

Outside
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The Next Generation of PBR

The gentrification of cheap beer continues.

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"I'm ironically drunk." Photo: brown54486/Thinkstock

Last week we reported that **the country has officially hit "Peak PBR,"** or the moment when the iconic brand became too hip even for hipsters.

With PBR reaching unprecedented sales levels (from 2009 to 2011 the beer had double-digit growth annually, according to **data provided by Euromonitor**), it looks like everyone's favorite subculture of urban counter-culture millennials will have to migrate to another ironic brew soon. Which one will they choose? Our best guesses:

Schlitz

Browse [Schlitz's website](#) and it becomes obvious that [Pabst Brewing Company](#) (PBC) realized the possibility of hitting "Peak PBR" before we did. Schlitz, which was bought by PBC in 1999, is being positioned as the company's next hipster beer. On the website, images of old-timey starlets mix with Instagram-tinged modern-day snaps. And an advertisement for something called the "Schlitz Bouts," a vintage-inspired boxing match, makes it clear that Schlitz, like PBR, will be marketed through events instead of traditional media.

Hamm's

Originally brewed in Minnesota, this [MillerCoors product](#) is now difficult to find outside of a few select states—but that just adds to its hipster charm. Also charming? It's gloriously cheap: Hamm's can be found on sale for as little as \$13 for a 30-pack. Sidenote: For a trip down the wormhole of weird 1970s advertising, watch a few [early ads for the beer](#), which are somehow both curious and charming.

Narragansett

By far the most drinkable of all of the brews on this list, this [Rhode Island-based company](#) is also still independently owned. Narragansett has been a staple at New England picnics, clambakes, and sporting events for more than a century, but it's starting to pop up in other parts of the country. Fun fact: Dr. Seuss actually drew [the company's original figurehead](#)—a somewhat culturally insensitive Narragansett Chief. The company (wisely) no longer uses the image but instead sticks to snarky, irreverent messaging. It's also broadened its lineup, offering a porter, a stout, a lager, and several more varieties.

National Bohemian

"If you called it National Bohemian in Baltimore, everyone would know you're not from Baltimore," says Adam Curtis, a D.C. radio personality who lives in Charm City. "Natty Boh is Baltimore's 'native' answer to PBR; it's a proud source of civic pride, even though it's brewed in North Carolina now."

"It's best when drunk ice-cold," Curtis adds. "Slightly better than PBR, but still similar to it and others such as Bud, Miller Light, or Coors." Apparently the trademark on Mr. Boh—the beer's adorable, hipster-mustache-sporting mascot—was allowed to lapse, so it's now common domain. As a result, his little one-eyed face is everywhere in Baltimore—he even proposed to the Utz gal (another famous Baltimore brand) [on a billboard advertisement](#) in 2007.

The Philly Citywide Special

Okay, this isn't really a new beer at all—it's [a drink combo with a cult-like following](#). The Philly Citywide Special is a shot of Jim Beam and a can of PBR. In most bars it costs between \$3 and \$4. While most people in Philly know the drill, outsiders don't—which makes it perfect for the hipper-than-thought set. "It was invented in 1993 or 1994 by an employee and friend of the owner," says Kelly "Waffles" Wolff, a bartender at the drink's birthplace, [Bob and Barbara's](#). As for whether patrons buy it more for the taste or the price: "It's a little of column A and a little of column B...maybe a bit more of column B."