

Russian River -tion Beers

Redemption

Blonde Ale

4.8% ABV. Year-round. Bottles, draft.

This beer was inspired by the Belgian Single or Blonde Ales. It has a fruity, banana bouquet with a spicy, mild finish.

Beatification

Sonambic, Spontaneously-fermented American Wild Ale

5.5% ABV. Seasonal. Bottles, draft.

This beer is very unique and inspired by breweries in the Lambic region of Belgium and, especially, our friends at Cantillon. It is 100% spontaneously fermented, meaning yeast is not added. Once the beer is brewed, it is transferred to a cool-ship or "horny" tank located in our barrel room at the pub. There it sits overnight and collects whatever funky wild yeast and bacteria may be living in the room. The next day it is transferred to oak wine barrels where it ferments wildly and ages for a few months. The end result is a wild, spontaneously fermented, sour, and tasty hand-crafted beer!

Sanctification

100% Brettanomyces Fermented Golden Ale,
American Wild Ale

6.75% ABV. Seasonal. Bottles, draft.

Technically, this is neither an ale nor a lager. The base recipe is for a Golden Ale, but we do the primary fermentation with 100% brettanomyces. The brett gives it some sour notes but not as much as if it had been aged with lacto and pedio. It's rather refreshing on a warm day!

Damnation

Golden Ale, Belgian Strong Pale

7% ABV. Year-round. Bottles, draft.

Inspired pretty much by Duvel and other strong golden ales of Belgium. It is medium-bodied, has a fruity/banana bouquet, and a dry, spicy finish.

Supplication

Sour Brown Ale aged in Pinot Noir Barrels with
Sour Cherries, American Wild Ale

7% ABV. Seasonal. Bottles, draft.

Brown Ale aged in used Pinot Noir barrels from local Sonoma County wineries. It is aged for about 12 months with sour cherries, brettanomyces, lactobacillus, and pediococcus added to each barrel. Flavors from the cherries, Pinot Noir and oak balance each other nicely with a little funk from the brett.

Temptation

Sour Blonde Ale Aged in Chardonnay Barrels,
American Wild Ale

7.5% ABV. Seasonal. Bottles, draft.

Blonde Ale aged in used Chardonnay barrels from local Sonoma County wineries. It is aged for about 9 to 15 months (depending on the age of the barrel) with lots of brettanomyces, lactobacillus, and pediococcus added to each barrel. Medium bodied with hints of oak and Chardonnay, funky brett characteristics, with a nice, long sour finish.

Salvation

Strong Dark Ale

9% ABV. Seasonal. Bottles, draft.

This beer has nice fruity and spicy notes from the Belgian yeast used in fermentation. The chocolate and raisin flavors are well-balanced with a lingering dry finish. Excellent on a cold winter night and paired with heartier dishes like stews and roasts. Also excellent with chocolate desserts.

Consecration

Sour Dark Ale Aged in Cabernet Sauvignon Barrels
with Currants, American Wild Ale

10% ABV. Seasonal. Bottles, draft.

Dark Ale aged in Cabernet Sauvignon barrels from local wineries. It is aged for 4 to 8 months with black currants, brettanomyces, lactobacillus, and pediococcus added to each barrel. Rich flavors of chocolate truffle, spice, tobacco, currants, and a bit of Cabernet. Very full-bodied, sip slowly!

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About Russian River

The Russian River Brewing Company (RRBC) was originally owned by Korbel Champagne Cellars in Guerneville, California and was founded on their historic and beautiful property amidst vineyards and redwoods near the Russian River. When Korbel decided to get out of the beer business in 2003, they generously offered the brewmaster, Vinnie Cilurzo and his wife Natalie the rights to the brand. Russian River Brewing might be something completely different now if it weren't for this incredible opportunity.

In the early days on the Korbel property, Vinnie not only brewed the beer, but made the sales calls and deliveries as well. Eventually they hired a sales/delivery guy to help with all of that so he could focus on brewing! Korbel planted a small hop field where Vinnie received a "field" education on growing and brewing with "wet" hops. It was from those amazingly fresh hops, grown just a few yards away, that he made his first wet hops brew, "Hop-Time Harvest Ale."

While the brewery was still operating at Korbel, the owner of the winery bought Lake Sonoma Winery at the top of Dry Creek in Healdsburg, California. There, they let Vinnie build a second brewery (adjacent to the winery) with its own tasting room and a million dollar view. The brewery at Lake Sonoma was only open for about a year, but Vinnie gained invaluable experience building a brewery from the ground up, and it was there that he started experimenting with beer in wine barrels.

On April 3, 2004, Vinnie and Natalie reopened RRBC as a brewpub in downtown Santa Rosa to great success and began self-distributing to nearby clients. In 2008, they opened a production brewery about 1 mile from their brewpub allowing them to triple production, take on more accounts locally, and distribute some beer in 4 more states.

As of 2012, RRBC employs over 60 part-time and full-time employees, and gives back to their community via charitable events such as their month-long Breast Cancer Fundraiser in October. The pub has become a community gathering place as well as a beer tourism destination. They also support local bands by hosting free live shows at the pub every weekend.

As it turns out, demand is still greater than the supply, but they prefer to grow their business organically while focusing on efficiencies and quality. For now, it is easier to make better beer than it is to make more beer!

The history of Russian River Brewing Company would be incomplete without a little background on the people who own it, operate it, and are passionate about their brewery and craft beer in general!

About Vinnie Cilurzo

Vinnie grew up in a winemaking family in Temecula, California, where his parents owned Cilurzo Family Vineyards from the late 1970s to the early 2000s. Vinnie and his sister, Chenin, learned all aspects of owning and operating a small family winery. By the time he was 18 years old Vinnie had taught himself to homebrew in the basement of the winery. In 1994, Vinnie, a business partner and an investor opened Blind Pig Brewing Company in Temecula, California. They owned it for about 3 years during which time Vinnie earned awards at the Great American Beer Festival and the critical acclaim of being the first brewer to make a Double I.P.A. commercially (Blind Pig Inaugural Ale in 1994).

In 1997, Vinnie and his wife, Natalie, moved to Sonoma County, where Vinnie took a job as the sole brewer at Russian River Brewing Company, then owned by Korbel Champagne Cellars. While at Korbel, Vinnie started experimenting with brewing funky beers in wine barrels (he had just one barrel at the time) and created RRBC's flagship beer, Pliny the Elder. In 2003, Korbel decided to get out of the beer business and sold the Russian River Brewing Company

Awards

<http://russianriverbrewing.com/awards/>