

ISSUE #123 | RESPECT BEER

Beeradvocate

BUILDING A BIGGER ROADHOUSE | PERFECTION BY THE HALF PINT

THE THREE BROTHERS WHO
CHANGED THE LANDSCAPE
OF MODERN BREWING

ALES FOR ANIMALS

SALT & SMOKE

APPALACHIAN-INSPIRED
BEER CUISINE





FROM THE SOURCE by Kristen Pope

Roadhouse Brewing Company

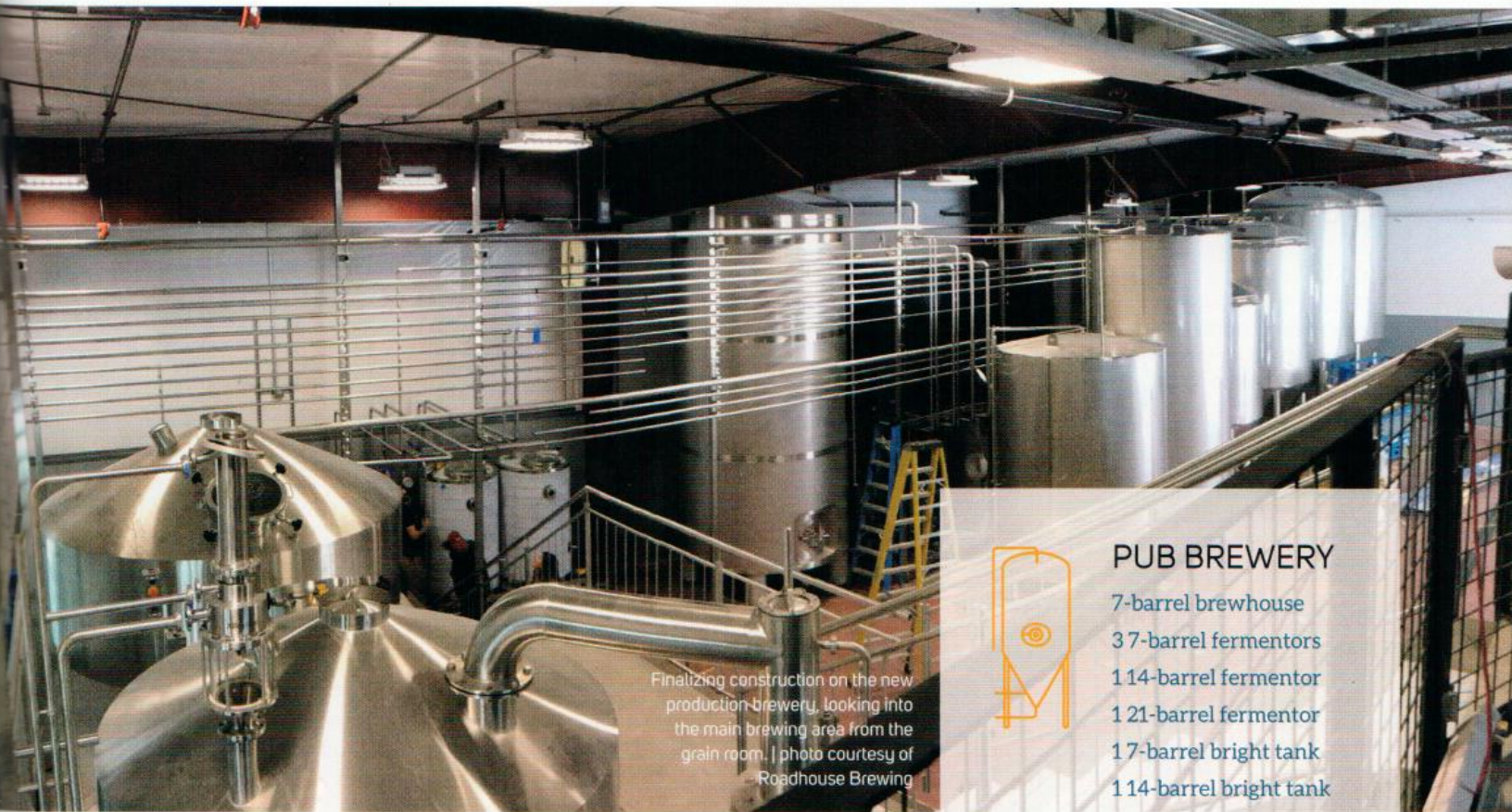
In late afternoon, Q Roadhouse & Brewing in Jackson Hole, Wy., is packed with people making their way home after a day on the slopes. Ski patrollers and ski instructors take position next to tourists on bar stools, cracking open peanuts in metal pails on the bar and tossing the shells onto the floor while drinking pints of Wilson IPA.

Roadhouse Brewery originated at Q Roadhouse—a restaurant still known as “The Q” to many locals—in 2013, when restaurateur Gavin Fine and homebrewers Colby Cox and Adam Chenault turned a side room that previously housed a pool table into a 350-square-foot brewery. In this tiny, cramped space, the crew cranked out a collection of brews, including Saison en Regalia, the 2014 Great American Beer Festival silver medalist in the Belgian Fruit Beer category.

From that original brewhouse, Roadhouse produces under 1,000 barrels per year—enough beer to supply the restaurant and 15 or so eateries and bars around town; rumor has it the ski patrol at nearby Jackson Hole Mountain Resort keeps an emergency supply of Wilson IPA, a beer formerly known as Rhombus, handy, too.

But new things are on the horizon for Roadhouse. Just a few miles away, a new 10,000-square-foot production facility under construction is scheduled to open this summer.

Roadhouse brewer
Kyle Fleming. | photo
by Greg Gricus



Finalizing construction on the new production brewery, looking into the main brewing area from the grain room. | photo courtesy of Roadhouse Brewing



PUB BREWERY

- 7-barrel brewhouse
- 37-barrel fermentors
- 1 14-barrel fermentor
- 1 21-barrel fermentor
- 17-barrel bright tank
- 1 14-barrel bright tank

PRODUCTION BREWERY

- 30-barrel brewhouse
- 1 30-barrel fermentor
- 3 60-barrel fermentors
- 2 90-barrel fermentors
- 1 60-barrel bright tank
- 1 90-barrel bright tank
- 150+ barrels and 3 foeders

In partnership with Colby Cox, it's part of an expansion by Fine Dining Restaurant Group, a company helmed by Gavin Fine and partner Roger Freedman that operates nine Jackson-area businesses. There, head production brewer Kyle Fleming will have an annual capacity of 30,000 barrels, with plans to produce around 5,000 barrels in the first year.

- The new production site will have a taproom, bottling line, barrel-aging room, and offer tours. It will also eventually have a beer cellar inspired by Cox's trip through the Flanders region of Belgium, where he visited 't Poatersgat, a cavernous underground bar in Bruges. Meanwhile, the 350-square-foot operation within the restaurant will focus on seasonal, specialty, and experimental brews.

Sourced from Next Door

In a remote mountain town, working with the brewery down the street is sometimes the best and simplest option when it comes to sourcing beer.

"I was having a hard time actually getting a lot of [imported] Asian beers in Wyoming," says Sam Johnson, co-owner of Teton Thai, a restaurant at the base of Jackson Hole Mountain Resort. "They physically don't carry them out here."

So he turned to his longtime friends at Roadhouse to design a refreshing, sessionable brew to complement the spice of Thai cuisine. The result was Fire Extinguisher, a 6.5 percent ABV ale described as "crisp and dry, with a hint of grain sweetness and a subtle citrusy and herbal hop aroma." The custom creation is now one of Teton Thai's top-selling beers, emptying about 13 kegs per month.

"We didn't want to be gimmicky with lemongrass or something like that," Johnson says. "So we made a beer we wanted to drink that's appropriate with Thai food." Since the brewery was just 5 miles away, Johnson even went over to help brew the first batches.

"It's all about the experience and environment and being able to get something from the source," Johnson says. "We're the only ones that carry Fire Extinguisher, and I like that. To literally have your beer made less than five minutes down the road is fun."

Restaurants aren't the only local companies that have worked with Roadhouse on custom projects. Stio, a Jackson-based outdoor apparel company, wanted to collaborate on a sessionable beer that reflected the "après ski culture," says Cox. The result was a 5 percent session IPA with Simcoe and Citra hops named Loose Boots, referring to the tendency to sit around



Wilson IPA 7.5% ABV

Formerly known as Rhombus, this hoppy, floral, citrus brew is the brewery's flagship IPA.

Saison en Regalia 6.5% ABV

Peaches and apricots add punch to this variation of Roadhouse's Sacred Creed Saison, earning it a silver medal at the 2014 GABF.

Family Vacation Blonde Ale 4.9% ABV

A Wyoming take on a farmhouse ale, this light and crisp beer is brewed with malted barley, rolled oats, and flaked maize.

Avarice & Greed Golden Ale 7.4% ABV

Two strains of yeast work together to create this golden ale's soft mouthfeel and dry finish.

Trout Whistle American Pale Ale 6.5% ABV

Brewed with fishing in mind, this Pale Ale is packed with American hops while remaining well-balanced.

Patrick Swayzon 4.6% ABV

This is the brewery's most traditional Saison, a light, dry Belgian-style beer.



Roadhouse co-owners Gavin Fine, left, and Colby Cox. | photo by Greg Gricus

with unbuckled ski boots after a long day on the slopes.

And when the Roadhouse crew isn't partnering with area businesses to brew beer, they're pairing it with food at Q Roadhouse for monthly five-course beer dinners. "From a brewer's standpoint, you get to point to beers [the customer] wouldn't normally order," says Chenault.

The dinners started in 2013 as a way to bring people in during the slower months between the winter ski and summer tourist seasons, but have picked up momentum ever since. "The beer and food pairing movement is legit right now," adds Fine. "We're always looking to pair. Life's about balance."

Casting a Wider Net

While visitors will still have to head to Jackson to indulge in multi-course meals or to enjoy brewpub menu staples like duck poutine, brisquet pie, and shrimp and grits, the new production facility means they will soon be able to pick up bottles of Roadhouse beer throughout

the Greater Yellowstone region, including in neighboring Idaho, and Montana.

The first four brews in line for distribution are the brewery's flagship IPA, Golden Ale, Blonde, and Pale Ale. The team hopes bottling will even spread Roadhouse's spirit beyond its distribution footprint.

"When you bottle you can take it home," says Neil Albert, Roadhouse's Wyoming brewery representative. "Jackson's a very touristy place and growlers don't travel that well."

That means the 4 million tourists who pass through Jackson each year can soon relive the memories of their mountain adventures by bringing some Roadhouse flavors home with them, along with a pair of cowboy boots and a jar of huckleberry jam.

It's a practice that resonates with the brewery's founders. Back in their college days, both Fine and Cox would bring beer home as travel souvenirs. Cox fondly recalls lugging cases of New Belgium Fat Tire back to New England; while Fine shared beers from Avery and European brewers with friends. "It was a nostalgia thing," Cox says.

The partners hope to help people recreate this feeling when they head home and pop open a Roadhouse brew in Manhattan, Los Angeles, or Minneapolis.

"Roadhouse beer [provides] a sense of place, bringing them back here," Fine says. "There's a euphoria to Jackson—that's the goal. It brings you to this place, this experience, whether it's summer or winter." ■

