

Hickory Beer
by: Ellen Gurley

I've said it before and I'll say it again: Charlotte has a lot of wonderful breweries and we don't have to travel out of town for beer anymore... but that doesn't mean we shouldn't. Hickory isn't too far away and Olde Hickory Brewery is nothing to scoff at.

With three locations in downtown Hickory alone, over twenty years of experience and a presence in over thirty restaurants and taprooms in the Charlotte area, I'm impressed. Enough so to venture down and often visit their taproom. And as a bonus I get to enjoy the Blue Ridge Mountains.



Oh, and their beer festivals! Not to scoff at our beer festivals, but Hickory puts ours to shame with over sixty regional breweries, bottled water, peanut can or pretzel necklaces and live music. Here we are lucky to have access to bathrooms and the ability to taste ten beers. I even get to leave with a collectible glass. Not a dixie cup or the run of the mill BPA-leaking plastic thingy thing. A real glass. You can expect to see some of their most popular brews; Hickory Stick Stout, Oak Aged Redeemer, Seven Devils, Death by Hops and Daniel Boone.



This year it is on Saturday, April 25th at Olde Hickory Station in Hickory. It's called the www.HickoryHops.com Beer Fest. There will be live music by Baby Black Orchestra and it will feature beers from Asheville Brew., Aviator, Bearwaters, Beer Army Combat, Birdsong, Blind Squirrel, Boone Brew./Blowing Rock Brew., Brevard Brew., Bull City, Carolina Brew.,

Catawba Brew., Deep River, Duck-Rabbit, Foothills, French Broad, Frog Level, Front Street, Fullsteam, Gizmo, Green Man, Heinzelmännchen, Heist, Highland, Howard, Huske Hardware House, Lexington Ave., Liberty, LoneRider, Mash House, Mother Earth, Mystery, Nantahala, Natty Greene's, New South, Olde Hickory, Oskar Blues, Outer Banks, Oyster House, Pisgah, RJ Rockers, Raleigh Brew., Red Brick/Atlanta Brew., Sierra Nevada, SweetWater, Thomas Creek, Tipping Point, Top of the Hill, Triangle, Triple C., Trophy and Wicked Weed.

If you're lucky, you'll get yelled at by a religious sign-toting zealot (warning you of the dangers of hop consumption) as you enter the festival, but you're sure to be presented with way more beer than you can physically try (trust me, I attempted). So ... no kids, no dogs and no amateurs (at the festival). Take that drive.

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