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92 Sierra Nevada Pale Ale (American Pale Ale; Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, CA). A definite classic, this is one of the most iconic and recognizable craft beers out there. The hops take center stage in the form of ripe grapefruit peel, fading into a lingering resinous flavor accented with pine that stays through the mildly bitter finish. The assertive citrus characteristics are kept in check by a clean malty core and cleansing carbonation.

abv: 5.6% **Price:** \$9/12 oz 6 pack

18

92 Harpoon UFO White (Witbier; Harpoon Brewery, MA & VT). There's a definite orange streak throughout this beer, with a strong wheat backbone flooding the mouth, and hints of sweet spice add complexity to the palate. The mouthfeel is chewy but spritz, and the finish is completely clean and dry with a subtle orange essence flavor. An excellent and refreshing choice for summer sipping.

abv: 4.8% **Price:** \$9/12 oz 6 pack

19

93 The Bruery Trade Winds Tripel (Belgian-Style Tripel; The Bruery, CA). A pale orange color in the glass, it starts off with a thick white head that exhibits good retention. Attractive scents of fresh lemon supremes, sweet grass, clean wheat, yeast and basil all welcome you into the glass, promising a refreshing experience despite the higher alcohol. Cleansing carbonation and a great earthy spice character lift the medium-weight mouthfeel and keeps things light and brisk on the dry finish. Well balanced and extremely drinkable.

abv: 8.1% **Price:** \$12/750 ml

20

93 Birra del Borgo Re Ale Extra (India Pale Ale; Birra del Borgo, Italy). Pours a medium golden orange color with a slight haze and a frothy head that has serious staying power, leaving gorgeous sticky lacing behind when it finally falls. The bouquet is like a hop-bomb: The vibrant grapefruit-dominant citrus aromas are front and center with soft malt, green apple and floral notes playing supporting roles. Medium full in the mouth with solid citrus, grass, pear and pine flavors. The finish is dry with a lingering bitter twang. Excellent evidence that Americans aren't the only ones who can do hoppy.

abv: 6.4% **Price:** \$18/750 ml

21

92 Karl Strauss Blackball Belgian-Style IPA (Belgian IPA; Karl Strauss Brewing Company, CA). This IPA pours a bright orange-gold color with a significant frothy white head that lingers. Fresh stone fruit and floral hops immediately waft out of the glass, while secondary notes of whole green peppercorns and faint sweet spice are discovered upon deeper nosing. The mouth is big and full but with all elements in check as the juicy fruit character mingles seamlessly with the fresh hop flavor and yeasty spice. Delicious and very drinkable.

abv: 8.5% **Price:** \$6/22 oz

22

92 Ninkasi Tricerahops Double IPA (American Double/Imperial IPA; Ninkasi Brewing, OR). An intense and well-balanced brew with strong hop-driven notes of grapefruit rind and pressed pine needles against a backdrop of caramel malt and fresh-baked bread. The full-bodied and round mouth is quite bitter and astringent, with powerful resinous hop flavors along with a touch of woody spice and more citrus pithiness. Definitely a good choice for those who like a strong hop kick.

abv: 8.8% **Price:** \$6/22 oz

"For a quart of Ale is a meal for a King."

—William Shakespeare



23

92 Goose Island Fleur Belgian Style Ale (Belgian-style Pale Ale; Goose Island Beer Co., IL). Though not a fruit beer, this herbed pale ale was blended with hibiscus and hombucha tea. Flowery phenols start you off, supported by notes of peach, tea leaves, soft sweet spice and breadly malt. The taste is more of the same but with a bit more of an acidic kick, finishing with an oily citrus flavor. Red fruit, caramel and a soft wild funk round out this complex but drinkable and well-balanced brew.

abv: 7.0% **Price:** \$8/22 oz

24

92 Full Sail Black Gold Imperial Stout Bourbon Barrel Aged Brewmaster Reserve 2011 (Russian Imperial Stout; Full Sail Brewing, OR). Although the label promises a "hint of oak," there's no denying that it's the defining characteristic of this beer. Aged in Bourbon barrel casks for 10 months, this is actually quite the oak bomb, with intense notes of Bourbon-soaked vanilla beans, sweet spice, cigar tobacco and roasted cocoa nibs that infuse the soft prune and dried black berry fruit accents. Chewy and full, this is a big brew with a ton of flavor.

abv: 11.4% **Price:** \$12/22 oz

25

92 Baladin Isaac (Witbier; Birrificio Baladin, Italy). This Italian wheat ale brewed with spices gives the traditional Belgian offerings some fierce competition. The medium-intense nose offers aromas of raw bread dough, soft banana and delicate spice. Full and creamy but balanced by assertive carbonation, the almost chewy mouthfeel is loaded with flavors of cereal, sweet citrus rind, jasmine florals and coriander that linger through the long finish.

abv: 5.0% **Price:** \$18/750 ml

Stats from the Brewers Association:

- Craft Brewer dollar sales were up 15% in the first half of 2011.
- Craft brewers sold an estimated 9,951,956 barrels* of beer in 2010, up from 8,934,446 in 2009.
- 1,753 breweries operated for some or all of 2010, the highest total since the late 1800s.
- The great state of Vermont tops the list of U.S. state breweries per capita based on the Brewers Association's count of operating breweries and the 2010 population estimates found at www.census.gov. There are 21 breweries and 625,741 citizens in Vermont, meaning they have a brewery for every 29,797 people. The top 5 states in breweries per capita are rounded out by Oregon, Montana, Colorado and Maine.

*1 barrel = 31 US gallons

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