sausages and yak sliders — which we cooked the following day.

■ Follow reporter Brendan Meyer on Twitter @Brendan_Meyer13.

More trips, more beer

Want to try your own beercation? You could follow the route blazed by Brendan and Jenna, or try one of these alternate trips.

Southeast Wyoming

THE BREWERIES:

- HeadStrong Brewery, Douglas
- Coal Creek Tap, Laramie
- Altitude Chophouse & Brewery, Laramie
- Freedom's Edge Brewing Co., Cheyenne

➤ **THE ROUTE:** Start in Douglas. Take Interstate 25 south to Wyoming 34 west to Laramie. Then take I-80 east to Cheyenne.

➤ **MILEAGE:** 186

➤ **ALONG THE WAY:** Make a pit stop in Vedauwoo, a great place for camping, hiking and rock climbing.

Northwest Wyoming

THE BREWERIES:

- WYOld West Brewing Company, Powell
- Pat O'Hara Brewing Company, Cody
- Snake River Brewing, Jackson
- Melvin Brewing, Jackson
- Wind River Brewing Co., Pinedale

➤ **THE ROUTE:** From Powell, you'll head west on U.S. Highway 14, passing through Cody and Yellowstone National Park, then head south on U.S. 191 through Grand Teton National Park, Jackson and Pinedale.

➤ **MILEAGE:** 278

➤ **ALONG THE WAY:** This trip would be best spread over a couple of days and combined with a visit to Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park.



A *new* BREW

.....
Gillette man runs state's first meadery

Wyoming is in the midst of a beverage renaissance.

The number of breweries in the state has exploded in the past decade, with more than 20 beer makers now operating in Wyoming. The craft distilling industry is similarly growing. Towns such as Casper, Laramie and Jackson have also become home to companies that produce vodka, gin and even moonshine.

The Cowboy State is also now home to a meadery. Big Lost Meadery opened in 2014 and produces several varieties of meads that are available at its downtown Gillette location and at liquor stores in several Wyoming cities including Casper.

Owner Sam Clikeman began making mead out of his house before making it his livelihood. He spoke with the Star-Tribune recently about his business. Portions of the interview were edited for clarity and space.

What is mead?

Mead is fermented honey. It can be made like a beer, it can be made like a wine, it can be made like something else. Ours is something else. It falls between a wine and liquor.

Why mead?

It's something that I enjoy doing. As far as a business proposition, there are not a lot of meaderies around.

Tell us about your meads.

Our two primary meads are Wild Man and Crazy Woman. Wild Man is a straight honey mead. There are no additional flavorings added. It's also 18 percent alcohol. Crazy Woman is a hibiscus mead. It's also 18 percent alcohol.

It's heavy and it's sweet. Heavier as in strong. They are about 18 percent alcohol but they taste like they are 5.

You host Viking-themed nights at the meadery. Why?

Historically, it was a very common

drink among the Vikings. They were not one the original drinkers of mead, but it was common. Honey will naturally ferment when mixed with water. It takes time. Naturally, it takes about a year. A lot of grains don't taste great when they naturally ferment, but mead does.

It's also a marketing thing. It's fun to eat out of horns and get your pillage on.

Since mead is a little different than traditional beverages, how have customers responded?

Very positively. It's a brand new market in the area ... for a lot of people it's a whole new thing that they never knew existed. A lot of people like honey. This particular mead, they tend to enjoy.

Where can you find your products?

You can get them in Casper, Cheyenne, Douglas, Laramie, Jackson, Lander, Buffalo, Sheridan, Gillette, of course, and parts of North and South Dakota.

Where do you get the honey?

All of our honey comes from Harden, Montana.

How are you doing with the downturn in the economy?

We are doing all right. We are lucky our economy is a little diversified, but Gillette is still a strong market for us.

What else would you like people to know about your business?

They just have to try it and find out.

Big Lost Meadery is at 106 S. Gillette Ave. in Gillette. Contact the meadery at 307-660-3199 or visit online at www.facebook.com/biglostmead.

■ Follow Managing Editor Joshua Wolfson on Twitter @joshwolfson.



Sam Clikeman, pictured in 2014 with his dog Scrum is transformed an old Gillette Avenue storefront into Wyoming's first dedicated meadery. (File, Star-Tribune)

REVERSE: Big Lost Meadery opened in 2014 in Gillette. It produces several varieties of mead, an alcohol made by fermenting honey. (Contributed, Star-Tribune)

This **BEER** may not **SAVE** the world, but it's **PRESERVING** a piece of it.

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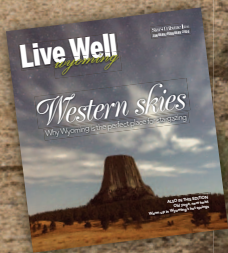
This benevolent brew celebrates one of America's greatest parks by funding improvements to trails and visitor facilities. Through 2016, a portion of sales supports the Jenny Lake campaign—a \$17 million restoration of Grand Teton National Park's most popular destination for the National Park Service centennial.

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