

www.FontaFlora.com Brewery
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When I was in college, we would have to drive out of Charlotte to visit a brewery. Most don't remember the days of Southend Brewery but I do, as I watched it's opening smack the crap out of my father's restaurant. There were other taprooms here in the '90's but in the years to follow, all of the breweries were in Boone or Asheville and everyone would drive there. That's not the case anymore, as Charlotte can boast about a dozen breweries here alone. We don't have to leave town to get good beer, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't. I took a drive to check out Fonta Flora and I'm glad that I did.

I'd heard of Fonta Flora and came to learn that they were in just less than a handful of restaurants and pourhouses here. I had to taste it right from the source to see what the hype was about. Hype was just the case as I was approached by a very gentle yet upbeat owner, Todd Boera, and old school hip hop from the house speakers. Todd has a beautiful and modest brewery in the middle of Morganton and he is excited about his product and unusually humble. "For a small town we have a pretty rocking community" Todd tells me.

He is overjoyed to have a following and is extremely hyped up about using as many local ingredients as he physically can. He is celebrating, bopping around his brewery, and he has reason to having recently been recognised as the only one in our area cranking out 100% Certified Appalachian Grown Beer (with every ingredient hailing from Echoview Farm in Weaverville). He has been *all over* winning medals at competitions and is slowly becoming one of the hottest brewers out there. While I was there a local publication sent in a photographer and we broke for his Kodak moments in his striped socks and shorts. I was glad to be another person present getting his name out there.

I visited at the beginning of fall (I'm a sucker for the leaves changing) so I had their Oktoberbest (which was delicious and much needed after a drive). Before leaving, I

enjoyed the Irish Table Stout (which just won a gold medal at the national Great American Beer Festival). Table is a Belgium term meaning low alcohol beers and he uses this term in about five names. Their most popular beer is one that is brewed with beets. I bought a T-shirt that was a play on Tribe Called Quest reading "Beets, Rhymes and Life" touting their fresh squeezed shandy. Throw your dog or your purse in your car and take a drive just a bit out of town and enjoy Fonta Flora yourself. You can also find them in the Common Market(s), Heirloom, Salud, Twenty-Two and Good Bottle Company. I'd love to see that list get longer.