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Sunny
SAN DIEGO

FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE TO *read*, LOVE TO *eat* AND LOVE TO *travel*

QUENCH

USA



San Diego

WHERE ON EARTH

KARL STRAUSS
BREWING COMPANY

Sampling the Suds in Sunny San Diego

by LAURA SUTHERLAND



LEFT: Beer pint. ABOVE: Underbelly
dumplings. BELOW: Underbelly.



KARL STRAUSS BREWERY



...What the Napa Valley is to wine,
San Diego is becoming to beer...

IT WAS THE WORD “NANOBREWERY,” spoken as if it were a common standard of measure, like “pint” or “barrel.” We heard it over and over again in San Diego, and it confused us until we stopped in at Hess Brewing, a former nanobrewery that had recently morphed into a microbrewery, with a back-story that’s surprisingly common in this beer-crazy town.

Like dozens of other San Diego suds lovers, Mike Hess was a home brewer for 15 years before he moved his beer making operations to a small industrial space. Word of mouth drew increasing numbers of people to taste and buy, and a successful nanobrewery was born.

As his output increased, Hess Brewing moved again and grew into a microbrewery — currently one of 70 in the San Diego area — with the number growing almost daily. More than 100 craft breweries are expected to be open in San Diego County by late 2014, and a recent analysis determined that there can be as many as 200 before the market is saturated.

Some beer experts call San Diego the most varied and innovative beer scene in the US, and many of its best-loved breweries, like Ballast Point, Stone, Green Flash and Lost Abbey, are regular medal winners at beer competitions worldwide. Craft beer has even become an important part of the tourist industry, along with sand, surf, SeaWorld and a world-famous zoo and wild animal park. There is a San Diego Brewery guidebook, brewery limo and van tours, and beer events of all kinds.

What the Napa Valley is to wine, San Diego is becoming to beer, and that goes for pairing food with the beverage of the realm. Some San Diego breweries with restaurants, like Karl Strauss, have teamed up with *cicerones*, the sommeliers of the beer world, to take advantage of their educated palates. We couldn’t resist Strauss’ ‘beer-a-misu’ for dessert (yes, it’s tiramisu with the lady fingers soaked in their Wreck Alley Imperial Stout) paired by the *cicerone* with the same velvety brew. We tried it on Cask Night when they roll out the barrel, tap it and let patrons sample a new, experimental blend.

Earlier that day we visited Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens, dubbed “The All Time Best Brewery on Planet Earth” by *Beer Advocate* magazine. Stone’s enormous new Escondido brewery and restaurant are connected by a two-storey wall of windows, so you sit shoulder-to-shoulder with gleaming stainless steel fermenters while you dine. Pub food standards have a sophisticated farm-to-table twist here — much of the produce comes from their organic farm located just a few miles away. The bruschetta BLT was a stand-out on homemade ciabatta, with thick slices of smoked applewood bacon, tomato, arugula, aioli, and Stone’s homemade beer-based mustard. We took the menu’s advice and paired it with their Arrogant Bastard Ale, from a tap list of 35 and a bottle list of about 75 beers.

It’s not just brewpubs that have lengthy and esoteric tap and bottle lists. Many restaurants and cafés throughout the city have dozens of beers on tap — much of it local — and pages of bottled beer choices. Many, such as Neighborhood Bistro and Ritual Kitchen, offer nouveau pub food like truffled popcorn and chocolate stout-braised beef brisket, along with a constantly changing tap list.

When a new restaurant pops up, like Underbelly, a chic new ramen and draught beer place in Little Italy, the tap and bottle list is as carefully considered as the food. We loved their charred kimchi ramen and airy pork buns with pickled cucumber and ginger hoisin mayo, all easily washed down with Alesmith’s X Extra Pale Ale — the dry, slightly citrusy beer was a perfect counterpoint to the spicy dishes.

Just around the corner, Ballast Point’s latest tasting room/restaurant beckoned, so we ordered a flight that included their award-winning bold and bitter Sculpin IPA — a highly hopped beer in a town known for hoppy beers. Another favourite — gold medalist, Calico Amber Ale — paired perfectly with cornmeal-crust calamari served with lemon arrabiata and sweet chili aioli.

Not every brewery can afford its own restaurant, so a changing cavalcade of food trucks travels from brewery to brewery throughout the week. As we sipped a tasting flight at Thorn Street Brewery, we watched a big red bus sporting a Union Jack and the name “God”

Cook
to

USA



SERVES 6-8

PORTER CHILI CON CARNE

Chuck Roast 1 ½ lbs,
cubed (½" pieces)

Cooking Oil 1 Tbs

Yellow Onion
1 medium, chopped

Garlic 5 cloves, minced

Yellow Bell Pepper
1, seeded, cut into
½" pieces

Red Bell Pepper
1, seeded, cut into
½" pieces

Porter 1 x 12 oz bottle

Beef Broth 1 cup

Kidney Beans
2 x 15 oz cans, rinsed
and drained

Black Beans 1 x 15 oz
can, rinsed and drained

Crushed Tomatoes
2 x 14 oz cans

Tomato Paste
1 x 6 oz can

Chili Powder 2 Tbs

Cumin 2 tsp

Ground Red Pepper
2 tsp

Dried Oregano 1 tsp

Jalapeno Peppers
2-3, chopped

Honey or Maple Syrup
1 Tbs

SUGGESTED TOPPINGS

Grated **Sharp**

Cheddar Cheese

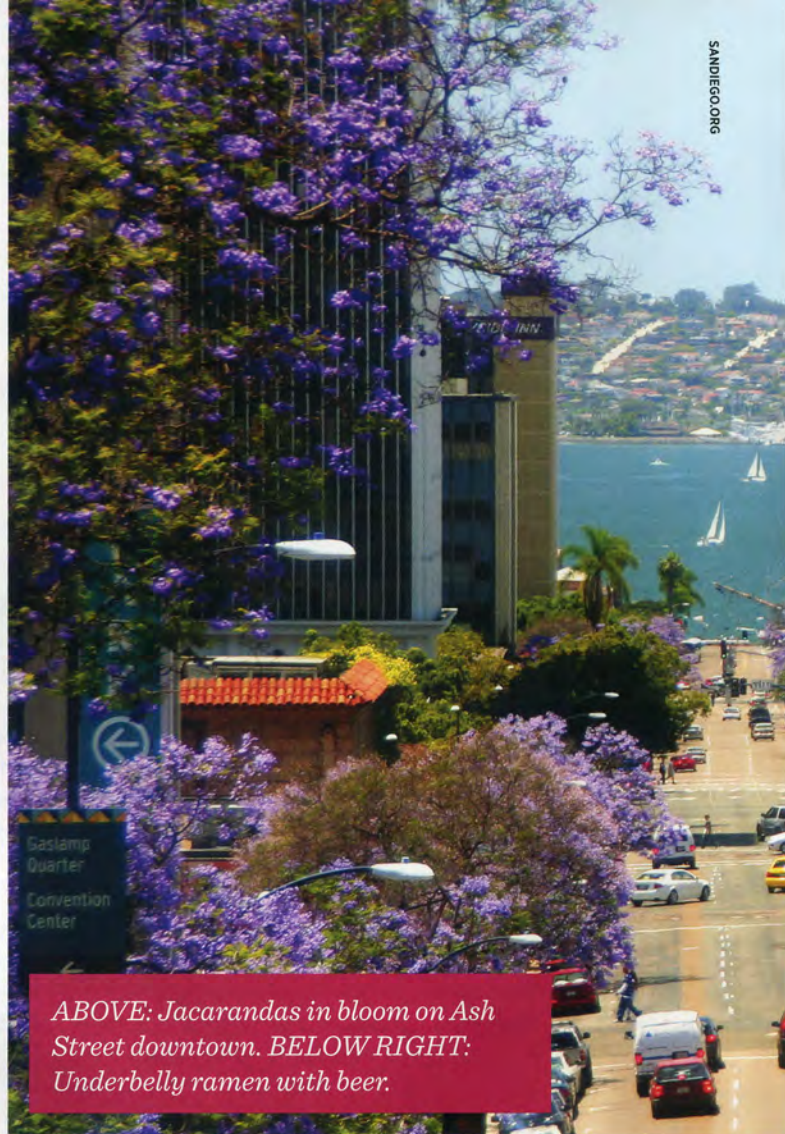
Chopped **Cilantro**

Sliced **Avocado**

Chopped **Green**
or **Red Onions**

Lime 1, juiced

- 1** IN a large heavy pan or Dutch oven, add the oil and brown the meat well on all sides. Remove with slotted spoon and reserve.
- 2** SAUTÉ the onion, then add the garlic, then the red and yellow peppers and jalapenos, about 15 minutes total.
- 3** RETURN meat to pot, and combine all ingredients except the black beans and lime juice and cook for 30-45 minutes. Add black beans and cook another 15-20 minutes.
- 4** STIR in lime juice just before you serve.



ABOVE: Jacarandas in bloom on Ash Street downtown. BELOW RIGHT: Underbelly ramen with beer.

«Save the Cuisine» pull up to serve nouveau English pub food. Nearby at Mike Hess's shiny new brewpub, a Brazilian food truck set up for the night.

The food trucks were tempting, but we had dinner reservations at Waypoint Public in the trendy North Park neighbourhood. With 30 taps and a lengthy bottle list, there's no shortage of beer to pair with their inventive dishes. Our favourite was the San-Diego-meets-New-Orleans *Po' Boy's Tacos* — small handmade tortillas filled with fried oysters, French fries, jicama/jalapeno slaw, aioli and smoked tomatillo salsa, perfectly paired with Societe Brewing Company's light, dry The Harlot Ale. We switched to Lost Abbey's Red Barn Ale, its earthy, mildly tart finish ideal to go with our rich, savoury mussels and pork belly, and learned why mussels were on nearly every pub menu we encountered — they come from a neighbourhood aquafarm a few miles away.

The next day we stopped for lunch at Fathom Bistro on the pier at Shelter Island, where child-sized pelicans sneaked bait from fishermen's buckets and sea lions cruised by. Calling themselves a hot dog stand and tap house on a fishing pier, their dressed-up hot dogs and rotating list of unusual house-made sausages paired with 15 choices of beer on tap are anything but ballpark ordinary and the setting is pure sunny San Diego.»



Ale Smith Brewing Company
www.alesmith.com

Ballast Point Brewing Company
www.ballastpoint.com

Fathom Bistro
www.fathombistro.com

Underbelly
www.godblessunderbelly.com

Green Flash Brewing Company
www.greenflashbrew.com

Mike Hess Brewing
www.hessbrewing.com

Karl Strauss Brewing Company
www.karlstrauss.com

The Lodge at Torrey Pines
www.lodgetorreyprines.com

The Lost Abbey Brewing Company
www.lostabbey.com

Neighborhood Restaurant and Bar
www.neighborhoodsd.com

The Ritual Kitchen and Beer Garden
www.ritualtavern.com

Societe Brewing Company
www.societebrewing.com

Stone Brewing Co.
www.stonebrew.com

Thorn Street Brewery
www.thornstreetbrew.com

Waypoint Public Restaurant and Beer Bar
www.waypointpublic.com

THIS PAGE: The Lodge at Torrey Pines. FACING PAGE: Lost Abbey silo.



*...Child-sized pelicans
sneaked bait from
fishermen's buckets...*



SERVES 4

PALE ALE MARINATED SALMON

- Salmon Fillets**
2 lbs, skin removed
- Pale Ale**¹ $\frac{3}{4}$ cup
- Whole Grain Mustard** 1 Tbs
- Honey** 2 Tbs
- Olive Oil** $\frac{1}{3}$ cup
- Scallions** chopped, 2 Tbs
- Salt and Pepper** to taste
- ¹ Such as Sierra Nevada.
- HEAT** beer, mustard and honey together in a small pan until well mixed, about 5 minutes.
 - ADD** mixture to a bowl and slowly whisk in the olive oil. Add the chopped scallions, salt and pepper.
 - POUR** $\frac{3}{4}$ of the mixture over the salmon fillets and refrigerate. Let marinate for 20 minutes, then turn the fish over and marinate for 20 more minutes.
 - HEAT** grill. Make a foil pouch for each piece of salmon. Divide the remaining marinade between the pouches and pour over salmon. Close the foil tightly and place on grill for 5-7 minutes per side.





«Our favourite food/beer matchmaker was Chef Daniel Boling at our final stop — The Grill restaurant at The Lodge at Torrey Pines in La Jolla, site of the closing event of San Diego's Beer Week. As we sampled a delicate scallop dish paired with Coronado Brewing Company's Orange Avenue Wit, we tried to analyze why they were so perfect together. The subtle flavours of the Belgian-style white left orange blossoms and honey lingering on our tongues, enhancing the dish's peppery fennel and creamy scallops. But maybe it wasn't only the complex sensations on our palates, but other senses at play that made it seem so perfect — the feel of the air on that luxuriously balmy afternoon and the view of parasailers soaring above the cliffs and endless Pacific Ocean against a cloudless sapphire San Diego sky. **T&T**

LAURA SUTHERLAND is a travel writer based in Northern California. **T&T**



MAKES 24

CHOCOLATE STOUT CUPCAKES

Stout¹ 2 cups**Butter** 8 oz, at room temperature**Unsweetened Cocoa Powder** $\frac{3}{4}$ cup**Flour** 2 cups**Sugar** $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups**Baking Soda** $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp**Salt** $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp**Sour Cream** 4 oz**Eggs** 2

6 ALLOW the batter to rest for 20 minutes to reduce any air pockets.

7 FILL the cupcake liners about $\frac{3}{4}$ full and bake for about 20–25 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean.

FROSTING

Unsalted Butter 4 oz, softened**Cream Cheese** 4 oz, softened**Powdered Sugar** 2 cups**Vanilla Extract** 1 tsp**Milk** $\frac{1}{4}$ cup

8 IN a large bowl, beat together the butter and cream cheese with an electric mixer. With the mixer on low, add the powdered sugar one cup at a time until smooth and creamy.

9 BEAT in the vanilla extract. If the mixture is too thick, add the milk one tablespoon at a time.

1 PREHEAT oven to 375°F and line muffin tins with 24 cupcake liners.

2 HEAT beer in a sauté pan and simmer until reduced by half. Add butter and stir until butter melts.

3 WHISK cocoa powder, flour, sugar, baking soda and salt in a mixing bowl until well combined.

4 ADD the beer mixture to the dry ingredients slowly and mix with mixer until incorporated.

5 ADD the sour cream and mix. Add eggs and mix on medium speed until smooth.

¹ Use a plain or a chocolate stout; Guinness works well, too.