

# MEN'S JOURNAL



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EXPERT ADVICE

## 15 Beers Brewed for the Beach

So many craft breweries carry a reputation for being **big, bold, and boozy**. But increasingly, small, innovative breweries are also aiming squarely at more accessible beers that are crisp, drinkable, and **even low-calorie** – just right to take to the ballpark or to drink by the ocean. For a relaxing afternoon on the sand, choose sessionable beers with less than 5 percent ABV, says Doug Odell, owner and co-founder of **Odell Brewing Company**. "You

want to be able to have a few without falling asleep in the sun," he says.

### RELATED: [The Best Saison Beers on the Planet](#)

We suggest keeping your cooler stocked with clean, crisp craft beers that aren't too hoppy – true thirst quenchers. Odell says he saves warm-weather beers with bigger flavors, such as a non-sessionable IPAs or full-bodied lagers, for nighttime hangouts around beach bonfires. Here are 15 beers you'll want to stock.

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– LUCY BURNINGHAM

Odell Loose Leaf American Session

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Ale



The **Odell Loose Leaf American Session Ale** is perfect for daytime fun, with just 4.5 percent ABV and the kind of crisp hoppy finish that makes for "more flavor than an American light lager," says Doug Odell.

## Bruery Hottenroth Berliner Weisse

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Not your average beach beer, the **Bruery's Hottenroth Berliner Weisse** combines some funk, tartness and a surprising amount of complexity with an all-day-drinkable ABV at 3.1 percent. While it comes in a 750 ml bottle, you will want to stock more than one.

## Firestone Walker Brewing Company

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### Easy Jack



A sessionable IPA with a surprising amount of complexity, **Firestone Walker Brewing Company Easy Jack** has 4.5 percent ABV, tantalizing tropical hops and a light, crisp body.

## Dale's Pale Ale

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A refreshing beer with a sneakily high 6.5 percent ABV, **Dale's Pale Ale** is a canned classic that belongs around the beach bonfire. The beer is insanely smooth, which contrasts with hoppy notes of pine and grapefruit.

## Bell's Oarsman

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Brewed in the German Berliner Weisse style, **Bell's Oarsman** combines a bracing zing of lemon tartness with a roundness that comes from wheat. The beer is light on alcohol, at 4 percent ABV, and pairs well with a wide variety of foods – perfect for lunch on the beach blanket.

## Brooklyn Brewery Summer Ale

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Brooklyn Brewery Summer Ale is a friendly pale that brings just the right amount of flavor to the shore. At 5 percent ABV, the beer is light and bready, and it finishes with a dry, crisp hint of lemon.

## Founders All Day IPA

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Summer doesn't mean abstaining entirely from hops. Founders All Day IPA is full of them, giving a citrusy hops punch, while also being light and easy drinking.

## Narragansett Summer Ale

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Throw some retro-styled Narragansett Summer Ale cans in the cooler for hours of sessionable fun. The beer is light in body with plenty of carbonation, and it weighs in at just 4.5 percent ABV.

## New Belgium Snapshot

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For a walk on the tart side, try New Belgium Snapshot, a 5 percent ABV wheat beer that's brewed with a bacteria called *lactobacillus*, which adds a refreshing pucker to some grainy sweetness.



We've said it before. The **21st Amendment Bitter American** is a balanced canned beer with impressive burst of hops and just 4.5 percent ABV.

## Brasserie Dupont's Saison Veille Provision



Brasserie Dupont began brewing saison at their farm brewery in Tourpes, Belgium in 1844 and they're one of the few authentic producers of saison that survived the two world wars and competitive pressures that wiped out so many of their neighbors of the last 170 years. The brewery has more than just history on its side though, their saisons are exquisite and they define the genre in much the same way that Guinness defines stouts.

Dupont's most famous beer is **Saison Dupont** Veille Provision (Old Provision). At 6.5 percent alcohol Saison Dupont has gained some strength over the years, but

it's still made in the traditional manner with high fermentation temperatures and refermented in the bottle. The beer is a slightly murky golden color with a thick white head and robust carbonation. It's rustic flavors are bright and spicy with a brisk blast of hoppy bitterness at the dry finish.

Saison Dupont is served on draft as well as in corked and caged green 750 mL bottles with a yellow and white checked label. In addition to their classic saison, Dupont also sells Avril, a lower strength "table saison" at 4.5 percent alcohol; Foret, a slightly stronger organic saison at 7.5 percent alcohol; and a year end brew named Avec Le Bon Veux ("with the best wishes of the brewery"), a powerful "Super Saison" that weighs in at 9.5 percent alcohol. All four are fantastic, but the original remains the classic, imitated by breweries around the world.



Craft brewers go to great lengths to differentiate themselves from mass market beer, focusing on bold styles abandoned by the big guys. The result: Brews like big, bitter IPAs and high-alcohol imperial stouts have made beer drinking interesting again. But what will improve the flavorless, yet easy-to-drink, brews that we down in numbers at the game?

Philadelphia-based Victory Brewing Company's flagship beer, Prima Pils, is one hell of a start. This golden lager is bringing the fight to the doorstep of Budweiser, Miller, and Coors, proving that a small-batch pilsner can make a difference. The

Prima Pils pours with the clarity and golden color of a Budweiser, Miller, or Coors (two things these three mass brands get right), but its composition and flavor hews much more closely to a classic German style Pilsner. In other words, it has flavor. The Pils is dry and clean tasting with just a touch of graham-cracker-like malt, spicy hop notes, and a crisp, bitter finish. Prima Pils is a pleasant reminder of why light lagers are the most popular beer in the world (and also a painful reminder of how few breweries aim to make them interesting). Fortunately, Victory distributes in 29 states. [[victorybeer.com](http://victorybeer.com)]



We can't think of a better way to hang on to the fading glory of summertime than with a **Kolsch**. We've long been champions of this light underappreciated type of ale that masquerades as a lager. The style originated in Cologne, Germany, but American craft brewers – like **Captain Lawrence Brewing Company** (out of Westchester, New York) – are taking some liberties with the classic brew. The Captain's Kolsch, one of the most popular beers from the company, is one example that shows the power of American hops while letting the best, easy-drinking aspects of the classic brew alone.

The aroma and flavor here is a study in subtlety and balance. Light graham cracker malt flavors are held in check by snappy hop spice notes. Thanks to a modest addition of Crystal hops (an American hop primarily grown in the Pacific Northwest), there is a touch more bite here than in a traditional German example – as well as a new dimension of spicy, herbal notes, but not so much as to distract from the basic, easy-drinking beer (it has just 5% alcohol). In all, it's refreshingly clean with slight hints of the fruity zing that great ale yeasts impart.

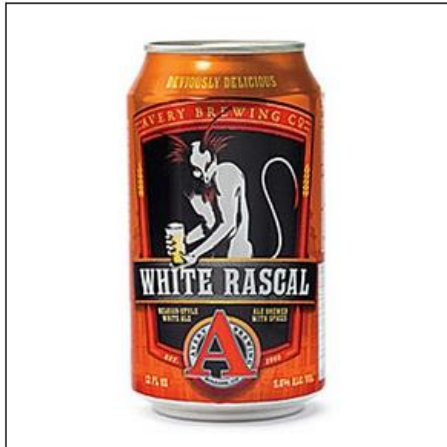
Like the rest of the Captain Lawrence beers, bottles of the Captain's Kolsch are emblazoned with the image of a beer barrel engulfed in flames and bearing the brewery's initials. Likewise, Captain Lawrence respects old world traditions without being shy about offering an exciting American take on the style. Still, we suggest you drink this one in the original glass, served in eights in a traditional **kranz**. [[captainlawrencebrewing.com](http://captainlawrencebrewing.com)]

## Avery White Rascal

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Credit: Photograph by Jeff Harris

Adam Avery started Avery with his chemist father nearly 20 years ago and is among the best-known Colorado brewers. This tasty, hazy pale yellow brew has the zest and funk of Belgian wheats but retains a more traditional boozy heft. (5.6% ABV) [[averybrewing.com](http://averybrewing.com)]

## Sierra Nevada Pale Ale

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Credit: Photograph by Jeff Harris

The beer that led the craft-beer charge is still brewed with whole Magnum, Perle, and pungent Cascade hop flowers for a satisfying bite and grassy, floral nose, and each bottle is carbonated with additions of yeast and brewer's sugar. (5.6% ABV) [[sierranevada.com](http://sierranevada.com)]