

# Double IPA/DIPA

# HATCH'S ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BEER

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## ALE – INDIA PALE ALE (IPA) – IMPERIAL or DOUBLE (DIPA), STRONG, OR TRIPLE (TIPA) EXCLUDING BLACK

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If the DIPA is very fruity as in the New England or NEIPA style, refer to that file instead. If it's very dark brown or black refer to Black IPA as well as the barleywine file.

The definition of the Double IPA (DIPA) or Triple IPA (TIPA) is open to much dispute and argument. Some use the term Imperial IPA. There are some basic, regular, single type IPA's which are stronger and more hoppy than another firm's DIPA. Being potent, super duper hoppy has become a marketing device that may or may not reflect reality. We place things here or above somewhat by the self-named style but one can make a case for moving some up or down the line here. Nor can we say a TIPA is dark and malty because many of them lack alot of

malts and are quite dark gold to amber. Indeed the Black IPA is more about the malt that goes with that extra amount of hops.

Since there is really not an Old World DIPA concept we generally do not separate the Euro hop forms from the American hop variations as we can with an IPA vs. AIPA (American India Pale Ale). Indeed, the majority of the first DIPAs were only American though the Germans and English are producing them too in this year of 2026 as I type this.

If we did have such a creature as a DIPA–BIPA, dark, malty as heck and super hoppy at some point that might become a Hoppy Porter and even the super–dense Barleywine if the ABV is over 9%.

Frankly, things marketed as DIPA or IIPA are often mellow IPA by traditional standards or even Citrus American Pale Ales (CAPA). The intensity of the hopping will vary down the line. However, a strong ABV is usually a sign you have a true DIPA...but not always.

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## Abita Springs Shot Gun Double IPA

RATING: 5.0

Abita Springs, Louisiana

When we first the painted bottle of this 8.5% DIPA, it appeared to be a new Rogue product. It turns out its from the off–again, on–again, mixed bag of Abita creations – and that the lord it's a very, very good one – maybe their best ever. The pour is rich hazy amber under a cream, lasting, lowish head. Amarillo starts us out with Simcoe,

Cascade, and Citra for the dry-hopping. At least 500 breweries have a similar plan and appearance. This one starts out for it's more than floral, citrus, and pine but actually has wonderful tropical fruit, punch-even notes. There is pineapple for certain, hints of mango, than more grapefruit, and maybe a fanciful nod to Hawaiian Punch after several full sips. "Pineapple-citrus-pine punch" wrote one reviewer and as odd as that sounds every hophead will adore it. It is quite dry and the finish while bitter never annoys or cloy. Abita finally charmed our hearts (after all these years of misses, minor hits, almost perfection, and mediocre renditions) and we would not have picked the very, very crowded and uber-competitive DIPA market for their first major triumph in our books. Well done!

## Against The Grain Citra Ass Down Double India Pale Ale [NEDIPA]

RATING: 4.5

Louisville, Kentucky

Get it? Sitya ass down. The label shows goose down from it's backside too. This is a full 8.2% with 68 IBU, malted with pale, Vienna, Munich, and wheat. The hops are mostly Citra with some Columbus for bittering. Then they added more pounds of Citra and Centennial after the fermentation cycle. The pour is a bright, medium amber, very clear, the head off white, rocky, lasting, and fairly good in size. First sip is ultra fruity, a non-tart, mild orange for one, very mellow, never bitter, and fruity as all hell. The lack of bitter hops makes this very much a New England DIPA (NEDIPA). There are many citrus-forward DIPA but this differs in lacking both bitterness and tartness. If there is grapefruit (and most of us got those notes) they are very tender and never acidic. There are very subtle hints of slightly tart lemon but these are hard to detect and pull out into your brain. The choice of three hops and not one is good even though we adore single hop DIPA for their own educational value. The hop-malt balance is remarkable and very close to perfection.

## Almanac Loud! Hazy DIPA [Dry-Hopped DIPA]

RATING: 4.0

Alameda, California

"Dark. Tropical. Smooth. Screams with juicy tropical flavors of mango, pineapple, and has a crazy, hazy mouthfeel". At 8.3% the DIPA bar has been reached. It is "obnoxiously" dry-hopped with Mosaic and Denali hops. The malts are Pilsner and oats. It seems that American and sometimes European brewers have no boundaries and using Pils malts in a ADIPA is a wild, fun thing. Oats will mellow it out and that is potentially good too. The pour is light hazy in pale gold, the head near white, lasting, low, and mostly of finer textures. First sip is fruity, faintly malty, and more bitter than we would have liked. Dry-hopping tends to make these ADIPA and AIPA a bit obnoxious, intense, fierce, and to some IPA lover unpleasant at times. Okay. We get it. LOUD! and "obnoxiously dry-hopped" gave us a fair warning. There is mango, pineapple, tart citrus, some pine, weak florals, and small doses of mixed tropicals in the batch. This was a good hybrid of an NEDIPA and the Anglo-Indian bitter IPA to some and we had two panelists who absolutely liked it, one saying "for me a wise compromise between the New and Old World approaches...potent and raw at times to be sure...obnoxious as they say but in so doing reaching for excellence...I sometimes like a more brutal, unreserved DIPA...[here is] is a nice pick". Others could not bare it except as a educational experience that we abused, tortured beer reviewers have to endure. Our first Almanac can is as controversial as things get.

## Anderson Valley Heelch O'Hops Double India Pale Ale

RATING: 4.0

Boonville, California

We've admired AV brews for many years at Brewbase Reviews but have not found many new products in the east here for some time. The rich amber-gold, lightly hazy pour is a lovely 8.9% in the aspect we need before every other. The head is as lofty as rocky mountain, cream, lasting well, a tad irregular and peaky at the top. "Aromas of California citrus and aromatic biscuits, with hints of fresh redwood needles greet

your nose". I know the first two but can't rightly say I done sniffed or licked a redwood any time in recent years. (and we do have several 50 foot redwoods down-east here in Raleigh NC and many more 20-30 feet on up). My informed sources tell me that Redwood does not taste like pine and I think they meant conifer resin or pine which is clear in their recipe and American varieties in particular. The pine-resin to redwood stretch is incredible hype. "An assertive hop bitterness is delivered to your palate, and balance beautifully with a malty richness and long, warm, and hoppy finish". We seldom quote a label this much so kudos to their writers.

With a name like Heelch O'Hops and a more aesthetic antler-blessed big bear than before (more artful colors, shadows, textured blue river) we had to do some research. They we building a new website on 1.19.2013 so nothing detailed was available. (by the way, no webmaster or web company should have you existing data down until the new site is up/proven so that is a curious thing not necessary or even tolerable). We dug into their recommended Twitter and Facebook alternative communication sites and found nothing useful on this brew after 30 minutes. Bad form here. Keep your old site up until the new site is ready...y'all horny beer bears. Pictures on bears on trampolines and drunk patrons sipping your stuff...really?...when no serious beer data is being offered.

First sip of this DIPA confirms some sweetish notes and a more hop-bitter dry ones, overall a finish on the dry side. Citrus hops increase with more nips. The hops are sophisticated as they have done years before and Sierra Nevada has made a living off of that in California. Panelists here said "bright, tart, citrus-tending and fine bitter hops...fairly dry but sweet bursts come out occasionally...quite crisp for a rich DIPA" and "a bit too intense bitter-lemon for me...I like citrus hopping but they were too intense and overly tart after a couple of sips...malts are way, way in the background...informed but not happy".

## Bearded Iris Attention Please! Double IPA with Citra

RATING: 4.x

## Nashville, Tennessee

"It's verbose, yet smooth, and always ready to have the last word...pillowy, tropical, citra". The single hop ADIPA (Citra) weighs in at 8.2% and pours a completely opaque, uber-hazy light yellow to pale gold. The head is distinctly yellowish-cream, very fine of texture, and gone in one. Seems to have good, long lace but that's like evaluating the bubbles in a mud puddle. First sip is indeed smooth, ethanol well disguised, tropical and semi-sweet, carrying all the glorious notes of Citra hops but perhaps mellowed by something – be it lactose, oats, or what we do not know. One panelist who is notorious IPA-phobe (or a very jaded former lover) said "I could drink this all day...flavorful and not abusive, substantial without blowing your buds off...Citra in it's best mono-hop form...memorable and delicious".

## Bell's Double Two Hearted Ale

RATING: 4.5

Comstock, Michigan

I was checking out my forty dollar order of rare and new brews at a local bottle shop and noticed a single bottle of this name at the register. It was in an unfamiliar orange color with the familiar fish faces. The cap too is orange and thus very collectible. I asked "is this for sale?". The cashier replied "last one". The brewery's website says it's a specialty recipe made in August and our bottled is stamped 8/22/2019. It was just \$4.99 and knowing what I know of the basic Two Hearted, this was actually the best find of the day. At 11% ABV it's more potent than The Oracle ADIPA reviewed below and a full two percent higher than Lampshade Party. The pour is a faintly hazed pumpkin orange but a bit on the copper side too, the head a medium cream, largish, lasting, mostly fine of texture but rocky in parts. This recipe used 2.5 times the amount of Centennial hops as the original, thus favoring "intense pine and citrus". They made sure the malting was rich to balance it too. This brewery does not list IBU, correcting believing we think, the absolute, laboratory bitterness and perceived bitterness are two very different things and "it doesnt tell the whole story". First sip here is lusciously sweet and charming with a very solid, even-handed balance of rich, velvety hops of the Centennial form and strong, structural malting. The ABV is overt at first but you get used to it....some. Two panelists felt that the extra hopping and

additional malting were a good thing but that the ABV hindered their experience, preferring something in the 8–9% range perhaps. I agree to a point. The ABV does interfere now and again in what is otherwise a perfect recipe, one of the Legends and 5.0 winners in the regular form, and made less enjoyable than it should be. One panelist felt the pine was too intense for her liking. Who are we to tell these brilliant brewers anything other than our likes and opinion? So we will. But let's say a 2x (not 2.5x) Centennial bounce with 8–9% ABV and perhaps the same amount of malt would make it a wonderful, more perfect thing..for us at least. We'd be angling for some of that!

## Bell's Lampshade Party Ale Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Comstock, Michigan

We found this in mid December 2018 so thought the lampshade thing was a tribute to The Christmas Story with the famous, fishnet, leggy lamp. Not so. "We cleaned out mom's attic and found these pictures of Uncle Rick and Aunt Linda. All we can say is – WOW!". Apparently the two got sauced up with brown bottles amid the 70's fake-wood panel walls and Uncle Rick was wearing the stereotypical lampshade of a man out of control. The pour of this full 9 percenter is golden-amber with the slightest hint of haze or perhaps not much, the head pale cream, lasting, medium-dense. First sip is a dose of rich hops, complex like so many Bell products, and malts like a tsunami, and some semi-sweet passages leading to a semi-dry, moderately bitter finish. It's fairly sticky and full and far more smooth than Uncle Rick's move on his spouse. We've had so fruity NEDIPA and fruity-bitter ADIPA of late something with this much malty is breath of fresh, barley air. This suck is really a nice change of pace and very nicely made. It earned one 5.0 perfect rating from our panel and the rest were 4.5 bottles. Good luck Uncle Rick and from all signs it might be a long, wild night.



## Bell's The Oracle™ Double India Pale Ale

RATING: 5.0

Comstock, Michigan

Weighing in at a strong 10% ABV, this joins other Bell's IPA with a high reputation for complexity, hops potency, and enjoyability. So many IPA and DIPA have just one or two of those things. Chiefly, most are potent without enjoyability. The Two-Hearted American IPA (AIPA) is by a modern legend and is sometimes the finest IPA on the grocery store shelves. The pour is a lovely, faintly hazed, golden-amber under a rough, rocky ivory head of good duration. They make it with Northwest type hops in the broadly West Coast Style – think California and Oregon's finest. First sip shows the density of the hopping, "massive" says their website, and it favoring a blend of resin and citrus notes. It is surprising sweet in the mid to late passages, something probably essential to make these many hop chemicals suitable for swallowing. The ethanol is there but fairly hidden until you consume a full bottle or two. It is bitter enough and very well judged in this balance. Panelists said "simply delightful...easily one of the best ADIPA every tried and I've had all the best" and "More than rich and hop-dense...there is a sophisticated, refined set of hop flavors, slight sweetness, and just the right amount of bitterness in the finish....very drinkable and proof a DIPA does not need to destroy your mouth and belly!". There is an irresistible horsepower here in terms of both hops and ethanol but executed with such perfection it never offends. Anyone making a DIPA should use this a benchmark. Just brilliant.





## Bhavana Cart Triple IPA [NEDIPA, Triple IPA]

RATING: 5.0

Raleigh, North Carolina

"Bold and Graceful". This 9.5% production credentials and with motivation to produce "an expression of everything we want but rarely ever find in triple IPA...balanced bitterness, subtle strength, and mellow hop flavors". The Triple AIPA or really ADIPA are rarely named and we know only a few firms claiming this tag. The pour is a uber-hazy gold, nearly opaque in the cloudiness, the head ivory, lasting, low. First sip is very fruit-estery, the ABV covert, sweet but neverly overly so, and NEDIPA to be sure but more refined than most. There is good background malt in moderation and we always and forever need malts to support the hops in all cases. "Bold and graceful" is fully met. Honesty and goals that are met are uncommon. The fruits are more bright tropical than citrus, nary a dark tropical note, and there is little tart citrus. Panelists noted "very agreeable fruity NEDIPA with lots of ethanol that never intrudes or ruins a sip...nicely layered hops with malt and yeast...the finish has a particularly warming, calming way I cannot quite put into words" and "hazy dense...a rare combination of fruity hops, high alcohol, quality yeast, and background malting...it all comes out to be a really great fruity IPA". It pleases, pleasures, caresses with everything soft and good, and delivers on all the promises, righteously executed, and for us a great, remarkable benchmark for any Triple IPA in future anywhere on this planet.

## Bhavana Grove Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Raleigh, North Carolina

Tried just moments after their Yield Session IPA, it's similarly ultra-hazy in gold but the head is more enthusiastic, longer-lasting, and larger in its mixed bubble character. It is also a whopping 8% ABV compared to 4.5% in the Yield. The name Grove derives from the image of walking through a citrus orchard (a sort of grove) full of clementine, grapefruit, and peaches. It is uber-fruity like the Yield and the ABV is well masked. It is slightly more citrusy than Yield and less rich of sweet pineapple. I prefer the Yield's mix of fruits and is slightly more bitter, especially after a full can and lots of finish passages are under your belt.

## Birdsong Honey Pie Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Charlotte, North Carolina

"Respect the hops. Keep cold. Drink fresh". Birdsong was founded in 2011 by a group of friends who love great beer and great people in wonderful interaction. Cloister honey was used to take this 8.9 percenter to some sweet places or what locals call "Heaven in a glass". They carefully made sure the malting and hopping was full too with honeydew melon and grapefruit at the fore. The pour is a surprising dark amber, suggesting a very rich malting, light haze, and the head ivory-white, lasting, low, and mostly fine of texture. First sip is not sweet at all, something of a slightly tart, hop tea (similar to some dry-hopped variations) and only by the middle to late passages does the honey come forth. It gets richer and fuller still with tea and herbal notes and hints of grapefruit too. As for the melon, we find that very much in the background or not at all for three of our experienced panelists. There is surely much more herbal and pine in the hops than melon and grapefruit rides a close second fiddle to these at best! The grapefruit actually seems to rise and fall. It has one of the European herbal cough drop flavors with mixed herbals, honey sweet additions, and lord knows what else in the kettle. One panelist who did get the honeydew says it's "quickly usurped by conifer, herb, tart citrus (not necessarily grapefruit and just as easily lemon), and light

florals". Another panelists found it "a jumbled mess...very nice herbal and tea hop notes for a time...some redeeming sweetness...but lots of notes all over the map and thus a stew out of control". Melon is hops if often short-lived and best with a single hop selection. I really like those herbal and honey cough drops so getting them in liquid form with ethanol is only more joy!



## Boulevard Double-Wide I.P.A. (Smokestack Series)

RATING: 5.0

Kansas City, Missouri

This potent 8.5% creation shows a moveable trailer which curiously has Corinthian columns at the door and a twister in the background: "Relax...it's twister proof". Other than Sanjib, your local, cheerful 7-11 Slurpie salesman ("woo you like a Slim Jim with dat-sir?") living in such a rolling place I don't much see a connection to IPA or India. Twisters do hop and with imperial, double intensity. The label provides the connection. This hoppy product like an IPA "travels well" and is something of a prairie schooner. Okay. Let's move on to reality. But first a joke. What does an East Carolina grad do when he wins the \$51 million dollar lottery?...triple-wide. The pour is bright, cloudy amber shaded toward orange juice tones, the head positively a rich golden-cream, quite aesthetic in tall glass. Limited, slow lace. The flavors are tea-like, hops tea of course, mellow but sufficiently sturdy to get our attention and respect. Sweetness is moderate and perfectly metered out. Panelists here said "Righteous and refined IPA...lovely dosing

without offending...it is not overly bitter or harsh in any notes...nice, nice ale" and "Lots of American variety notes...full of citrus-hops charms in the AIPA style...very polished presentation...I just love it despite the odd marketing approach...nice fruit esters in addition to the citrus...I'd pick this to explain American citrus-hops to a skeptical European ale lover". Double-wide is a portable, efficient, and convenient argument for the AIPA, a paramount introduction to that style, and with ethanol to support it's stalwart yet soothing approach. This bottle-conditioned trailer park amber-haired lass made our day and it spun it us right 'round like a tornado on white and goldenrod metal siding. And then a perfect Mercedes S550 drops down and lands in pristine shape in their gravel driveway with keys on the seat, a cold cherry Slurpie and Slim Jim ready in the cupholders...Earlene!!!! You ain't gonna believe this...



## Breckenridge Small Batch 471 Double Hopped IPA

RATING: 5.0

Denver, Colorado

While their regular IPA failed to impress, this amazing product in 9.2% ABV trim. Color is bright amber-gold with a nose very strong and lovely. The head is big, strong ivory with short-lived lace. The flavor thrills at first note and while suitably drowned in *Humulus*, it is surprisingly fruity and rounded out with good malts. A rich IPA with fruit flavors as good and strong as the hops – what a lovely invention! May I have 12 more, please.

## Cismontane Hop Dumpster Double IPA

RATING: 4.0

Rancho Santa Margarita, California

This thing turned up a new at our local wine/beer bottle store and I checked their website. It was not there. Beer Advocate said it was retired around 2015. We were surprised. Was it revived? I checked the label and it was full of numbers but one group alone was 0914. We're still not sure if might be that old. The pour was medium yellow, a bit gold under dark light, and with a near white head of rocky proportion but little life. The hops are surely American and it's especially sweet and mellow for any IPA. Were it not for the proud 9.0% ABV badge we'd consider it among the most easy going down IPA and barely that. One reviewer felt it was on the tail end of the American Pale Ale spectrum save for the ethanol. There was no sign of aging or staleness and even if the ship it was aboard was named Peterbilt, Volvo, or Mack, it did hold up from journey from brewery to mouth as should any 9% IPA!

## Clown Shoes Space Cake Double IPA [ADIPA]

RATING: 4.5

San Diego, California

"Disclaimer: the graphics have been removed from this label for content unsuitable to children". Being naive, mostly older men and women, although we mostly grew up in the 60's and 70's, we had to look up "space cake". It's apparently a full-blown, iced up cake made with hashish, Cannabis oils, and the buds. It's kind of the maturation of the old school, 60's frosted hash brownie which we all...never mind. Presumably this ADIPA has none of the illegal stuff in it. The disclaimer is cute but we have in truth seen Cannabis leaves on beer labels that use non-THC hemp in the batch. This 9 percenter pours a very clear amber-gold to dark gold tinged orange under an ivory, large, lasting head of rock texture. First sip is very strange and fairly sticky of mouth feel. There are semi-sweet herbal notes that seem to be hops that are smoother than a fresh NHL floor just a second after the Zamobini passes and more smooth too than a new

Teflon wok with ten ounces of peanut oil. There is a certain herbal quality that like those other herbal foods somewhat hard to detect and very subtle. It is sweet enough to be cake-like. Thank of this as a sticky hop tea at 9% with very, very mellow hops that satisfy and transport you to a special, nirvanic place. Just saying.

## Commonwealth Ultra Modern Ariana Callista Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Virginia Beach, Virginia

This 8.5 percenter comes in a white, black, and silver can with designs suiting the name. It is named for two "open source" hop varieties from Germany c. 2016. 'Ariana' has citrus and black currant notes, sweet fruits, pear, peach, and slight resin. 'Callista' is intensively fruity with a harmon of apricot, passion fruit, raspberry, and blackberry, a tad less citrusy and hoppy than 'Ariana'. They come from the Bavarian State Institute for Crop Science and Plant Breeding. These are the same Ph.D.'s that gave us the amazng Madarina Bavaria and Huell Melon. I think of them as German Tesla hops, copying an American fad and maybe doing it better in some ways like Porsche, BMW, VW, and Mercedes are all hoping to do in the electric car world. I guess the Germans are smart enough to join the fruity IPA or NEIPA trend even though their precious, omnipresent Pilsners can't take advantage of them – so far. I will guess the Beer Jesus over in Berlin will do so and roll away the stone more than once. The pour is a medium hazy gold with slow but lasting lace (a full 5 minutes at least) under a near white head that lasts but is low. First sip screams a high ABV NEDIPA and yet not a single American or Australian hop appears to have been used! The sweetness of the citrus is remarkable and it's not a tart lemon or stiff orange affair by any means. There are other supportive fruits but I had trouble getting more than a punchy, general mix

though apricot and raspberry jumped up now and again. Nice work but still within the upper middle of the pack.

## Commonwealth Hansel Triple IPA

RATING: 4.0

Virginia Beach, Virginia

The can's label is a closeup of blonde hair locks all around. We presume that is Hansel. Before I move, it should be said that this brewery's cans lack bar code and so it's always a delay to check them out at most bottle shops or wine stores. The ABV is 9.4% and that's more than nearly all DIPAs you'll find out there. The pour is a very dark, super hazy gold, amber tints as well, the head light cream, lasting, finely bubbled, and mid-sized. First sip is very curious, full of sweet caramel mingled with light hop bitterness, general herbs, light florals, and some dank fruit. The lofty ABV shows up by the second or third sip but it's so malty-sweet (hence the very rich amber color), it is mellowed out a good deal. Panelists had some interesting takes including "a rare high ethanol ADIPA...full of sweet vegetables, herb, semi-fruits, some apricot, malty flavors and a dose of ABV too...not terribly pleasant but unusual as hell". This is a nice one for a beer tasting because comments will be all over the freakin' map and thus a good debate label. I doubt too many of your reviewers will love it but some may admire it and be curious enough to sharpen their tasting skills with this strange brew.

## Commonwealth Kashmir Cashmere Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Virginia Beach, Virginia

Before we get too far, it should be noted that Highland Brewery of North Carolina also sells a Kashmir IPA. Kashmir here is the name and Cashmere the variety of hops. These are two spellings of the same name, the first usually used for a region and the other for a type of wool. This 8.5 percenter favors mixed tropical fruit, melon, and tangerine with a slight bitter finish. It is close to a NEDIPA but more bitter than most. Pour is super hazy gold, a dark, rich rich shade, the head near white, low, lasting. The tartness is there but limited, so

there is no lemon or orange per se but the tangerine is not the only citrus bite either. I get sweet lime too. Let's call it generic citrus, favoring tangerine. When we research the hop suppliers online they say Cashmere has lemon or lemongrass, lime, peach, coconut, and melon. Lemongrass is a non-tart source of culinary lemon notes. "Smooth and clean bitterness" is the phrase employed. I knew there were lime notes! Cashmere bred by Washington State University has only been out since 2013 and is sometimes unofficially known as "Super Cascade", referencing one of its parent cultivars. As to the coconut, I get a bit of that too but this was a suggested result. Alphas run 8-11%, Beta 4-7%, Myrcene 39-42%, and Co-humulone is a big 35%. And it retains 75% of it's alpha acids after 6 months of controlled storage. Very well made and we always like single hop IPA as they are very educational to the expert and novice alike. Most of all, it's highly likeable and drinkable all day and night.



## Commonwealth Omnium Gatherum DIPA

RATING: 5.0

Virginia Beach, Virginia

This \$5.99 tallboy (2018) at 8.2 percent is made using Citra, Mosaic, Azacca, Eldorado, Cascade, and Simcoe hops. The pour is as hazy as a gold ever gets under a big, whitish, fine-textured head that lasts and lasts. It is wonderfully complex with this kind of hop bill and the early to mid passages favor that of very realistic pineapple-citrus smoothie, soon producing light traditional bitterness for the DIPA and later some more pine. It is intermediate between the NEIPA and the ADIPA of times past, favoring the form with its fruit-forward approach. There is nary a bad or off note in this long symphony. Just delightful and



simply brilliant!

## Coronado Idiot IPA Imperial India Pale Ale (Crown Series)

RATING: 4.5

Coronado, California

The lovely blue and white painted bottle features a long-haired mermaid carrying giant mugs of ale. As with so many crazy Calie laws this bottles contains a California Prop 65 warning that the "colored decorations" contain cadmium known to cause "reproductive harm". I'm thinking that beer in general...umm....has resulted in more than a bit of undesired reproductive consequences over the last...maybe...six or seven centuries. Thank you Cal-nazis for the timely, PC update! Now for something important: the pour of this 8.5% DIPA is medium gold with a golden-cream head of some size and good duration. Lace is nearly absent. Using what they term "a stupid amount of hops" to be faithful to West Coast IPA tradition, they used Nugget and the 4 C's - Cascade, Centennial, Chinook, and Columbus for "a highly intelligent brew". First sip is clearly American in hopping, tart and citrus emphasis as expected, complex from the five superb choices. This is complex, US-style DIPA, very dry and a bit harsh at times really. It could have used more sweet malts to mellow it out although malts are evident and decently formulated. It's nice, fairly intelligent IPA but needs some tuning to get more out of it. We'd suggest a panel of at least 10 experienced (20+ year IPA drinkers and homebrewers) to get this to it's full potential.



Coronado Stingray IPA Imperial India

# Pale Ale

RATING: 5.0

Coronado, California

This strong thing immediately contrasts with their Idiot IPA in the inclusion of the Citra, Mosaic, Simcoe, and Southern Cross hop varieties. The pour is a slightly hazy rich gold under a rocky near white head, mid-sized, and lasting. The nose is of fruity New World hops. The DIPA market is very, very full these days (November 2016) and one had better bring a strong game to fight off half a dozen very worthy nationwide, if not worldwide, competitors in this category. This DIPA variation is named for a bit of laid back, slow moving Coronado beach or shoreline and is intended to be "easy drinking". We noticed that goal right away without declaring it weak or watery. It surely is neither of those things. Nor will it be a club over the head because "more hops is always good". Some DIPAs, usually with some name that implies you are about to cringe or pucker up your nether regions are unbridled, "triple the recipe Bob" attempts to be potent and relevant without being wise and skillful. Stingray IPA is wisely formulated and an expertly executed antithesis to the way of "load up the tank and let's see what happens" thinking. This 7.9 percenter has the ethanol to claim Imperial status and the 48 IBU are amazing for something so easy to drink and drink over and over again, bottle after bottle. Flavors are mellow, tropical, complex, and favoring mixed sweet citrus, nectarine/peach, and assorted unnamed tropical esters. It carries some sweetness and that too helps with the mellow approach that so well suits the California and frankly worldwide lover of uber-hopping. I am not sure Sierra Nevada would go so fruity and sweet as this but they might well think about it. All our panelists were delighted with this offering and will most likely seek it out again but only one of us asked for an Award of Merit vote. That did not happen but we did play with a blend or two, adding malts, that if it had a maker or name would have gotten somewhere. Malty fruit DIPA or IPA are getting some attention and perhaps a variant of this would drive all the judges wild. That said, Stingray does have some fine awards under its belt.



## Council Beg For Murky DIPA

RATING: 5.0

San Diego, California/Santee, California

The green on green chrome label is hard to read being murky and all. Some odd-headed monster akin to a 60's horror film arises about the murk to frown at us. I am suitably terrified and follow his subliminal orders to my weak, human cranium to consume it in mass quantities to the point of death. This 7.5% DIPA comes in a \$5.99 tallboy (January 2019) and that is average for a fine micro DIPA. As DIPA haze goes with all the NEDIPA around, it's just medium murky in a rich gold, the head off white, lasting, and composed of mixed bubble sizes. My bright band of LED produced some lovely red beads when up close and does not happen with all hazy golds. First sip is odd, hoppy to be sure, and strangely of a sweet herbal tea approach. These DIPA with herbal tea and green tea notes are curious and come to us rarely but always in transformative layers. This is not a super-fruity, tropical nor citrus, NEDIPA by any means. By the entire can, there is some sweetish lemon and at times we get an mellow IPA version of sweet, southern lemon tea. It seems the swamp creature from the green lagoons harvested specially for us his best herbs and most honeyed, succulent pods to make this a very curious, unique DIPA. The approach is delicate at times, more full-bodied at others, honeyed to perfection with no oversugaring, a hoppy herbal broth, hints of floral and tart

white grape, always refined and gentile. This is the very opposite of what a monster in murk might produce and so we stereotype the beast for he can ably brew and brew and cook like few others. Give him a chance for he brews well and with care. We beg for more and we crave it. What a brilliant change of pace, tea in the swamp, and an exquisite dinner with the creature from the hoppy tea lagoon.

## Council Bully Pulpit A Never Hit Softly IPA

RATING: 4.5

San Diego, California

Remembering all the millenials out there who read these reviews and about ten other Gen this or thaters, we should remind all that this image of Teddy Roosevelt of the famous Rough Riders famously said "speak softly and carry a big stick". There was in those days such a creature as the Republican (technically he was a Bull Mooser) who loved the environment and this man with the influence of John Muir and others locked up some of America's best parks in the West. By the way for your real historians, the Environmental Protection Agency was also created by a Republican President called Nixon who most certainly "not a crook". Teddy was green and he was also fuzzy brown since his campaign distributed little bear dolls to children in hopes their parents would vote for the big, burly man. Those are still called teddy bears. Teddy was green and loved nature especially if he could shoot at something and mount it on his wall. Save the wilderness for rich hunters. That's different from modern green. His "Bully Pulpit" meant the U.S. President was free to comment on regular, ordinary social issues; something not done much until his time. "Bully" meant wonderul or superb in those days and nothing about bullying people you don't like; someone else comes to mind here.

Politics and history aside, this 7.2% brew of Simcoe and Mosaic flows a clear medium gold under a fair large, lasting, creamy

head of mostly fine to medium textures that gets rocky in a couple of minutes. First sip is a joyous mix of conifer, bright fruit, mango to the max, melon, background malts, and mixed florals; all being semi-sweet, only occasionally tart by one note or two. The finish is mildly bitter after some sips saturate on the tastebuds. This is an ADIPA with two hops but lots of diversity in notes and from my bully pulpit when I'm not rough-riding with a big stick, is very agreeable, mild but satisfying, and quite like nothing else. Teddy would have loved this, sipping from Bully Pulpit from his canteen with John Muir on a ledge overlooking the great falls and itching to fire on a fine, stout bison down the way.

## Crank Arm Tandem Double IPA

RATING: 4.0

Raleigh, North Carolina

Crazy cool label. Two blue-eyed Siamese cats are riding a tandem bike that has fluorescent, glowing orange and magenta tubes and wheels. This recipe weighs in at 8.5% with a staggering 87 IBU. The malt backbone is from pale and Munich variations. "The hops change on Tandem each batch but the emphasis is in one tropical fruity flavor and aroma". The pour is a rich amber-orange, something like an amber ale, not a dark copper, the head medium cream, lasting, variably in bubble size, soon rocky. First sip is fruity with mixed tropicals and some tart citrus but it's so highly malted this is no classic NEDIPA by any means. We turned to a malty-IPA lover on our panel and he wrote "while I admire this effort the unity among the fruity hops and malt is lacking and you get some discordant odd notes now and again...and you also get a few glorious ones...I am not convinced that fruity hops generally agree well with strong malts as do the traditional, noble hops". Fully agree. A nice experiment but "this tasty behemoth" is not getting our higher marks.



## Dogfish Head 120 Minute IPA Aged in Utopias Barrels

RATING: 5.0

Milton, Delaware

"The Holy Grail for hopheads". Years and years ago, a friend gave us a bottle of 120 Minute they had acquired in the State of Virginia as the ABV was too high for sale in our HQ State of North Carolina. It was 90 Minute on steroids, more potent and crusty and flavorful. On a recent trip in 2023, maybe a decade or so later, to Richmond I obtained a bottle of the latest 17 percent version aged in Utopias barrels. I don't believe our older trial (not reviewed here) mentioned the barrels. This one is described as "a very special version of the original classic" and Total Wine sold sixpacks in May 2023 in Richmond for \$34.00. This legendary label is unfiltered and their website says variants range from 15 to 20 ABV and most with 120 IBU. The Utopias barrels come from Samuel Adams of all unlikely places and this variant is a 2023 first time offering.

The pour is a mostly clear copper-brown under a bieve that is low and short-lived for us. First sip is loaded with malty sweetness, pine and citrus hops by mid passage, then ABV more apparently, more sweet malts, and a slightly drier finish. "It has to be sweet to be bearable and it's more than bearable....fundamentally a syrupy sweet tea with complex,

dense hops flavors all over the high-alpha spectrum" wrote one panelist. Hoppy sweet tea does it justice if you added a generous dollop or twelve of vodka! The sugaring up makes it drinkable (more than we recall from the first experience) and there is some smooth aging that improves this and Utopias at 28% is said to "blur the lines between beer and fine spirit". Utopias used a combination of 86 different barrels including bourbon, port, wine, and more so it's hard to pin these influences down. This is not a whiskey type flavor, more high ABV with some oak, slight vanilla, and general oaking.



## Dogfish Head The Perfect Disguise Double IPA [Dry Hopped ADIPA]

RATING: 5.0

Milton, Delaware

This double dry-hopped recipe has a little trick going on as the label clearly demonstrates. It is made with Kolsch yeast and the stereotypical German man on the label has his head open MIB style with an alien-like hop appearing to control him. This 8 percenter pours mostly clear light gold under a very substantial white head of rocky form and very long duration. First sip is curious and indeed Kolsch-like and we came to conclude the dry hopping was quite subtle and moderate to obtain this effect. The malt is richly blended in nice doses and high quality. Like most dry-hopped ADIPA, this one has a very mellow, tea-like

quality but not a malt tea in the least. It is a velvety hop tea to be sure, yet on the mild (not weak) side to achieve their ruse and ploy to full measure. Like a good Kolsch with those yeasty notes and fine malting, this is surprising a good choice and yet also not the real thing. Their results are amazing and fun, far better in result than my attempt to make a fake stout with malted milk balls which I figured had the right malting and lots of sugar. I dare not try this on a native German beer drinker but some of you should. It is very substantial, nifty, steady, nearly full-flavored, and delectable offering as nearly all Dogfish Head productions remain. Grand, perfect, and celestial all around! A tribute to master brewing at its utmost level. Quick...pop that German's head back on you emerald hop monster before the Men in Black come a'callin. Milton Delaware...we are watching you from Moon Base Teutonia.

## DuClaw The Rule of Three 3x Dry-Hopped Double IPA

RATING: 3.5

Baltimore, Maryland

At 8.8 percent this is surely ADIPA territory. The pour is lightly hazy, pale amber-gold under a creamy head of good size, long duration, and most fine texture, occasionally rock in the last moments of it. There was moderate, slow lace too. Citra, Centennial and Simcoe are three times dry-hopped. First sip is quite mellow and a bit odd, a mix of high ABV, moderate bitterness (which wains from time to time), tart citrus, mixed but reserved tropicals, and eventually a bit of resinous pine. The high ethanol is poorly disguised and it ruined the experience and frankly not one of our panel of five even liked it. It seems to be a case of the "right stuff" (3 proven hops, a laborous hop infusion process, and a quality brewery) not translating well to the bottle or can. There were a few redeeming, slightly sweet



malt portions but the bitterness, sometimes oddly terminating and conspiring with the ethanol to nip too much put us off. This was not a nice choice and frankly most homebrewers could do better. We got some 3.0 scores for two panelists did not want to finish it but such is our rule. Pain for truth I say!



## Ecliptic Star Party Brut Imperial IPA

RATING: 5.0

Portland, Oregon

"Primordial hop character". This firm established in 2013 offers interesting bottles and this one carries floating yeast or what we call "dark stars in an amber sky", and their label with ample foil to shine. This 8 percenter pours is light hazed gold under a near white head of some duration, though short and also finely textured. There is light, slow lace. The "Brut IPA" is a new thing in 2018 as far as our panelist can determine for our wild shopping in several states. First sip is moderately fruity, fairly malty in the background, and something of a "warming approach" as one panelist put it. There hop quality is refined, sophisticated, favoring traditional Brit-India in the finish, more fruity in the early to mid passages and while dry, not as stiffly bitter and frigid as the "brut" name might convey. There are occasionally semi-sweet notes that mellow out the hops and make the malts a little on the caramel side. The ethanol is not offensive and is pretty much unnoticed until the entire pint

bottle is consumed – and then only a tad. There is a magical, "wow" aspect to this offering and so our score of 5.0 was an easy decision; very apparent to all of us from the very first. Some preferred it a bit less than super cold and with it's malty infrastructure that is a wise decision. Panelists wrote "semi-dry and not desert dry...hops are well layered and endlessly delicious...the sumptuous and toasty malts boost it above the common Imperial IPA" and "I was hooked from the start...cultured and soothing...dry butterscotch malts along with both traditional and US hop notes...one of the more approachable ADIPA that is delicate (never light) and somehow full-flavored at once...it has everything for every IPA lover".

## Elysian Space Dust IPA [NEIPA]

RATING: 4.0

Seattle, Washington/Fort Collins, Colorado

Firstly, if you buy this in a cardboard sixpack of bottles the box comes with glittering foil space dust on it. That really stands out in a cold grocery case! The pour is medium gold, very subtle in haze if any, under a lasting, ivory head of moderate size and very fine texture. The lace is steady for a time. The ethanol dose is a whopping 8.2%, securing it's placement in the DIPA category – though the label does not claim this. IBU is 73. Hops are Chinook for bittering, followed by Citra and Amarillo in the dry phase. Malts are pale, C-15, and Dextra-Pils. They call the hopping "pure starglow energy". The hops are rich but of the New England DIPA (NEDIPA) to NEIPA variety, fruity and not bitter in the early sips. It is thus very consumable in quantity. The bitterness gets light to moderate with more sips as does the ethanol taste. By the end of the first bottle (and especially with a second), the ethanol gets a bit intrusive and increases the dryness and harshness of the finish. This is a not a good position to be in when there are several other NEDIPA around that lack this flaw.

Blending notes: the brewery recommends a blend of this with SuperFuzz to create "Fuzzduster".



## Evil Twin Molotov Cocktail Imperial IPA

RATING: 5.0, **Award of Merit 2015**

Stratford, Connecticut

The word Molotov is itself incendiary but when it comes with 13% of the good molecule in the bottle, you pretty much better enjoy the blast, run, or pray. I am sipping and am alive snatching flavor from the jaws of firey hops death – which is life to some of us. "Arrogant amounts of hops" is my kind of very spiritual creation. (Pardon me while I wash the Honry Goat Chocolate Peanut Butter Porter out of my mouth and off my buds). Back. The pour is cloudy amberish-gold with a big near white head. I thought that hops would knock me off my ass back into the times of the Czars. Actually the real Molotov cocktail was used by the Finns to ward off Russian aggression in 1939 and not by the Russians – the "Molotov bread basket" being a name for their bombs. Molotov was the Russian Foreign Minister and hated the name. The potency of this DIPAs is not hops (though they are substantial, laid down in a very sweet base, and ultra-refined) but is in a spectrum of enticing fruit flavors. This is one of the most sweet, fruity DIPAs on record here and could, I think, bring unity among the insane hops lovers on the IPA extremist side with average beer drinkers liking lots of flavor – and by that I mean ladies who like sweet, flavorful beer and their diverse men who have similar tastes but don't wear dresses, capri pants, fitness bands, or clogs. Here is authentic fruit, pomes dripping juice galore, godly fruit, just picked orbs, Garden of Eden fruit far more tempting than whatever Eve got into with Mr. Serpent. There is also fresh apricot, mango, bottled tame citrus blend (never tart), and exploding esters including some sweet cherry, and a nirvonic fruit punch (blends at times in some flavors

passages) to blow the mind of any hop-fruit ale lover out the door. Apricot-citrus with some pine and ample brown sugar is a good general summary but not doing full justice. This label is a new standard, and a benchmark so far down the bench it is into empty space four feet down from where the wood leaves off. This golden fluid is peachy, phenomenal, captivating, and so joy-giving every firm brewing fruity-ales better freaking match up or go home. The ABV is hidden better than most things of this stripe and almost nothing is this great. This cocktail (and that name strangely fits) is glorious to the 32nd power and if there is any word exceeding perfection...whisper it to me sometime in an email.

## Firestone Walker Doublus (Leo v. Ursus Series)

RATING: 4.5

Paso Robles, California

This is the refined, successor to their earlier Double Jack DIPA first delivered in July 2018 with "amplified aromatics". In tallboy, pint cans it pours out in golden-amber to dark gold under a rocky ivory head of some persistence. The nose is immediately hoppy. First sip is potent with hop chemistry but quite dry and surprisingly not very bitter. Usually dry DIPA are a bit bitter because there is not much sugar, honey, etc. to temper it back towards mellowness. This one is not very bitter at all and shows special smoothness. The blend of hop flavors is diverse, resin and floral at the peak I think, dark tropicals in the background, and not much citrus or bright fruit at all. The selection of hops is interesting and we wish they'd given us some names or clues. The lack of traditional bitter Golding(s) or Saaz hops is notable – and if they did use them they are marginalized to the deep background. One panelist noted that the bitterness does increase if you finish the can and perhaps begin a second one. Hops stick to the tastebuds so IPA are often very cumulative in their chemical punch. Interesting and different to be sure but not in the Top 25 for pure delight or enjoyability.



## Florida Swamp Ape Double India Pale Ale (DIPA)

RATING: 5.0

Cape Canaveral, Florida

The legendary and likely real "swamp ape" seems to be a thinner, faster, less shy, more aggressive (hence appropriate for a hot tropical jungle) version of the Northwest's Sasquatch and it might stink a bit worse. What a nice name for a human beverage? Their take is that the five varieties of hop produce a similar bit if not a wonderful, strong aroma. What a lovely juxtaposition of space age technology and primitive concepts in that town, we suppose. If you have even been to the Space Center, you know it's pretty much a wildlife preserve and zoo that occasionally sends objects out into space without or without hairless apes aboard. This brings up the question: if I drink 12 of these, so I drink another two in the morning using the "hair of the ape that bit me" theory. Absolutely! And I might be tempted to do this for an entire week unless for some silly reason my boss thinks I need to come into work. The lovely, 10%, amber-golden pour shows a large, finely formed head of cream and actually a kind of odor of hops and apricots. This stuff is fruitier than all the bowls of ape and monkey food at the San Diego Zoo and more hoppy than all the frogs in the Everglades put together. Apricot-hops is so very real it conforms to that rare nectar type of DIPA (and we have known just a few) and I would readily recommend it for those of use who like fruity-hoppy beers for a culinary recipe. Any brewer trying to go down this complex-hop and ultra-pomalicious DIPA recipe path will have very big feet...I mean shoes to fill. Wow and super wow! This formula and reality is Planet of the Apes' top scientists rocketing through twelve hairy wormholes near to heavenly perfection 42 billion light

years hence. This is one of the best DIPA creations, fruit-filed or not, to ever come across our lips.



## Fort Collins The Incredible Hop Imperial IPA

RATING: 5.0

Fort Collins, Colorado

There are other Incredible Hop products of a similar label, redder or blacker. This one is an amber imperial IPA. FCB offers this bright amber as an "irreverent beer" or as Brewmaster Adam Glasser says "go hoppy or go home". This 10% is strong enough on that account and a big bright green, almost glowing and bulging hop brings out the analogy of The Incredible Hulk. The brew is dangerous but on a path of goodness, righteous evangelism for our favorite vinous fruit, and both strong and friendly to our cause. I do sometimes get violent and hulky when dosed with hops and tend to tear off my clothes, hit friends in the face, and run naked into the....never mind. The whole approach is simply marvelous on first sip. There is a dry-sweet balance, the formula offering quite curiously some aspects of both, overall very rich, high sophisticated, and almost like a Sierra Nevada project made on another planet and lovingly transferred with small chromatic orbs to us by an alien spacecraft. Yes, it's that good. Kudos to the 32rd power. Many microbreweries could do two-thirds this well and charge far less. The bar is raised and the new FCB fans are sitting at it waiting for the others to measure up to this new northern CO standard. Benchmarks in Colorado have always been high (save the pure yet pisswater factory in Golden) and here is a fresh reminder to others what could and should be done on a regular and on similarly affordable basis.

These perfect 5 bottle creations just jump out at us and make themselves known for their amazing strengths, lack of flaws, and most importantly pure enjoyment on a nirvanic level. You get hints of fruit, some very intense and more than hinting, and we also get faint smoke, mellow fruit, earthy citrus, damp moose droppings (not really), and most importantly a very intense, highly refined, American hop blessing. Blessing is a wonderful word for this label. We do feel honored and to have known it and consumed it full. The high ABV puts some panelists off for a sec but Imperial does not mean subtle sips for the tame of heart and the lily-livered, pansy ass, malt freaks among us. You know your names...Sid. This is a manly and lady-strong hops-drenched beer and we do know the ladies love hops as much as the lads. It does what it must and very superbly, no holds barred, no shirts or skirts left untorn, and no reasonable beer lover need be offended by it – indeed we are enlightened, made exceedingly happy, favored, more than content, pleased nicely in fact, and as I said before...blessed by this hulking green cone.

## Goose Island Tropical Beer Hug

RATING: 4.0

Chicago, Illinois/Fort Collins, Colorado

"Born in Chicago 1988...A beach vacation for your tastebuds" so says the beer in pink sunglasses doing his beer hug and bear hug joke. At 9.9% this is rich than some in the grocery store and convenience store tallboy marker. It is less potent than a couple of others less mainstream. There are other lower ABV Beer Hugs like the Hazy at 6.8%, Neon at 7.0%, Big Juice also with 9.9% and regular Juicy at 7.3%. I am still and always of fan of this firm for their lovely, memorable, and truly accomplished Bourbon County Stout line. The speal is nice too and fun: "It's just the thing to elevate your pit tickets or to celebrate your friend finally dumping Alex. We never liked Alex". The hops are Nugget, Sultana, Citra, Mosaic, Eureka, and Azacca Strata. It has nationwide distribution this 2024. Checking with the Beer Advocate for history as we often do, it dates from 2021. The pour is a rather clear rich yellow, not quite gold, under a near white head of finer textures that lasts long. The nose is tropical fruity. The lack of haze in the early pours is

significant. First sip is a fairly rich, tart tropical hop blend, richer than the Voodoo Rangers we just tried with their oat mellowing. The ABV is more apparent than than the two tropical Voodoos as well. So how these tropical notes break down? Tart grapefruit dominates with passionfruit, faint banana, and a surprising pine finish by the second sips and middle of the can. It can be abrasive a time or two as some notes conspire with the ethanol. In this regard a couple of reviewers elsewhere called it "gas station crude IPA" and things even less flattering. It is not smooth and complex as the Voodoo Juice Force and Tropic Force. Is it then simple, crude, and formulaic only? I would say no but neither is it subtle, a hug warm or welcoming, and the claws are surely out on this embrace.

## Great Divide 18th Anniversary Wood Aged Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Denver, Colorado

"GREAT MINDS DRINK ALIKE". With 10.0% ABV, this anniversary special is based on their famous Denver Pale Ale ramped up to emphasize everything they do best. English and American hops give a generally floral theme but the malts are kept strong here as evidenced by its dark copper-amber color. Both French and American oak is used to give many notes, vanilla being their chosen theme. It is said to pair with a bacon and blue cheese cheeseburger, barbequed ribs, and sticky toffee pudding – which for some of us vascularly-challenged IPA lovers would require a ride in a boxy orange, white, and blue vehicle with permission to run red lights. It pairs just fine with rice cakes and no fat yogurt too. The head is dark cream with a firm nose of sweet hops. The hops are full and smooth, not overtly imperial-strong or double at first approach. The sweetness of caramel is intense from sip one. Later passages are more hoppy and the malt only takes a slightly secondary role throughout, being a very important part of the balance here. I would did think this was oak-aged at first sip but eventually you decide this easy, slippery flavor profile cannot come from ingredient choice alone. Oak chips and not wine nor whiskey barrels were used and this accounts for the lack of strong scotch flavors. Our panelists came down with "smooth but a



1.5x IPA at best...there are far hoppier IPAs with or without this aging...the strong sugar-malt background is appreciated at my house" and "enjoyed it but the "wow" and "it" factors are missing. I can see us commoditizing the wood-aged IPA as generic in future but it's too soon...they used oak chips...I agree that full barrel aging has advantages."

## Green Flash Palate Wrecker – Hamilton's Ale

RATING: 4.0

San Diego, California

Here's a DIPA that was created for an anniversary of Hamilton's Inn. intense and full 9.4% creation flows rich gold under a massive yellowish-cream head. Lace is medium-light but steady. First sip is DIPA-luscious, favoring dry, very American hops, bitter with purpose. Ethanol is disguised for a time then pops up. It reminded me of Mikkeller's Ultramate 1000, a near DIPA but just 4.9% strong except with a punch or two more on all fronts. While not hazy as Ultramate 1000, it seems to be a bit more fruity overall. This is one full-bore, pungent, and so aggressively hopped it might be responsible for a future hop shortage in CA. Like horsepower in cars, ABV and ingredient intensity in ales is not the best measure of merit. You have to handle the potency and raw power with class, finesse, and poise. This one does it fairly well but we did not find too much joy or affection here in this increasingly crowded, massively-hopped market. I like the faintly fruity, very coverting sweet-mellow finish better than some DIPAs but there is no big love in our heads and bellies in the final analysis. \

## AWARD OF MERIT 2019



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### Heavy Seas 23 Triple IPA

RATING: 5.0, Award of Merit 2019

Baltimore, Maryland

"Fearless. Bold. Independent". The "23" marks their anniversary of this same year as sold in 2018. Describing this complex label is an tough thing. I'll try. Two turquoise skulls with black spots have fire-like tongues which end with giant eyeballs emitting rays and it all cascades down to the fiery, lave-like blast from a dripping caldron that roasts on a pile of yet more skulls with something like two turquoise surfing tubes on each side. Kudos to onedropdesignstudio.com for this attractive yet inscrutable

piece of art. Simcoe, Citra, Mosaic, and Cascade hops are employed in "massive" doses with triple dry-hopping to boot. These pint cans weigh in with a whopping 11.5% ABV and so this \$5.99 single has potential for value. The pour is an ambery-copper to medium orange under a dark cream head of some size, good duration, and mostly fine rocky foam. There is limited slow lace but surprising not much haze if any. First sip is surprisingly mellow, a rich hop tea effect, and a shocking lack of bitterness given the hop bill. Tea, tea, and more tea. Malt makes this brilliant, drinkable, highly approachable theme work and all this depth with velvety smoothness is as rare as hen's teeth with emerald and gold fillings. The high ABV is well disguised with time and there is a residual sweetness that adds to the mirror smooth, creamy theme. Panelists wrote "the ultimate in honeyed hoppy bliss...well supported with malts and unlike most ADIPA something you actually respect and enjoy at the same time" and "this is one of those holy sh\*t IPA...immediately a gem and done just right...one or two out of five hundred I know...remarkable and without a single flaw". One panelist felt it was slightly too close for him towards the side of a "malt-hop soda" but I think the margin it has from that simple approach is where the brewing arts come to the fore and get Heavy Seas to this exalted level. Brilliant and ideal in every way. Run to the caldron.

## **Heist Grand Optimist West Coast Double IPA**

RATING: 4.0

Charlotte, North Carolina

It's not the Grand Canyon on the label but Utah's Monument Valley. One of the cut-out peaks looks suspiciously like a bottle opener. A little green hop is carrying a hobo satchel through the desert. This 8.5 percenter pours a mostly clear, medium yellow (not gold) under a short-lived, whitish head of mostly fine bubbles. There is about a minute of carbonation but not much enduring lace. It's not on their website or can so the hop bill is anyone's guess. It is very much diverse, almost more floral than tropical, and very little citrus save some in the background. By two or three sips there is a moderate bitterness worthy of a WC-ADIPA. There may be some melon in the

hop plan too but that could be mimicking a mango type tropical. Our panelists did not feel it was "too West" given the hops were pretty darn ample in the fruit department and more floral than WC normally likes to be. Let's just say it's not a ADIPA made by doubling up on the Cascade. The hops do not play well with each other, sometimes being discordant and at times a floral as rose petal tea. The bitter notes are not terribly fine either and sometimes offend a small mite though other times they are reasonable and good enough. Not impressive.



### **Heretic Evil Cousin Double IPA (2018, different panel)**

**RATING: 5.0**

Fairfield, California

"Drink with me Cousin, as Hades comes with the dawn - Acacius". This 8 percenter is a Year-rounder for the firm and has a stunning 100 IBU even. Citrus and pine are the main themes. The pour is a medium yellow (not gold), clear as good yellow quartz, under a short but persistence near white head of variable textures. It is very nicely and fully malted, reminding me perhaps of a Sierra Nevada Pale Ale on steroids. You get those warming malts with citrus-resin calming like that famous green label. It is far less intense than a Stone IPA or DIPA for the most part and is a supremely delightful beer - and a very introduction to stronger IPA for those thinking all very hoppy beers are either nasty or overly strong. This has punch and if Everlast made a line entirely with velvety covers, this would be the right concept. The big ABV will knock you out but you'll be sozzled and sloshed with so much hoppy bliss it will feel like heaven. It was immediately to our panel that this was a perfect, highly refined 5.0 bottle beer and it was even pleasant at room temp! The sophisticated, charm, and refinement are off the charts. It is one of the most ADIPA we've had in months and that covers a swarm of crazy NEDIPA, wheat-oat-lactose mellowed ADIPA, and lots of other middling to obnoxious stuff. This is old school West Coast great and worthy of a try by everyone. Yes, everyone.

## Heretic Evin Cousin Double IPA (2019, different panel)

RATING: 4.5

San Diego, California

"Drink with me cousin for Hades comes with the dawn – Acacius". There's Evil Twin Brewery and is quite a different entity. This eight percenter comes with a whopping 100 IBU and pours a lightly hazed medium gold, the heading near white, lasting some, and mixed in textures. It's a year round offering for them. They designed it to be full of citrus, pine resin, and also very malty. First sip confirms those choices but there is rich, slightly dark somber fruit mix too, favoring very rich, pungent tropicals and a semi-sweet citrus that is maybe a species mix. The malt is quite loaded up and extradinarily helpful to round to it. The pine is subdued but very much a useful presence. Having been the evil cousin (maybe even a charcoal-toned sheep) myself a time or twelve, I understand the importance of being strong, different, and standing out just to stand out. This is a very agreeable, sticky beer firmly in the ADIPA mold and a refreshing departure from the endless string of NEIPA and NEDIPA coming before us this 2019. They also make an EVIL Cubed which spans 11.5% ABV is much more hoppy intense. A very nice recipe, refined to a high degree, and well made.

## Holy City Yeast Wrangler Double IPA [ADIPA]

RATING: 4.5

North Charleston, South Carolina

The clever can shows a cowboy lassoing a green, anthropomorphic yeast cell that has big bug eyes and short stubby arms and legs. Hops of this strong 9.5 percenter are Centennial, Cascade, Chinook, and Simcoe with Warriar and Citra added later on. The pour is a moderately hazy, amber-gold with a near white head of some duration, short statue, and mostly fine bubbles. First sip is surprisingly mellow and I suspect there is some-dry hopping with those later additions. It is very complex in terms of hop chemistry and six varieties pretty much assures that. It is a nice malt backbone and that shows up between diverse hops note something like citrus-malt-tropical-malt-pine-citrus-malt. There is only the faintest

of finishing bitterness and then only after a full can, some pine helping to boose that nip a bit. The ABV never once offended and I might even think it a 6–7% had I not read better. This is a refined and very pleasant and I think could become perfect with a tweek here and there.

## Ithaca Mr. Sticky Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Ithaca, New York

Ithaca has a 2019 Double IPA Series consisting of Platponic, Uncle Buzzy, and Mr. Sticky. Each has a different recipe and ABV. We'll try to review them all. This here one is an April 2019 but we first found it in North Carolina (also known as Ithaca South for all the Cornell and Ithaca College people down here) in Septeber. The malt bill is 2–row, oats, and wheat. Honey is added for sweetness with hops being Mosaic, Ekuanot, and Simcoe. They dialed the 7.7 percenter to have potent hops, "tropical dankness", lots of pineapple and as the name suggests lots of those thick, heady, sticky terpene (resin). The pour is super clear dark gold with faint amber bits in a darker room, the head lasting, medium–sized, slilghtly rocky and a rich cream in tone. First sip has a heavy, sticky mouthfeel with the early passages a mix of very dark fruits, herbs, moderate resin, and just the least bit of pineapple. I've had some very pineapple rich IPA, AIPA and NEIPA alike, and this is not too full of that fruit to be truthful. The malt infrastructure is "righteous and praiseworthy" wrote one panalist and we all agreed. This could easily be a Sierra Nevada production but perhaps less satisfying on the whole as most of their creations. We never did find much pineapple, either super cold, chilled, or warmer. It's a very pleasant thing and just right for that posh, Ralph Lauren, "my advisor has a Nobel Prize", trustfund, "should we take the Bimmer or the Jag", Ithaca crowd. (That's actually not fair as I your editor would never have gotten through Cornell on my middle class background without lot's of rich 'lums raining down scholarship money like a hurricane's arm. My suitmate actually had a Nobel Laureate as his advisor so that part is real and I still manage a piece of crested Ralphie now and again). This is a very nice product and very much a West Coast production with loads of depth and sophistication.



## Knee Deep Hoparillo Triple IPA

RATING: 5.0

Placer County, California

This is a serious formula at 11.1% ABV and 122 IBU. The pour is rich gold in a dark room but with some LED help it's actually a medium yellow under a big white head – almost a good imposter of a Pils. You get complex, lovely American fruity, floral, and coniferous hops from the first sip and they continue and continue like drops of nectar from heaven. The varieties of choice are Citra, Mosaic, and Amarillo. And Knee Deep is not done with this wonderful creation because they also make the Hop-Ranged Quad IPA that "borders on insanity" at 13.1% ABV. Some of you will also know their Simtra Triple IPA (Simcoe and Citra hops) and Hop Shortage Triple IPA (Centennial and Chinook hops). Anyhow, this formula is splendid, sophisticated, well-rooted, and supremely artful in the world of potent hopology. We adored it and you will too.



## Knee Deep Lupulin River Imperial IPA

5.0

Auburn, California

This Placer County creation is 8 percent strong with a massive 76 IBU going for it. The pour is a slight clear medium gold under a mix-textured near white head. The recipe favors Mosaic and Simcoe, and a South American specialty. This brewery makes at least two Triple IPA at or over 11% ABV so this is far from their most potent offering in the hops and ethanol departments. The smell and flavor, proclaims the website, is like a "tropical pine forest" and so it really is. The fruit tropicals are wonderful, layered at times and there is mellow pine which sometimes fads into a dry spicy flavor more than gummy coniferous notes. We liked it very much because it's a good quick buzz and those magical fruit notes just charm and charm until the jungle monkeys come home to...um...do whatever they do. So many modern DIPA or ADIPA just beat you about the head and into full vinous submission but this one is actually soothing, occasionally delicate, luscious, and yet seductively full of the glorious molecule we love most. One panelist said "this is proof a good DIPA can be made with pine and pineapple side by side, complimentating the other and yet accomodating another dozen fine notes in full harmony".

## Lagunitas Super Cluster Ale

RATING: 4.5

Petaluma, California/Chicago, Illinois

As a "Citra-hopped mega ale of galactic proportions" with 8.0% ABV this one pours a moderately hazy gold with some amber tints. The head is near white, large, and lasting. It is fairly sweet for an IPA, taking on a citrus and fruity aspect of much richness, overall in the NEDIPA (New England Double IPA) classification. It is slightly bitter in the finish, this intensifying as the can count increases from one to two or more. The ethanol is fairly apparent and the can even admits it being "slight alcoholic". While it begins in early passages of the first can as a very mellow NEDIPA, the later notes are more bitter, dry, and ethanol-rich. It boils down to whether you want a simple, easy-drinking, mono-hop NEIPA with 4.5-5.5% ABV or this slightly more harsh, powerful version. One panelist called it "a manly NEDIPA...not compromised...full charging and bold". Another said "deliciously fruity and apparently single hopped...it has a noticable, raw, strong side



with both bitter dryness and an alcohol punch". We paid just \$9.99 (October 2018) for a box of six cans. That was quite a fair, respectable price for something of this strong character and drinker's dose.



## Lagunitas The Waldos' Special Triple IPA (2021 Onehitter Series)

RATING: 5.0

Petaluma, California/Chicago, Illinois

"Herbaceous. Botanical. Dank. Resinous...Brewed for all the treasure hunters....Life is uncertain. Don't sip!". Not every day does one find an 11.5% IPA ("100+" IBU) and their goal was the "dankest and hoppiest" beer possible. It is an April 2021 release and their video says Cannabis-like in the resin, mango filled, guava too, dank once again, passionfruit, citrus, dense pine, little bit of sweetness, "alcoholic warmth with goose bumps", several grapefruits, and intense bitterness. The pour is a rich, medium shaded copper-orange to orange-amber, slight hazed but not too much, the head medium-sized, diversely bubbled, rocky in two, and yellowish-cream in hue. The nose is potently of citrus, strongly favoring grapefruit. First sip has a heavy mouthfeel, drenched in hoppy-citrus, and more sweetness than expected, making it very approachable even with this ABV level. There are supportive tropical fruits that pop their heads out when the pine and citrus notes fade for a second or two. The hop depth is very good without it being a kitchen sink recipe. With time the finishes get more resinous with goodly pine forest pine but the sweetness keeps that from being too dank and hostile. Think of it as sweet, piney-citrus-tropical IPA, very hop-centric and having no

compromises while still being highly likable, drinkable, and reward.

## Lost Coast Fogcutter Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Eureka, California

"Cut the fog. Rock on". Scoring 80 IBU (a fine, intense value) and 8.7% ABV (surely double) this one is designed to balance malt and bitter hops. This is a true 5-C ale using Cascade, Centennial, Crystal, Chinook, and Citra hops in the the stormy batch. That chemistry in total would cause a mass spec machine to get brain freeze and maybe shut down. So we are using our human brains and taste buds. The pour is gold with hints of amber, very clear, the head near white, lasting, quite short. First sip is a hop cornucopia, rich, complex, layered, and slightly sweet in the finish. The bitterness is offset by the semi-sweet later passages. Bittersweet suits a ADIPA very well and they chose wisely in this approach. The malt backbone is nicely developed and two of our panelists gave this a perfect 5.0 rating. The rest of us gave 4.5 bottles for it remains a detailed, layered thing with good imagination but not as desirable and mind-bending as a true 5.0 ADIPA should be. I got no "wow" vibes in both my pours. It's close and with a tweak here and there could be a finer thing.

## Magic Hat Band Demo Black IPA (SIDE B)

RATING: 4.0

South Burlington, Vermont

The music analogies are everywhere on the label – "SIDE B", "Limited engagement", "IPA on Tour", "a performance in every bottle", etc. The tour will consist of four IPA-themed concerts and we think this is named SIDE B – not sure as we have yet to find the other three. It pours as black as an stout, the head a uniform, mid tan of some duration. The nose follows quality, dry malt themes. While malt makes this a double or stronger IPA, the 6% ABV is much lower than imperial or double variants of most beer styles. Usually big means big ethanol too. Not here. The hops are rich but not as much as expected. This is almost a Malty IPA of single variety and one panelist here felt it should go there. It is an impressive beer but Uinta Dubhe and Widmer Black are miles ahead of this label. Magic Hat normally makes very fine products and this one is fine without being worldclass – very

competant like a cover band but not overwhelming among my all-time concert lists.

## Mikkeler (MKSD) Tiny Scissors Double IPA (Limited Edition)

RATING: 4.5

San Diego, California

I really like the shiny, silver view of half the can with the small, domed green label. It's a unique look for them and a pleasing one. They used wheat with the barley bill, the hops being Citra and Michigan-raised Chinook. The manly barber is named Sally for some reason. The pour of this 8.5 percenter is a very clear, medium gold, the head creamy-white, larger at first, diversely textures, rocky in three or four. The nose is a sharp, intense floral hop. First sip is a floral love fest, not bitter and with no citrus or tropicals to speak of except way into the background. As the sips grow some herb garden-bitter immorges but not too much and the Citra flavors develop more fully. It is citrus-floral most of the way, again never too bitter except in a general herbal, hoppy way. There is grapefruit to be had also from both hop varieties and that saturated me more fully by the end of the metal pint, the florals still in command even by then. One panelist wrote "Mikkeler odd to be sure and I did not expect much else...being a floral hops fan the grapefruit flowers suited me well...nothing exactly like it and with the Mikkeler name no big surprise".

## [Buzzards's Bay for] Narragansett Private Stock Imperial India Pale Ale

RATING: 4.5

Westport, Mass. for Providence, Rhode Island

Buzzard's Bay Brewery makes this for the famous Narragansett folks who make one of the best canned lagers you will have for a mid-market price. The ABV is a potent 8.6%, imperial status in part confirmed, flowing out a dark amber-golden which will be a pale amber under dark bar lamps. The head is near white and irregular, lasting very well. The nose is of a sweet, very rich IPA. Having bought this brew on New Years Eve between 2012 and 2013, I'm a tad confused by 2009 reference on the web that Buzzard's Bay of Westport MA is out of business and replaced with Just Beer Brewing. This would appear to be a contract label from the Westport tanks in

any case. It is reasonably sweet, just mellowed out enough in that mode to keep the ample hops from being too bitter and the malts give fine, firm support too. You could be forgiven for saying Sierra Nevada this or that from first sip to last. It is that good and refined. With more sips from this 650ml bottle you get a fuller and more lasting saturation on tongue and that always means hop intensify and linger. The ethanol and hops dosing support the imperial tag on all grounds and of course we realize these uber-Humulus things are not to everyone's taste. One glass is probably enough unless your brain shuts down without enough alpha acids. It is full, rich, skillfully made, not just an barrel dump product, and yet it was only admirable and super-yummy to some of us. There would be room for more depth here, yeasty fruit being one take, oak-aging another, and fuller background malts a third approach.

## New Belgium Voodoo Ranger Imperial IPA

RATING: 4.5

Fort Collins, Colorado

This nine percenter carrying a full 70 IBU is a strong version of their regular Voodoo Ranger IPA which took the industry by storm. It pours a clear, dark yellow bordering on light gold, the head enduring long in a rocky, fine way. It has been around since about 2016. The nose is potent of hops from a foot away. The hops are Delta, Bravo, Centennial, Cascade, Calypso, Mosaic, Foxtrot, Charlie, Voodoo. Okay, not those last three. The malt bill is simply black and and pale. First sip is a crisp, vaguely tart hops feast but not some overly potent, abusive thing but one that hides the ABV and hop potency under the velvety nature of the recipe. Those 9% tallboys go down easy and pack a punch. The hops are rich and American, semi-bitter at times and a good, complex mix of floral, light fruit (pineapple, melon, little citrus), herbs, and conifer. While is it nowhere near as fruity as their Juice Force label, it does saturate by the end of the can to some fruitier notes with the sticky herbal and pine subsiding a bit. It is deceptively easy drinking so like their mascot bombing might come suddenly in mere seconds. There is some malt but it has no malt:hops balance like a Sierra Nevada or Stone product. "Potent but clean...not terribly distinguished but with it's widespread availability and price point East to West a thing to be reckoned with" wrote one of us. I agree for I was getting home after a trip when the grocery stores in the area were all

closed. Needed a night cap and the local convenience shop has their tallboys. Great beer at 0200 and so it resounds with me as evening savior. I think some people under estimate this one for it's availability and very clean, crisp smooth character. It will amuse and never abuse. (should I trademark that line?).

## New Belgium Voodoo Ranger Juice Force Hazy Imperial IPA

RATING: 4.5

Fort Collins, Colorado

"You'll be buzzing the tower in no time". With a slightly higher ABV (9.5 vs. 9.0), this is a variant of their Voodoo Ranger Imperial IPA with more haze and a fruitier bent. It is also a stronger version of the Voodoo Ranger Juicy Haze IPA at 7.5%. The pour is more cloudy than the Imperial and actually a lighter shade of yellow too. The fine-textured head is similar, lasting long, and rocky in three or more minutes. The hops are different from the Imperial, being Mosaic, Chinook, Phato, Galaxy, Strata, Lotus, and Sabro with a malt bill of pale, wheat, and oats. The IBU is lower at 30 vs. 70 for the Imperial IPA. First sip is ultra-fruity with pineapple hitting first, then a sort of mixed fruit punch, a less tart citrus blend, and undefined tropicals. Now if this is too fruity or a "kid's juice box IPA" for you, then you can easily mix this with the Imperial in various ratios to get a balance. I did and going on from 50:50 preferred 60:40 to 70:30 Imperial to Fruit Force. Beer blending may offend some brewers but as long as you're buying more than one and staying without the family (brewery) many of them don't care. Like the Imperial the 9.5% tallboy goes down like a cup of water and the beloved molecule will hit us all before we can buzz the tower with our F-35 simulator game. The making good stuff affordable and in so many grocery and convenience stores (2023-24) you have to admire that.

## New Belgium Voodoo Ranger Tropic Force Tropical IPA

RATING: 4.5

Fort Collins, Colorado

While this member of the Voodoo family does not say Imperial the 9.5% ABV seals that classification for us. It has the same hops as Juice Force, Mosaic, Chinook, Phato, Galaxy, Strata, Lotus, and Sabro and the identical malt bill too. The one slight difference is the 33 IBU here

versus 30 for Juice Force. The pour is much hazier there than the other imperials and is very much a fruit smoothie look that lets some light through. The head is very lasting in near white, fine texture, and rockiness in several minutes. The first sip favors the tropical side of the hop blend, intense pineapple, a semi-tart citrus concoction, and less of a rounded fruit punch approach compared to Juice Force. The two are very deep and complex in the hop flavors but I slightly prefer this one although an Imperial blend is once again a good idea if you want more conifer, floral, and herbal notes in the broth. This has the brighter of the two approach, less somber, faintly tarter and less about pome fruit and more tropical. So if the hop varieties are identical how does this happen? It could be from dry hopping but more likely in the ratio or proportions of some hops to others differs between the two. The two are close siblings with identical hop and malt DNA I prefer this very slightly over the Juice Force but both are quite remarkable and well made. Two panelists felt this was the lesser of the two by a small margin so your preference is likely to vary.

## Pisgah Black Mountain Ale (Black IPA)

RATING: 4.5

Black Mountain, North Carolina

This brand usually comes to us on the other side of NC in affordable 500ml, running \$7.99-\$9.00. This 6.7 percenter is more dark than DIPA or Imperial strong so we are eventually splitting out the Black IPA from the rest in the near future. Four organic malts (unspecified) conspire with Amarillo, Citra, and Mosaic hops for what is described as 69% organic on the label. The pour is super-dark, completely opaque under a beige to light tan head of some duration and mostly fine bubbles. First sip is tart and malty rich but the semi-rich hops quickly come out by the middle passages, being fairly dry in the finish. This one does a shift from tart-malt to hops-bitter-dry like a chameleon. We've blended scores of stouts and porters with AIPA and ADIPA (usually using post-review leftovers) and this approximates some of them – and that is good thing because our blends are carefully designed. While not a DIPA or ADIPA, being the later because of the American hops, this is supremely malty for those who miss that strong element in the ordinary AIPA. We like it as what might be called a Porter-AIPA hybrid. It is wonderful value (price to delicious ratio) and when in Western NC or anywhere this shows up in bottles...do try

it.

## Red Hook Big Ballard Imperial IPA

RATING: 4.5

Woodinville, Washington/Portland, Oregon/Portsmouth, New Hampshire  
The cartoonish, right-out-of-Monopoly man with huge 'stache says "ya sure, ya betcha" like he dropped clean out of Minnesota or the movie Fargo. It was born in 1981 in Ballard, Washington (that being a state for some of you foreign or California airhead types) and location of Red Hook's first brewing operation, a converted transmission repair shop. Ballard is slightly North-seattle up I-5 and not far west of the famous Woodland Park Zoo. Consider Ballard the home of the first and best Seattle craft brewing revolution in general terms, if not all of that other Washington that gives us planes, operating systems, great beers, and does not tax us. First impressions are the 8.6% ABV number and their claim of "aggressive hops". The pour is clear amber-gold under a white head of short size and some duration. Nose is rich IPA. First sip is mixed, some deep complex hops but not as many as expected, rich malts within an intense context, but things quickly moving about and dropping out as the flavor passages move like a Seattle train making no stops. Next sips show the higher ABV in a way that says "I'm getting buzzed and soon" but does not interfere much. It is apparent in a good way. Three of our panelists noted it did not seem to have the massive firepower of DIPA but perhaps they would rather make a DIPA one actually likes to drink instead it being a punishment like cod liver oil? Malts are pale, Munich, and Caramel 40 along with Alchemy, Chinook, Cascade, HBC-431, Centennial, Mosaic, and Eureka hops. That hops bill is surely curious now in July 2017. Study this one to the full bottle or better two because it gets better with the session. This is the thoughtful drinker's DIPA. Some of those odd hops and their profound, varied character only come out with slow sipping and time. This one gives that dry hop bitter finish without crushing, annoying potency but in a nice way. You like it better by the sip and time. So give it time. This is not something Stone or Sierra Nevada would give us and that is a nice change of pace from the DIPA stereotype being set out by the hundreds of little breweries. Give this one a go, a long, slow go.

## Revision Dr. Lupulin Diabolical 3x India Pale Ale

4.0

Sparks, Nevada

This 11.3% creation pours a very clear gold under a white head of limited persistence. As you probably know if you bought this book, lupulin is powder found on the hairs of hop flowers from which much of the goodness springs, alpha acids and other oils and such. This one is designed to be hop rich but not overly bitter and annoying. They got that right. The ABV is very noticeable and there is some sticky mouthfeel for the density of ingredients. It does not punish from hops and only a bit from the ethanol. There is some quality here but we wanted a bit more hops complexity and a nicer malt base even if subtle.

## Revision Mindful Fermentation [NEDIPA]

RATING: 4.5

Sparks, Nevada

Revision makes about 14 different IPA and most of them NEDIPA and NEIPA styles. This 8.5 percenter rates 36 IBU. Citra, Simcoe, and milk sugar are the main factors in making this particular recipe different from the others. The pour is a medium yellow, moderately hazy, and the lace massive. Just like their NEIPA Scrog Grog NEIPA with milk sugar, this one gets lots of carbonation, we expect, from a secondary can fermentation. The head is near white, lasting, low. It is a mild fruit at first, not as tart as the Scrog Grog and not as piney or UK IPA bitter in the finish. You get some of the nice Simcoe notes to blend well with the citrus-forward Citra hop. There is faint herb, a bit of floral, and some dark fruit in the mix that is moderately complex. Like most of their many IPA recipes (and we've tried five so far) they are interesting, respectable, well made, and very much what is expected of the different varietal combinations. They are just not quite brilliant or earth-moving...so far.

## Roak Flavorful Five Double N.E. Style India Pale Ale

RATING: 4.5



Royal Oak, Michigan

"Aggressively brewed", the products from this concern appeared after their start in June 2015. This September 2018 discovery is our first review of their work. Their line is typical in some ways but different in others with a porter made with roasted chestnuts and maple syrup. The pour here is an ultra-hazy light yellow under a nearly white head of good duration and limited height. The "N.E." in the name stands for the recently named (about 2017) style called the New England IPA, a less bitter, fruit-forward style as opposed to the West Coast IPA from the other side of the ocean. The "flavorful five" here refers to the El Dorado, Citra, Galaxy, Azacca, and Amarillo hops – five powerful superheroes to any ale lovers. The Whopping 9.2% ABV level assures one of a Double or Imperial rating all the way. First sip is fruit juice city all the way with little hint of the ethanol dose until the second or third sips. "The right amount of bitterness" is employed and it should be said a true New England IPA is not going to be without some bitterness to hold down the genuine IPA tradition. It is easy drinking and pleasant yet did not set off "wow" alarm bells with all but one of the panelists. I would rather have my NEIPA with this level of bitterness and certainly a NEDIPA with lots of ethanol (the other kind of good juice) as a reward. Most of us thought it needed more infrastructural malt even though the NEIPA and NEDIPA style are not highly defined by a hop:malt balance yet. Holding to a general standard for IPA-themed ales, the best have always had supporting malts even if far in the background.

## Rogue Newport Nights West Coast India Pale Ale Brewed with El Dorado Hops

RATING: 4.5

Newport, Oregon

"Atom bomb of pine". Can't wait! This has a whopping 9.8% ABV with a hefty 60 IBU rating. The hop bill is 2-row, Pilsner, Munich, and malted what. The hop bill is "hop extract" (say what!), El Dorado (mostly we suspect), Mosaic, and Citra. Their usual Pacman yeast is employed of course. The pour is a fairly clear amber-gold under a creamy head that is low, lasting, fine of texture but variable for us. The nose is very sweet hops,

mellow and not sharp. First sip is immediately a mix of good bitterness with the promised mango, papaya, tangerine, pine, and grapefruit. It goes from sweetish tropics to dry pine in a nanosecond, leaving you with a hops blast (website says "monstrous hop punch") that is often hard to pine...I mean pin down. The "surprisingly smooth" claim is very true so suspect dry-hopping at least once. The mouthfeel is sticky and you go from a sweet hops tea (mixed flavors) to tart grapefruit to a tropical smoothie in the course of five seconds. Your brain is befuddled but likes the experience none the less. This is one of the more fruity West Coasts that is nothing like a NEDIPA smoothie at all. It's too clear, way too sweet, tea-like, and velvety to be one of those atomic bombs of tart, milkie fruit. Yet it gives a very rich dose of hops, perhaps less intense and surely more smooth than some of the eccentric, extreme Stone productions. Do we wish it more uniform and consistent? Yes and no. Hard to say really for that shifty cornucopia is quite charming. Very nicely done. Received one perfect score, the rest 4.5 to be frank.

## Saranac Galaxy Monster Double IPA (Inner Circle Series)

RATING: 4.5

Utica, New York/Bufalo, New York

We got this 8 percenter with 80 IBU in the same purchase as their Permafrost Double with the same ABV and IBU rating. Let's compare and contrast as they are both ADIPA. This label pours a super-hazy mid gold under a near white head of the finest texture, lasting but low. First sip is a mix of moderate fruit, moderate efficacious malt, and overall a dark flavor with only light bitterness. There is some tartness so the fruit favor citrus (lemon, nippy tangerine, some orange) but there are other tropicals and some floral notes too. To call it Malty NEDIPA is not quite correct but gets our head in the right direction. Given

the name we are presuming Galaxy hops are amply used and the result matches this. Permafrost is more of a pine and lemon theme with some malty depth as an effective background.

## Saranac Galaxy Permafrost Double IPA (Inner Circle Series)

RATING: 4.5

Utica, New York/ Buffalo, New York

Having the same 8% ABV and 80 IBU as Galaxy Monster we found a logical comparison among kin. American and Australian hops (none named) are employed and pine notes are mentioned on the neck label. The pour is considerably paler yellow to light gold compared to Galaxy Monster but the head is similar, fine-textured, near white, and lasting somewhat longer. The hops are more complex and favor dark herbal hop notes with lots more conifer than Galaxy Monster. There is some bright, tart lemon but the citrus is not as rich or deep as Galaxy Monster. The background malts are also there and nicely measured. Saranac has never been as savvy and skilled as these two recipes found by us in late January 2019. Pine and lemon is not a bad theme with everything else like malts they have in the kettle. This is the more tart of the two and whether there is real lemon we pretty much are led to think so with citrus esters and acid. I think I like the Galaxy Monster better of these two but not by that much.

## Sierra Nevada/Boneyard Beer West Coast-style DIPA (Boot Camp 2017)

4.0

Chico, California/ Mills Rivers, North Carolina

This partnership hales from Bend, Oregon and is obvious by the name very much within the familiar, cozy wheelhouse of the Sierra Nevada brewers. As the DIPA goes, this one has 8.3% of the desirable chemical and that ordinarily takes some brewers into so-called Triple IPA range. Citrus and herbal is how Boneyard goes so it's going to be

interesting what SN gets from this collab other than a name and gimmick. The pour is bright yellow, light-medium under a massive ivory head of mixed bubbles and some duration. First sip is super mild and it brings us back in headspace and budspace to the Beer Camp's Tree House East Meets West IPA. This too, unlike most SN products has hardly any bitterness at all and really a fairly mild herbal-fruit tea on the order of their own Pale Ale but more subtle still. The ABV and the apparently high dose of non-bitter hops is the only thing that holds it clinging to the DIPA badge. Is SN rethinking the whole "death by hops" approach that alot of ale fans (especially younger millenials and females) are well known to dislike. Tp be honest, not a few, silver-tinged, beer-gutted fellows would secretly admit they'd rather not be constantly clubbed to death by IBUs just because it feeds the ego of some brewer and suggests yet another cute DIPA name. Should we get a new class of approachable (never weak) AIPA and ADIPA that favor the less bitter side of our favorite vine? Until recent years, the low bitterness IPA and DIPA were mostly sugared up to be more drinkable. Now we can have them dry with the selection of the right hops and perhaps less (or none) of the final bittering process. Get the fruit, get the herbs, and get the pine but forget about the punch and pain. Here is an interesting glimpse of where American IPA might be going and then they will clearly be ours and not just a citrus version of the old stuff.



## Sierra Nevada Fresh Hop Double IPA

RATING: 5.0

Chico, California/Mills River, North Carolina

This one is actually not a stronger, doubled version of the basic Fresh

Hop IPA because the hops shift to Simcoe and Magnum. Honey malt, caramel, and choco malts are added with oats and wheat deselected. ABV is 8.0 and IBU rates a strong 67. It was good of them and smart really to mix the recipes up a bit or this 12-pack might get monotonous in one, big hurry. A hint more bitterness and more ethanol are not going to cut it as variations on this theme. It demonstrates the fresh hopping movement with more accuracy and insight too. You immediately notice the caramel and chocolate malts giving this one a decidedly non-golden, rich amber-copper look and the head definitely a rich cream tone. First sip is magically malty with the hops quite to the rear at first. By mid-passage the hops form a partnership with the malts and that balance is superb, absolutely superb. Finish is still a bit mellow on the hop front unless you venture into a second or third can – and one is apt to be tempted. There is anything wrong or offensive or too bold about this, giving the high ABV and IBU numbers. Panelists here wrote "yet another confirmation that Sierra has the IPA thing down, refined, reinvented, and absolutely mastered year after year. Their creativity is remarkable and the Fresh Hop Double is a stellar accomplishment" and "just amazing, remarkable in every way....a perfect benchmark for anyone wants to do a Malty ADIPA with a flawless balance of malt and hops". Indeed, it is a benchmark. Let's see....Malty ADIPA equals a MADIPA.



## Sierra Nevada Magnum Edition Hop Bullet Imperial IPA

RATING: 5.0

Chico, California/Mills River, North Carolina

"Behemoth flavors". Hop Bullet Magnum arrived first for us in January 2024 and as a popular 16-pack. This 9.5 percenter carries a lofty 48

IBU and used the Magnum hop cultivar along with some Eureka, Helios, and Idaho 7. The pour is a medium yellow, not quite a gold, more amber in low light, below a yellowish-cream head of mixed textures, rocky in three and lasting for a bit . The malt bill is crystal, oats, two-row pale, wheat, and white wheat – thus heavy on the on non-barleys. The nose of of warming malts and fine hops. First sip is mellow in terms of ABV, that very well hidden, and the hops are complex and medium rich, not overpowering nor intrusive. It is not the "blow up your tastebuds" type of DIPA that is powerful because it can be. The malts make it very drinkable, velvety, and consumable (hence the 16 packs) in a way the over-the-top DIPA will never be. "It was borderline AIPA-ADIPA for me" wrote one expert, noting the hops were not lacking but very much in subtle reserve mode. If you want your head blown off this is not the DIPA you are looking for. If you like full hopping with refinement, beguiling ease, and yet the potential of a stealthy F-22 to lay it on, this is a very, very nice brew. Wiuth the given ABV it can be treacherous and cunning with it's polished and effortless delivery of fine flavor and ethanol.

## Southern Pines Mosaic AF Imperial IPA

4.5

Southern Pines, North Carolina

Southern Pines rings a bell with some folks, mostly golfers, for it's home of the world famous Pinehurst No. 2 golf course and site of several men's and lady's US Open event. It's a darn charming, gentile, and lovely town with folks with lots of money living near those barely with monthly trailer money. The delivery of the 7.0% and 60 IBU creation is in the New England IPA style which usually means not to hoppy and more on the fruity side. Imagine driving to work through a swamp and everything turning gold on ya. The pour is so hazy it's nearly opaque and that was just the first pour from the pint cans. By the way, kudos to whoever did the tropical, fruit-themed artwork against a black background on this lovely can. Besides the terms already mentioned, the label describes it as Bougieness in a glass, chewy, luxurious, lavish, dank, unicorn milk, and with savage amounts of Mosaic hop. First sip is dripping with lovely fruits, mixed tropicals but nicely sweet-tart pineapple seems to come to fore as the most dominant. The geography is a tad confusing at first since it's from The

South, made in the New England Style, using a hop from the US Northwest, and label very suggestive of Hawaii and tropical realms. That's quite the tour of the Old USA, eh? Panelists disagreed somewhat with me saying pineapple was dominant for others felt it was mango chased with pineapple or a papaya-mango smoothie. Whatever! I fired back, quoting one of the larger vendors of Mosaic who describe it in fact as contributing notes of blueberry, tangerine, papaya, rose blossoms, grass, and bubble gum. I'm firing this damn panel as not one of them said blueberry, grass, or gum. I stand by the pineapple because there is a freaking huge pineapple fruit on the front of the can and another on the back. And no other fruit shape appears. Case closed. No really. I'm docking the pay of our panel by 50% from nothing to nothing.

## Southern Range Cat Face Double IPA [ADIPA]

RATING: 4.0

Monroe, North Carolina

The label features a big cat face on side, most likely a leopard wearing headphones, a camo ball cap, and wide black sunglasses. The reverse shows something more domestic in the feline line with headphones, huge blue aviator sunglasses, and a green cap saying "IF YOU ONLY KNEW". This 7.8 percenter pours an uber-cloudy dark yellow with a milky sheen, the head near white, massive, rocky, and enduring until the cats come home. First sip is fairly tart and ethanol-rich but not offensively so, the fruits coming out in bushel baskets with mixes of semi-sweet citrus and mixed tropicals all about. There is virtually not residual, later passage bitterness. As NEDIPA go it's about average and not especially complex in the hops department. The lack of a malt backbone is okay in this substyle but it would be...nice to round it out. Of the two faces, this is more the tender kitten nibbling on piece of dropped mango than a fierce leopard climbing a tropical tree for potent orbs

## Southern Tier A Wrinkle In The Fabric Unfiltered

## Double IPA (Science and Art Collection)

4.0

Lakewood, New York

Every time I go to write a Southern Tier review I forget what state they're from. Doesn't sound New Yorkish does it? Got clever and Googled "southern tier fabric" and came up with their sewing center. First of all, the hops being Mandarinina Bavaria and Huell Melon are not your everyday fare nor is the 8.5% punch. This is "episode" or release 2 of 6 planned in the Science and Art series, offered first on March 2, 2018. We got it roughly a month later. This one is created to a wrinkle in the fabric of space and time. That spaceship is serving orange and melon juice along the route. It's designed for hopheads as the 80 IBU and big ABV number suggest. Pour is rich gold, not as hazy as expected, the head massive, fine-textured and old ivory in tone. The flavors are very strange, a good strange for most of us ('cept two), and that is clearly from the unfamiliar Huell Melon. Now cantelope is not for everyone in the hop or fresh real form and neither was this treatment. Serve it blind to your beer tasting club and I doubt anyone will guess entirely what's going on. Two of panel were frankly disgusted with it's potent hop profile of that odd melon style and I frankly never really warmed up to it; assuming one can ever warm up to a ADIPA of this eccentricity. As an experimental science project it's fine, as a pleasant sipper of any IPA intensity, it is not the most charming. It is very well crafted to be sure – just three notches too peculiar, outlandish, and for most of us.

BLENDING NOTE: We added one third of a conventional pale ale and those odd melon hops turned into a more useful thing, not so hold or revolting. Just a reminder that if you're stuck with science project beers not entirely of your liking there is an alternative to doing a mixed pitcher or the sink drain. Careful, thoughtful planning can temper such things into fairly likeable, decent, surely more decent drinks with some of odd edges rounded and the flavors more compatible to your liking.

## Stillwater Artisanal Wavy Double IPA

4.0

Stratford, Connecticut



The pint can with ten shades of fluorescent green and gold with wavy lines comes straight from the 70's but the DIPA does not. The regular IPA barely registered on American shores in the 70's. And if you saw a micro-brewery on the corner you probably just got some bad acid. This eight percenter a light, faintly hazy yellow under a near white rocky head of mixed textures. Their website shows the artisanal, even crazy, nature of their formulae and indeed the beer list is found under a link called "our works" like they were masterpieces every one. Found a dark Belgian made with violet flowers. This label has not yet appeared on the site. As DIPA go this one is fairly on the sweet side, favoring fruits and florals with less emphasis on the pine, classic IPA noble notes, and danker things. It is bright cheerful and a phrase we use a lot for these fruit-forward DIPA... "never punishing". The label reflects having to down bottle after bottle and can after can with cute name that were so hop toxic we could barely drink them and gave them an adult beverage. This is a friendly sort but we are not saying all good DIPA have to be fruity and not Noble hop or coniferously rich. Panelists here felt "it was average for the modern fruity DIPA...not overly complex nor too simple either" and "a good venture into mellow DIPA but nothing to stand out from so many others from your town or mine".

## Stillwater Dank Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Stratford, Connecticut

This 8 percenter ADIPA adds wheat and spelt to the usual malt bill. The pour is hazy, amber-gold, the head light cream, lasting, short and of variably bubble sizes. The nose is light fruit, slightly sweet. First sip is lightly fruited, semi-sweet, not tart, and by mid passage a very dank, tea-like creation. Bitterness as perceived is light, intensifying if you have more than a single can. It is a mellow, dark, somber hop tea that is very drinkable and easy to down, cold or even warmish, supported by nice malts, and fairly refined as such. The ABV is well hidden and only now and again raises its head and to no disadvantage to the overall effect. It is well named for being a dank, dark, and almost savory ADIPA and we are seeing more of these in 2018 in reaction to the smoothie-like NEIPA and hundreds of West Coast AIPA copies, both good and average. The dank, somber, tea-like IPA without British IPA bitterness might become a substyle soon.

## Stone 22 Anniversary Anni-Matter Double IPA (Limited Series)

RATING: 4.5

Escondido, California/Richmond, Virginia

"The no haze double IPA" is a whopping 9.1% ABV made by filtering for a clean, crisp, very hoppy approach. Stone pits two brewer teams against each other for this competition. This winning team is Jason Smith and Jose Flores. It pours a bright amber or light orange under an ivory, mixed bubble head of some duration. Carbonation is vigorous. The IBU hit at an impressive 81. First sip is juicy, fruity (plum, apricot, melon, berries, grape, cherry, lime, mixed citrus claimed), overall citrus-forward with secondary and tertiary profiles of malted oats, some biscuit, and a bit of herbs and floral notes. It is faintly sweet. Of the claimed fruit flavors listed above, apricot, melon, lime, mixed citrus, herbs, and resin are most clear to us. The hops employed are Columbus, Denali, Hopsteiner #06297, Galaxy, Citra, and Amarillo. We researched at hopsteiner.com (accessed 8.10.2018) and their experimental #06297 is a by strength 2/5 in citrus, 4/5 in fruit, 1/5 in floral, 1/5 resinous, and 2/5 in herbal. Officially they sell it as orange, vanilla, berry, and tropical fruit in theme, bred from Eastern Gold, Apollo, and Cascade. Alphas run 13–18% with 33–39% humulone. First sip shows it very hop, clean, lingering bitterness low and not as citrus-forward as we expected. Nor is it one of the those, ultra-fruity, cornucopia New England IPA styles. It is too resinous, herby, and Old World hop chemical-wise to be that. It's a nice compromise between old and new DIPA styles.

## STONE Enjoy By 01.01.21 Unfiltered IPA

RATING: 4.5

Escondido, California and Richmond, Virginia

"Brewed to be festively fresh". Coming out in December 2020 before Christmas this is a wonderful holiday treat for us Stoners who like our stimulating herbs in liquid form. The bottle simply says IPA and it was not until we got to their website we were sure it was a proper DIPA, a different file in my system. It is 9.4% ABV and 90 IBU similar to the 07.04.20 product of a similar name and different date. Indeed they recognize this stuff has a similar recipe and it more fruit forward than

the filtered version. The hop bill is the same as the 07.04.20, being very long and complex. Pour is a very dark gold with amber tints, the head small, cream-toned, and diverse in texture. The lace is very active and endless. The flavors are as complex and diverse as the hop choices, like the 07.04.20 having some grapey bitterness from the Nelson Sauvignon. It is best very cold and as it warms the bitter nature gets a tad negative and less enjoyable. It is no worse nor better than the 07.04.20; from memory of course as a bottle that old would not be fresh nor fair. While there is no greater fan of Stone than our panel, this is a bit "too much kitchen sink...too little harmony and purpose for me" wrote one of our gang. A hopfest like this is rare so I will probably buy the next hundred dates of it. If all the busy, noisy, crowded stuff is not your cup of hop tea...just one date will do ya.

## Stone Enjoy By 07.04.20 Unfiltered IPA

RATING: 4.5

Escondido, California/Richmond, Virginia

"A defiantly independent Double IPA". The "Enjoy By" series is often IPA-based but not always, single or double, but also flavored and if the date is in your future...chances are it's new to you. I've tried six or even by now so memorizing those dates is just not possible with my 60 y.o., ale-addled brain. The one clocks at 9.4% a potent 90 IBU so is no weak can by any means. They say it is akin to earlier EB recipe but the lack of filtering gives "a perceptible change within the hop aroma...more fruit-forward than our filtered version" and less of a dank and fruit balance. The hop bill is massive with Nugget, Super Galena, Simcoe, Delta, Target, Amarillo, Cascade, Galaxy, Citra, Nelson Sauvignon, Motueka, and Helga. The pour is rich, clear gold with some amber hints, the head near white, shortish, diverse in texture but short-lived. First sip is sticky, heavy mouthfeel and it hit a good bitter stride from the get go. The fruits are strong and dark both – and those are different concepts in this case. I think the Nelson Sauvignon grape kicks up very well. Overall you get a dark peach, other stone fruits, mixed tropics, and citrus muted with bitter pine notes. The finish is quite bitter, sticky-dry, and makes it an IPA with absolute true, deep credentialing. Again with 9.4% you get some ethanol pop by the end of the can (even our small 12 oz. one) and like everything in the Stone EB series it's going to be special, mind-blowing, a

change-of-pace, world-beating, and/or well worth waiting for. Some firms would call this a Triple IPA for the ABV and strong hop dosing. In this series Stone has never let us down, the rating be damned. You admire it even if not always easy to put one down and it's worth dissecting hop by hop until the end.



## Stone Enjoy By 04.20.2022 Hazy IPA

RATING: 5.0

Escondido, California/Richmond, Virginia

"Blazingly fresh". This nine percenter with a whopping 90 IBU was available to us in August of 2022 but it tasted just delightful and fresh enough. By the way this is not the "Enjoy by 4.20" without the year in celebration of....you know what. That said, they say "a celebration of those magical green little buds we call hops". The hops are Rakau and Citra leading to sweet orange, tropical fruit, peach, and apricot notes according to the program. Since IPA of a far weaker British form were able to endure the long voyage to India, we figure 3 months and 5 days will be just fine for this creation. Knowing Stone their IPA would last a voyage to Mars. The pour is lightly hazed (by today's milkshake standards anyhow) and almost clear by those new measures, the head ivory, large to massive, fine to medium in texture, rocky in two and lasting well. First sip is shockingly smooth for the hopping and ABV level, enough sweetness to take the edge off any bitterness and mellow it to a very refined, velvety place. It is almost Sierra Nevada velvet if the Stonies will pardon the compliment. The fruit notes are as stated and there is light pine and some supportive floral bits too. If some silly Brit said "Americans can't do IPA" this would be one label to put into their face. It is that smooth yet rich, refined, classy, and as

one panelist put it "with all the yummy fruit-filled charm of American varieties". The fruit balance is wonderful and those supportive conifers, florals, and herbs really make it deep. We were kind of burned out on IPA but this one brought us back into the camp as big, huge, massive fans of the ADIPA when done this well. Brilliant, simple brilliant.

## Stone Fear.Movie.Lions Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Richmond, Virginia

This latest Stone creation (June 4, 2018 release) is 8.5%, 60 IBU, and inspired by a sign at their Richmond brewery. Their explanation makes no sense to me. Something about a global addressing system. Then they imply it's a puzzle you can solve and write them about. It's supposed to be the world's first what3words.com beer. Now even more confused. Apparently that website generates a three word code for your location. Mine was something about eggshells. It created a second one for me without asking about powder. Not getting it. I guess it's some kind of secret code for people to find you on Google Maps. It's about privacy so why is this printed on a beer can? The pour is amber-gold, fairly clear, the head ivory and lasting and finely textured. It is unfiltered but the haze is not much for that. The flavor is very, very mellow, more American Pale Ale (APA) than real IPA, being neither of potent AIPA fruit ale (aka New England IPA) nor original British IPA. It may be double in terms of ingredients (and they would know) but it's less than regular, single IPA strong in final, flavor terms. The APA or American Pale Ale is a notch below the most subtle IPA in terms of hop intensity. This is a delightful, enchanting recipe (as they often do) with special complexity not typical of APA, lots of subtle notes, lovely background malts, a clean but sufficiently bitter finish, and the obvious product of many types of hops that agree with each other. Their website claims it is a New England Style IPA but I would argue it's still more on the APA side being not as fruit as most New England IPA. They mention "lingering tropical fruit" (somewhat) and lime peel (perhaps if one imagines it) but APA it remains to us.

## Stone Inevitable Adventure Double IPA (Limited

## Series)

RATING 4.5

Escondido, California/Richmond, Virginia

At 8.9% and 84 IBU this DAIPA (Double American IPA) pours are mostly clear dark golden with some amber tints under a very white head of mixed textured, some very fine, most lasting. There was lots of carbonation at first, much less later. It uses Loral hops (known since 2016) and the now rare Dr. Rudi hops which was one of the first high alpha varieties since 1976. Dr. Rudi provides pine and herbs while the Loral adds more florals and citrus. This lable was first released on January 29, 2018. First sips is bright, alive, refreshing, and only in the late middle to later passage do we get the "inevitable pairing" of this complimentary hop varieties. Second sips and all others are hoppy from the get go. This is one of Stone's more drinkable doubles and it's very engaging with a finish slightly bitter but mellowed out by faintly sweet malts and fruity hops. The 84 IBU is a big, big number but it seems more like a 50 or 60 to us. While superbly made and nicely judged, it does not excite as much as some of their other creations. It's a nice side project and a good way to experience both of these special hop varieties.

## STONE Liquid Poem Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Escondido, California and Richmond, Virginia

"Glory to the hop...a lyrical journey for the palate...undeniably loud". This 9.2 percenter with "100+" IBU arrived for us in late June 2021 as "the liquid equivalent of some old school classic punk rock poetry". Official release was 27 April 2021. Then they talk about "co-pioneering" the West Coast IPA. Beer historians please note this admission and clarification! This is a 4C concoction with Centennial, Chinook, Columbus, and "a dash of new classic Citra for good measure". Malts are not listed on the bottle or website. The pour is a mostly clear, rich amber-gold under a cream head of mixed texture, rocky in 60 seconds but lasting low a tad longer. First my admission. I got tired and sick and freakin' tired and fed up to height of Everest with IPA and all the cute names after reviewing 278 of them. I took a break and told my wine and beer store guides "anything but sour and

IPA today please". They understood the saturation and nomenclatural abuse and state of hype 2020 to 2021. It got to be just way too much for many true IPA lovers who just did not need one more hazy, milkshake berry something named for a cat. I am now back with a fresh approach to IPA now this June 2021, free and clear of IPA influence, abuse, and boredom since about March 2021. Stone would be the firm to get me back into the grove of the real, good stuff if anyone can do it. First sip here is heavy on the mouth feel, hop tea dense but not sweet, dry and hop-tea style in a dense, thick, double way, Stone way to be sure. The 4 C's blend well as we all know but some brewers are too cheap or too dumb or too clueless to include all of them. Stone never scrimps nor goes frugal ass on us. This is a dense, dry, hoppy charmer and a good introduction back to DIPA, make that ADIPA for me. There are hints of sweetness here and there, redeeming slower, simpler, oasis notes here and there but it always returns to the potent, hop-tea punch that is the Koch and Wagner Symphony in C Major. My local wine shop was selling it for just \$9.99 for a six and you could not some very inferior local micros for even a buck or two more. This is value, mass production value, charming as always, perhaps not different nor enlightening this time but steady and ready and competent beyond any doubt. Symphony in C Major.

## Suffolk Punch 16 Hands Double IPA

RATING 4.5

Charlotte, North Carolina

"Proper good draft". This 8.1 percenter has a potent 65 IBU and the name refers to the height of a mature Suffolk Punch English-bred draught horse. The hop bill consists of Azacca, Simcoe, Amarillo, and Centennial. The pour is a dark, light cloudy golden-amber under a cream head of small size, mostly very fine texture, and lasting well. The nose is fruitier than Carmen Miranda's panties. First sip is full of rich, hoppy fruits in a very diverse blend with both bright and darker notes coming out. There is slight bitterness from the get go. It is a Fruity ADIPA and slightly intermediate to and transitional to an NEDIPA but more belong here than in the NEDIPA file. The sweet malt depth and very sweet, tea-like hops suggest dry hopping out the ying-yang and to a very perfect level. It's a very yummy, multi-hops, tea-style, very sweet ADIPA and very close to a perfect recipe. There is a heavy mouthfeel at times, medium at others and the hop varieties seem to

pop in and out of sequence with one flavor dominant and a nanosecond later something else. Bitter pineapple might give rise to a sweet tropical smoothie which in turn becomes a tartish citrus and then finally a dry, herbal place. You could session this is the true sense of that term meaning to slowly savor it over time and extract more with each sip. It's very nicely constructed but misses our perfect "wow" factor by a small margin.

## Thornbridge Halcyon Imperial IPA

RATING: 4.0

Bakewell, England

Very pretty label, a golden Greek statue against a teal tapestry with an foiled bottle neck. Haycion since the 14th century refers to a Greek Kingfisher (they are mythical in effect but not existence) and since a dozen other things from businesses to games. Alcyone, a greek maiden apparently turned herself mythologically into this flying thing. The actual, modern bird (the zoological genus *Halycion* is real) was said to calm both the seas and skies, storms not occurring during those days. The word usually refers to comforting, golden, winter solstice times as when the bird was incubating; a happy, peaceful, prosperous, calm, and glorious time as in "Halcyon Days". Supposedly the Kingfishers calmed the seas for a week or more so they could lay their eggs on seaside places. One does not ordinarily expect a 7.4% imperial IPA in such a pale yellow, very clean trim with almost no lace and a large, Pils-like head. That proved to be a bad sign. Besides full-hopping they promise tropical fruit, mango, and summer berries. Pasteurization is eliminated. Caramel biscuity sweetness is said to augment the fruit. Imperial status might be claimed by the ethanol percentage but even after a full bottle, I do not get the fullness of the hopping as an American would judge the DIPA style. There is some background fruit, good quality but not spectacular nor particularly joyous. This DIPA is as clean and clear as a Pils and not the least bit hazy and yeasty – thus not possibly too tropical in fruits. It pleasant and well made enough but for serious hops or fruit one need look elsewhere. If there were mangoes and summer berries, the monkeys and bears, respectively, must have stolen them. They are not in this bottle. If this is imperially it is the fourth cousin to the Queen twelve times removed. It would be 3.5 as a DIPA but as we judge beer for it really is and not claimed to be, 4.0 is justified here.





## TO ØL Final Frontier American-Style Imperial India Ale (IIPA)

RATING: 5.0

Lochristi-Hijfte, Belgium

Many of you ale experts know the TO ØL dudes will do American ales with a finesse greater than 90% of the craft and big micros in the US or sometimes blend the Belgian way with the New World hops or even do something very radical and wonderful and experimental with or without their partner at Mikkeller. This is another of their labels that is a black and white collage of miniature pictures of things quite unrelated to beer and yet more appealing to me than all the neon-glowing, blood-dripping wild flying creature labels in the world. I see a birch tree (maybe), toadstools, and maybe a scene from South Park among them? The pour of this 11.2 "art bottle" pours as cloudy an amber as any brewer ever bottles and the head is pale cream, lively, and off mixed textures. The nose is bright, hoppy, favoring lemon. First sip is very tart for a DIPA or IIPA, not punishing like most imperial, hoppy things but the jury remains out until the entire bottle flows down our necks past our buds and cranial analysis. We have seen the final frontier and it's made of hops so strong and lemony we almost have hop-filled lemonade. Not quite but we're almost to that point with the sugar. Hops are Columbus, Simcoe, and Centennial. I have read reviews of it being "well-balanced" and we politely say WTF to all those freakin' brainless new-to-ale wannabees because there is very little malt in this formula. It is pretty much all sharp, tart, citrus hops and very little else going on. The finish is bitter, a good bitter, lemon with increasing orange to give warmth at times, lots of ethanol to add to the nip, and with the odd tropical fruit note. One panelists

almost shouted in his email that we have the lemon wrong for it is more about grapefruit. We sipped more and he may be right that the roundness of the esters are favoring grapefruit in the later passages and the more you consume it. I would say lemon first, a quick fade towards the more warm orange profile, and lots of grapefruit and lemon in the notes as the bottle comes to a close. There is a bit of subtle hops pine and I think that affects where what species of Citrus we all perceive because I've never been offered a cool glass of pine lemonade or orange juice with a pine sprig in my life. Perhaps I should coin the term resin-citrus here and now. Labs can analyze this down to the molecule and how much of them present but what you and I as humans perceive will never capture our own experience. Still...I'd put this one in a machine and see what we get.

## Troegs Golden Thing Double IPA Brewed with Lemondrop Hops

RATING: 4.5

Hershey, Pennsylvania

I really like the straight-forward chart on the back of these big cans. ABV is 8.2% and malts Pils, Vienna, and Wheat. This is noteworthy for some of the modern DIPAs are getting themselves in a more mellow place with wheat on malt bill and richer for the Pils addition. Hops are Centennial, Denali, and Lemondrop. The brewers here were so impressed by Lemondrop they just had to "build a beer around it". Centennial gives it more pine, more lemon, both tart lemonade and mixed sweet citrus. The pour is medium yellow, light gold under a near white head that is very foamy, lasting, and thick. The nose is very subtle, light fruit, favoring citrus. First sip is slight tart, citrus in spades, the next passage turning more sweet lemon and then sweet of mixed citrus with lemon still peaking. The finish is semi-sweet, always abounding in lemon-based citrus but a little of other species to round it out. Ever pour a small bit of tangerine or orange juice (5-8% max) into lemonade? You can and maybe should. It rounds it out unless you insist on the completely traditional thing. This is a Citrus ADIPA on paper and in truth. The high ABV is absolutely hidden unless you session it out with some techniques that most beer drinkers don't use. The bitterness of the hopping is light-moderate so there is only a hint of Brit-to-India IPA here. A nice lemony DIPA but no "wow" for of

the eight of us.



## Twelve Percent Zodiak Multiverse Imperial India Pale Ale [NEDIPA]

RATING: 5.0

Stratford, Connecticut

As of November 7, 2018 never see a can like this before. The top is entirely black, lid opening, and pull all. The side is black with pale white letting and an artful pattern like a wreath of daisies, golded, paper, diamonds?, puzzle pieces, and knots. The pour is one of the most hazy golds on record here, under a lasting white head of limited size. The nose is all fruit suggesting a NEDIPA (New England/North East Double India Pale Ale). First sip with 8% confirms the NEDIPA classification with tropical, citrus, and others in the mix and in good measure. Panalsist remarked "this is a divese fruit cup, all from hop chemistry and supremely likable and as easy to down as any smoothie" and "a refined NEDIPA with all the addition notes from yeast and a brilliant blending of hop varieties". This is a good benchmark for a modern, 2018 and forward NEDIPA. The hop blend has much more complexity than your average NEIPA or NEDIPA and they judge the sweet, fruity finish just right. These things can get overly tart, excessively sweet, or oddly bitter in attempting to be partly of the British IPA style. This is none of those things and immediately separate itself from more than twenty NEIPA and NEDIPA we have evaluated this year. Multiverse is a good name for such a diverse, multiplicity of hop notes, and a stellar shine that is exceedding rare in any glass.

## Uinta Detour Double India Pale Ale

RATING: 4.5

Salt Lake City, Utah

This 9.7% amber-golden IPA with a rich golden-tan head is about blazing a new trail – hence a detour of sorts to a higher, more vistic road. Nose is of sugar-hops. First sip is mid-low sweet, smooth as the main road after the detour, slick and flat as [your foul analogy here]. The big corked bottles for \$12.99 are decent in some of the Uinta labels (especially the glorious Labyrinth) but less exciting, close to failing in other recipes. This is a very solid, enjoyable DIPa but I am not sure this bottle is equivalent to six regular bottles of the other potent stuff. I found it very uplifting, impressive without blowing me away. It's like test-driving a dozen cars and each driving as well as an MB S-series or Bimmer 5. There is some lack of excitement in predictable, high levels of competency, the boredom of perfection and near-perfection all about us, broadly distributed among many producers. But was this not our goal for micros 25 years back?

## Award of Merit 2012



## BrewBase Reviews

### Uinta Dubhe Imperial Black IPA

RATING: 5.0

Salt Lake City, Utah

While their forementioned Detour Double IPA came in corked bottles, this label came to us as four 12 oz. bottles for \$9.99 (February 2012). This offering is 9.2% ABV, flowing as a semi-transparent, dark brown with a lasting yellowish-cream head. It is also brewed with hemp seed so I hope my boss doesn't hand me a little plastic cup with lid tomorrow. Actually hemp and it's seed lacks the THC or buzz-chemistry of you-know-what. While on the topic of things high and far-out, Dubhe is the Utah State Star (aka *Alpha Ursae Majoris*) in the Great Bear constellation in front of the Big Dipper near the bowl....not

that kind of bowl. And would you know it? Dubhe is pronounced quite conveniently as DOO-bee, another name for hemp's outlaw half-brothers wrapped in paper. The bros sang of Black Water makin' everything all right. Keep on shinin'n. Come dance with this pretty mama all night long.

The malts are shockingly efficacious for an IPA, loaded with toasted, roasted, semi-choco, and licorice flavors, the hops and hemp bringing up the rear with some sophisticated but sturdy notes; all of them pleasant and glorious. This is a malt-addict's IPA and one a hopaholic can share with them. I recommend a twelve step program or three 4-packs to verify your addiction and serve as a pre-screening tool. This forceful, dark IPA is not so much smooth as tastefully bold, powerful, never crude, surely herbal-malty on the IPA spectrum. Here the hemp seed proves it merit to give sharp differentiation in the recently trendy DIPA market. *Alpha Ursae Majoris* here is actor bear Gentle Ben, formidable and rare, approachable within limits, and sure to impress and give awe as the finest of it's species. Award of Merit 2012.

## Victory Dirtwolf Double IPA

RATING: 4.0

Downington, Pennsylvania

"Untamed howling hop flavor". At 8.7% and 85 it surely has the numbers behind it. The malt bill is Pilsner and pale crystal with a hop recipe of Citra, Simcoe, Mosaic, and Chinook. "Aggressive dry-hopping" is employed to favor citrus and earthy notes. The pour is a nearly clear medium yellow below a head of ivory white, lasting, mixed textures, sometimes tough tardily rocky, and medium of depth. For the record, their basic, single IPAs are called No Brainer and Hopdevil with their hazy NEIPA is named Cloud Walker. First sip is very fruity, bordering on a moderate NEIPA but clearly not of that haze nor intensity. A smattering of bitter notes, pleasant ones all, come to fore by middle passage. The early passages favor sweet citrus, mixed tropicals, pines, surprising strong florals, and bitter herbs. It is pretty much the entire American hop toolbox and it finished more than dry than before. The agreeable fruit start makes it charming but the middle to late passages become fairly ordinary and the very much the kitchen sink. It is not as velvety as dry-hopping usually permits, nay demands, and so that is a bit of a let down. It is fairly West Coast DIPA

and not the modern, dry-hopped things with hops as smooth as a telescope mirror. Even our IPA traditionalist in the group felt the bitterness was not set harmoniously with the hop mix and it just not fitting together as it should. It seemed like a young, unproven recipe to us and much in need of a tweeking.



## Victory Juicy Monkey Hazy Imperial IPA

RATING: 5.0

Downington, Pennsylvania

"Packin' A Punch". At 9.5% this is no hoppy wallflower. The "monkey" in the name indicates it's tropical fruit focus. The hop bill is Sabro, Lotus, and Sultana – hardly the average fare. The pour at first was fairly clear, a nice golden with amber tints. The last pour will be slightly hazy but no smoothie/lactose look ever. The head was surprisingly near white, of mixed finer textures, down in two and last as a ring. "Holy crap...this is a strange one" wrote our most accomplished IPA expert. The can said pineapple and orange so we were ready for that. But what popped up immediately were some very nice and unique fruit esters, one approaching grape soda, a closer one to that of bubblegum, along with stone fruits and some orange. The pineapple mostly did not come up at first but then again I ate raw pineapple today and so the comparison might not be as favorable for me. Some got the pineapple and said it was stronger than the citrus – others quite the opposite. The later/last hazier pours are more full of pineapple and this must be noted. Pouring a full stein at once might be advisable. It had faint mango too and almost negative for hop bitterness. "Not sure if this is from a kid's juice box or a really fancy upscale cocktail bar" wrote one very insightfully panelist who got that bit

so right. It is odd and strange, fruity to the hilt and enough to drive a rainforest full of monkeys stark raving mad. Don't bring any to a real rainforest as you'd probably be beaten to a pulp with appendages gone – that is how greedy monkeys work. As fruity NEDIPA go, this is one of the more fun, interesting ones, far from formulaic and common in their approach.

## Victory Mighty Things™ Imperial IPA

RATING: 4.5

Downingtown, Pennsylvania

Dry hopped with "whole flower American hops" that are citrus-themed, this 8.3 percent recipe promises good things, mighty ones in fact. The pour is medium yellow with some gold hues, slightly hazy, the head near white, lasting long, mixed texture and medium tall. The nose is tart favoring light lemon. First sip is very tart and as expected with lemon up front and slightly more deep citrus esters all coming up by middle passages. The finish is very dry, lightly bitter but never Old India intense. The citrus notes only get cleaner, sharper, and more loveable as the bottle is downed. There is much more substance than simple lemon and we get a full-blown, natural chemical bill that makes this a pleasant brew. There is a tea-like somberness and dryness in the finish and occasionally non-citrus fruit notes jump out to good advantage. I think I like my citrus-forward ADIPA that have more tangerine and orange notes but if you like a mostly lemon approach, this might impress more for you. The whole flower gives it good stratification and they get high marks with us for that extra expense.

## Weyerbacker Double Simcoe Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Easton, Pennsylvania

SIMCOE® is a registered trademark for a special cultivar of hops that is known for its American-style properties, bittering and aroma-loading (dual purpose) but not harsh, high (12–14%) in alpha acids, infused with very tasty citrus and pine notes. You double it and you get double the pleasure, double the fun for the hops lover. This variety has only been around since 2000 so it could not have been made until recent years. This is one very lovely, strongly IPA, endlessly rewarding



and just barely sweet enough to make it very accessible. First sips were perfect 5.0 bottle elements but with some saturation it could be a tad rich and annoying – so half a bottle had to be deducted by the final sips of any bottle was done. If barrel-aged and/or engaged with a touch of fruity yeast, the edge would be rounded some and perfection could result. If you like your hops full-bore, rich enough to kill any bug in it's path, and unrelenting, this might be your dream IPA.

## Williamsburg Alewerks Bitter Valentine

RATING: 4.5

Williamsburg, Virginia

The pour of this 8.3% ale is rich amber-gold under a short, ivory head of mix sized bubbles. The nose is hoppy-fruit, slight on the sweet side. The hops, unnamed, come from the Pacific Northwest and the malting is said to be on the light side. First sip confirms this is mostly true. The hops in the background are sumptuous, complex, and fruit, not favoring citrus or pine in a strong way. The slightly higher than single IPA ethanol is apparent from additional sips and it serves mainly to add to the bitter, fine nature of the ale. There is a unique quality about it that our panel here found "special...a little out of the ordinary...it is fruit-filled and hoppy but in the SN [Sierra Nevada] or citrusy IPA way I expect...pleasant and potent". Another wrote "approachable but never weak...I downed a bomber with no effort or worry...the hop notes are balanced of different types, favoring fruit with background conifer and Old World nips...enough malt to make it rewarding....nicely done".

## Wyndridge Handsome Bull Double IPA

RATING: 4.5

Dallastown, Pennsylvania

"Live Crafty".The sky blue can shows a gentlemanly bull head smoking a pipe in a fancy suit with an ascot. Now that is a real cattle baron! As an 8.3 percenter was made by a brewmaster who took this same bull by the horns and wrangled up a Citra, Calypso, Mosaic, Waimea, and Mandarina Bavaria soup of the first order. Besides barley, oats and wheat were in the malt bill. The pour is a very hazy, gold under a fine-textured, white, lasting, lumpy head. The fruit notes come out in a

mix of malt with hops and nothing like the smoothie style of a modern NEIPA. It has a fairly bitter, traditional DIP finish and a very classy one. The smoothing wheat is apparent and not a few very fine, mellow ADIPA (American Double IPA) benefit from this addition. The ethanol follows you close down the dusty trail but never fires on'ya nor summons the Sheriff. It just sits there watching, mostly harmless. The ethanol is real but harmless, the hops complex and not overly potent, rightly judged, the oats and wheat making it more sublime and easy-drinking, a fairly traditional bitter end, and the hazy yeast with hints of ale fruit a glorious contribution. One panelist wrote "mellowed by the mild barley, wheat, and oats and made delightfully stratified by the diverse choice of hops...fruit forward but not ignoring bitter which we need to be a true IPA...they should be very, very proud of their success here". yeast particles of any note and is rich golden. Still you taste the yeast. It is a slightly richer, more fruity and sweeter version of the Hefeweizen, loaded with banana, tart generic fruit (citrus or pineapple perhaps), faint cloves or undisclosed spices, faint supporting malt, and with 7.5% ABV or about 2.5% more than the basic Hefeweizen. It won the Gold Medal in both the 2004 and 2006 World Beer Cup. I drink these all afternoon into a numb, happy sleep and not miss anything from a stronger wheat or more spiced Belgian that too is fruity and spicy as here before us. This is an enchanting German masterpiece, always pleasant and well-mannered, full of interesting notes that change with the temp of the fluid, and yet competent and more at everything from iced to ambient degrees. I don't see it often but one would do very well to seek it out and set it's position among the other choices. I for one adore and celebrate it and it has never done me wrong when served to demanding friends.