

1

**98 Port Mongo Double IPA (American Double IPA; Port Brewing, CA).** This offers a lively combination of key flavors in a manageable high-alcohol package. Clear bronze in color, it has a classic biscuit-malt backbone and threads of pine hops that evolve to a pleasing herbal bitterness which emerges midpalate and eventually gives way to a soft clementine finish.

abv: 8%

Price: \$14/16 oz 4 pack

2

**96 New Realm United Craft Lager (Lager; New Realm Brewing Company, Atlanta, GA).** Assertive carbonation brings aromas of ripe lime, lush tangerine and apricot skin to the surface. These tones come through on the palate to yield a wonderful tapestry of New World flavors with Old World respect and know-how. It finishes with a slight spice note that adds a snap to any sweetness that might have built up. All of the ingredients come together in a, yes, united way that will bring you back can after can.

abv: 4.5%

Price: \$10/12 oz 6 pack

3

**98 Cascade 2017 Bourbonic Plague (Barrel-aged Robust Porter; Cascade Brewing, OR).** This is tart stone-fruit forward, with some light malt roast in the background that never quite settles on any of the traditional, familiar flavors. A dry, tannic midpalate and finish would indicate that significant time was spent in wood, taking on the characteristics of previous occupants. The brewery calls this an imperial porter aged in Bourbon barrels with dates and spices. This is a springtime sipper, when there is still a chill in the air but promise of warm weather ahead.

abv: 11.1%

Price: \$14/500 ml

4

**97 Parish Ghost in the Machine Ale (Hazy/Juicy American Double IPA; Parish Brewing Co., LA).**

It takes some time for this hazy, pineapple-juice cocktail of a beer to truly reveal itself. It is bursting with fruit notes of mango and papaya, layered with orange peel and tangerine on the earthy wheat body. The hop bitterness grows as the glass empties, but it is such a slow process that the nature of the hops never overpowers.

abv: 8%

Price: \$14/12 oz 4 pack

5

**95 Ecliptic Callisto Blackcurrant Tripel (Belgian-style Tripel; Ecliptic Brewing, OR).**

Showing peppery and spicy notes, this tripel gets an assist from the tannic black currants that not only add to the auburn hue of the beer, but also give it a dry finish. Flowery, yeasty flavors and a malt sweetness bring out a just underripe raspberry flavor on the midpalate.

abv: 7.5%

Price: \$4/500 ml

6

**97 Lakefront 2019 Black Friday Barleywine (Barrel-aged Barleywine; Lakefront Brewery, WI).**

The strength of this barleywine is that it stands tall on its own and the barrels only play a small role in the overall flavor. The wood is important, mind you, and offers up the vanilla and spice components that one expects from Bourbon barrels, but the base beer offers tones of caramel, butterscotch and light minerality. An annual release from the brewery available on the day after Thanksgiving, this will age well over the next five years or can be consumed immediately.

abv: 14.8%

Price: \$20/22 oz

7

**98 Rhinegeist Truth India Pale Ale (American IPA; Rhinegeist Brewing, OH).**

This IPA is like being punched with an iron fist in a velvet glove. It is fun and engaging, with mango and pineapple hop flavors that are soft and inviting, followed by orange, grapefruit and a finishing touch of pine. It has diversity in each sip and it drinks just a little too easy for its above-average alcohol level.

abv: 7.2%

Price: \$10/12 oz 6 pack

8

**98 Weldwerks Medianoche Brewer's Select (Barrel-aged Imperial Stout; Weldwerks Brewing, CO).**

This is a decadent ale that seems to capture all light around it. With a silky jet-black pour and a thin head, it leaves legs on the glass as it empties. Vanilla and oak are the dominant flavors behind the rich cocoa base. Whiffs of pipe tobacco, soft aged leather and husky malt are intertwined in this ale that has spent the better part of two years sleeping in Bourbon barrels. Solidly built, sipping on this beer helps the mind wander to peaceful places and should be enjoyed with abandon.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$32/22 oz

9

**95 Springdale Coconut Cast Away (American Wild Ale; Springdale Beer Co., MA).**

This is a lovely sour ale that offers bright acidity, a hint of lemon citrus and a quality that gets the salivatory glands going. At first blush you could think it's a young beer made by an experienced Belgian brewery, but the reserved coconut note shows up and it shows its American roots. Some breweries might try to hit you over the head with it, but this one teases you. The coconut tone disappears and then reappears, its flavor grows as the beer warms, and a woody character is revealed. Drink one now, but get a second to age. This has promise to delight over time. Drink through 2025.

abv: 6.5%

Price: \$12/500 ml

10



**95 Side Project Brewing Grisette Blend #6 (Grisette; Side Project Brewing, MO).** A lovely all-day sipper that is lively with just-ripe strawberry and peach. Champagne-like carbonation wakes up the taste buds and reveals a soft wheat character that is like lightly toasted country bread followed by a slight earthy hop bite. On the finish is an oak character from the foudres used to age the beer. This ale manages to be both traditional and modern in each sip.

abv: 4%

Price: \$15/750 ml

11

**95 Alaskan Imperial Bock (Eisbock; Alaskan Brewing, AK).** Bursting with rich tobacco and toffee aromas, there's a woody, spruce-like character that likely comes from being brewed with oak chips. There is a thin line of heat that rolls from the first sniff to the last sip, making this the kind of beer you'd want to drink outside while ice fishing, or just standing in the middle of a blizzard. It'll warm you up and make you not care about the cold. A malt-derived fruitiness of raisin, plum and fortified grapes give it a brandy-like finish.

abv: 12.2%

Price: \$10/22 oz

12

**96 Reuben's Triple Crush Hazy India Pale Ale (Hazy/Juicy American Double IPA; Reuben's Brews, WA).** This is smooth and tangy in tart lime and lychee tones, with hints of passion fruit and orange popping up. All these tones shine on their own and are spokes that connect to a light-colored yellow hazy body with a full mouthfeel.

abv: 10%

Price: \$20/16 oz 4 pack

13

**94 Rockwell Beer Co. Stand By Hoppy Pilsner (Pilsner; Rockwell Beer Co., Saint Louis, MO).**

A "hoppy pilsner" that delivers on both without allowing the former to overwhelm the latter. Responsibly dosed without a residual hop bitterness, it has a juicy character of tropical fruit, with a touch of orange and even a little earthiness. Some lagers can grab your palate's attention from the first sip and hold it through until the end, and this is one of them.

abv: 5.3%

Price: \$10/16 oz 4 pack

14

**98 Revolution Mixed Berry Ryeway Rye Ale (Barrel-aged Rye Ale; Revolution Brewing, IL).**

Pouring a shade of royal purple, this is sweet, tart and teeming with real juice from the raspberries, blackberries, cranberries and boysenberries that went into the recipe. Part of the brewery's Deep Wood series of beer, this rye ale never feels heavy and lets all of the fruit tones shine—tart cranberry followed by tangy raspberry, then sweet boysenberry. The wood ties it all together with an earthy note before a strong cherry juice finish.

abv: 12.4%

Price: \$40/12 oz 4 pack

15

**96 Area Two Black Raspberry (Lambic; Two Roads Brewing, CT).** This deep purple ale has a rouse foam that rings the edge of the glass, which is enough of a reason to buy this beer—it's mesmerizing to look at. The blackberry in this lambic from Area Two, a sour project by Two Roads brewery, is the star of the show and shows off all the versatility of the fruit. It's tart and sweet, assertive yet subdued. With mellow acidity and a dusting of chocolate, it's slightly thick and jammy. It's a beer that is made by years of honing a skill, not just a lucky one-time batch.

abv: 6.7%

Price: \$15/375 ml

16

**96 West Sixth Pennyrile Pale Ale (Juicy/Hazy Pale Ale; West Sixth Brewing, KY).**

The caramel malts play a crucial role in this beer, as they give a soft and sweet platform for the tropical fruit hop oils. It offers a smooth hop experience from beginning to end, never becoming too bitter. It's the right beer for an afternoon on the lake or a sunset drink before dinner.

abv: 6%

Price: \$10/12 oz 6 pack

17

**95 Atlas Silent Neighbor (Stout; Atlas Brew Works, Washington, D.C.).**

This is a fun every-day stout that is rich, warming and easydrinking. It's a fine accompaniment to a lunch out or a session during an evening around the firepit. It was brewed with molasses and rye, but won't weigh you down with alcohol or body weight. It will tickle the taste buds with milk chocolate, a smooth coffee roast and a hint of vanilla bean.

abv: 6.7%

Price: \$11/12 oz 6 pack

18

**97 Wormtown Rocket Pale Ale (American Pale Ale; Wormtown Brewing, MA).** A miraculous combination of orange zest, tangerine and apricot is balanced by a spicy malt note that creates a zippy, refreshing ale. Brewed with specialty rye from a local maltster, this is the kind of pale ale that locals are lucky to have access to and beer fans should travel for.

abv: 5%

Price: \$11/16 oz 4 pack

19

**97 Drowned Lands Spring Terra Double IPA (Hazy/Juicy American Double IPA; Drowned Lands Brewing, NY).** Pale and bright straw in color, this offers pleasing aromas of lemon curd and spun confectioner's sugar. Sip after sip, it comes across as light and airy despite the amped up alcohol. It's like a warm ray of sunlight that lands on an otherwise nippy spring day.

abv: 8.2%

Price: \$20/16oz 4 pack

20

**94 Notch Cerné Pivo (European-style Dark Lager; Notch Brewing, MA).** This brewery cares about tradition and process, so it's no surprise that this black lager is the closest thing to what you'd get in Bavaria without having to leave New England. It's light and crisp, with just a hint of roasted coffee and an earthy hop bitterness. The low abv makes this an ideal session beer for just about any occasion. It's smooth, refreshing and thought provoking.

abv: 4.5%

Price: \$10/16 oz 4 pack

21

**94 Lawson's Hopzilla (American Double IPA; Lawson's Finest Liquids, VT).** The hops are a showcase here, with traditional pine, grapefruit and dried citrus flavors and aromas. There is also a boost from a strong malt content that is not shy about flavors of caramel, grape nuts and crusty bread. This is an old school IPA that is doing just fine in a modern hoppy world.

abv: 8.7%

Price: \$15/16 oz 4 pack

22

**96 Sun King Bourbon Barrel Aged Donuts (Barrel-aged Stout; Sun King Brewery, IN).** With an aroma like walking into a bakery minutes after the pasties have been dusted, a whiff of confectioner's sugar bounces from the glass and stays until the end of each sip. The vibrant, powdered sugar tone is boosted on the palate by raspberry jelly and a sweet chocolate. Whatever kind of baked sorcery the brewers did to this stout, a collaboration with Jack's Donuts, it works. It's the breakfast beer we deserve, especially after a morning trip to the gym. Treat yourself.

abv: 10.4%

Price: \$20/16 oz 2 pack

23

**94 Avery Night Warden Whiskey Barrel-Aged Stout (Barrel-aged Stout; Avery Brewing Co., CO).** This is a barrel-aged stout made for everyday drinking. With a manageable alcohol level, drinking this need not be a special occasion. The base stout recipe, with subdued chocolate, toffee and coffee flavors, remains intact and is lightly accented by a softly toasted wooden-barrel character. There is nothing flashy about this beer, no bells or whistles, just a showcase of what a familiar beer can do after a spell in whiskey barrels. A chocolate bitterness creeps in on the finish, but is washed away clean with the next, slightly sweet yet still refreshing sip.

abv: 8.2%

Price: \$17/12 oz 6 pack

24

**93 Ayinger Altbairisch Dunkel (Munich-style Dunkel; Ayinger, Germany).** This shows a lovely combination of worn leather, sweet tobacco, dried sweet cherry and a dusting of chocolate. It's dessert in a glass that won't weigh you down. With effervescent carbonation that keeps each sip lively, this well-crafted lager remains crisp from start to finish and shows a Sherry-like depth woven throughout. It would be a wonderful pairing with a slow cooked beef and root vegetable stew. Merchant du Vin.

abv: 5%

Price: \$4/25 oz

25

**92 Narraganset Autocrat Coffee Milk Stout (Milk Stout; Narragansett Brewing, RI).** This is the kind of stout you want served in a dimpled mug inside a cozy pub on a rainy afternoon. Softly sweet, there's a fun and lively coffee roast with some milk chocolate and a slight hop bite. But any bitterness comes from the java or malt. With a smooth mouthfeel, this collaboration with Autocrat coffee, a local producer, is one to seek out.

abv: 5.5%

Price: \$11/16oz 6 pack

For more on this year's list, visit [winemag.com/TopBeers2020](http://winemag.com/TopBeers2020)