

## The Kiwi Beer Renaissance

The history of Kiwi brewing is one of massive expansion of local breweries in the 19th century followed by a huge shakeout during the 20th century. This was caused by two forces – the industrialisation of beer production and the growth of a strong temperance movement.

### McCashin's Brewery

By 1984 just the 'Big Two' brewers, DB and Lion, controlled virtually all Kiwi brewing. But the desire for flavoursome ales lived on – and up stepped an early hero of the Kiwi micro-brewery movement, publican Terry McCashin. Terry's dream of serving good beer to his mates led him to set up McCashin's brewery in Nelson in 1981, and so was born the highly successful Mac's range of quality beers.

So successful, that the Mac's brand was acquired by Lion in 1999 but not before McCashin's had become an inspiration to others – there are now around 80 Kiwi micro-breweries, or boutique breweries, as they are also known.

### The New Beers

So what's so special about these new beers? Many of the new wave brewers have adopted the Bavarian beer purity law of 1516 that says "beer must consist of malt, hops, yeast and water only". In other words, no chemicals or artificial additives.

And like our wines, Kiwi beers are becoming world-famous for their high quality and distinctive flavours. New Zealand has a great climate for barley cultivation, world class hops grow in Motueka and there are abundant supplies of mineral-rich, clean water.

The pubs and bars are changing too. The days of slurping over-chilled, mass-produced lager from a plastic jug are fast dying out. Increasingly, wine bars, theme pubs, cafes and restaurants are offering local beers as they would offer a selection of local wines – in an atmosphere conducive to civilised drinking.

So in the North Island, look out for brewery names like Cock and Bull, Galbraith, Limburg, Loaded Hog and Shakespeare, and in the South Island watch out for Dodson's, Dux de Lux, Founders, Harrington's, Pink Elephant and the Mussell Inn.

Whether it's a pint of Puck's Pixilation in Auckland, a Hopsmacker Pale Ale in Hastings or a pint of Wobbly Boot in Nelson, there's a trail of wonderful breweries waiting to tantalise your taste buds. Thirsty? What are you waiting for?

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