



HOW
VANCOUVER & BEER

Home Brew

MADE
EACH OTHER



Brewing on Unceded Territory

We acknowledge that Museum of Vancouver is located within the unceded, ancestral territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

These nations are hənqəmihəm and Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh sníchim speaking peoples. These languages are part of the Salish Language family, which dates back many millennia.

We encourage you to learn more about Vancouver's Host Nations.

MUSQUEAM

x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam)
website

Musqueam teaching kit

Musqueam place names map

SQUAMISH

Sk̓w̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish)
website

Squamish Lilwat Cultural Centre

Squamish Atlas

TSLEIL-WAUTUTH

səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)
website

Tsleil-Waututh Sacred Trust Initiative

Takaya Tours

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Please Drink Responsibly

Though beer is a driving force, it – and other types of alcohol and intoxicating substances – can be a destructive one, too. Please visit [HealthLinkBC](#) for resources on low-risk alcohol drinking guidelines.

If alcohol is triggering for you, please proceed carefully.

If you or a loved one is living with alcoholism and/or other forms of addiction, help is available. Below are links to several helpful resources.

[Alcohol and Drug Information Referral Service](#) →

[First Nations Health Authority: Mental Wellness and Substance Use](#) →

[Mental Health and Substance Use Supports](#) →

[Vancouver Coastal Health Substance Use Services](#) →

Take good care.

Produced by the Museum of Vancouver

Home Brew: How Vancouver and Beer Made Each Other

The explosion of craft breweries in Vancouver over the past decade is not the first wave of breweries to operate in the city.

From the 1880s until the 1910s, a number of small breweries produced beer for the city's thirsty population before first amalgamating locally, followed by national consolidation.

What follows is not an exhaustive history of these breweries, but a brief consideration of the many factors – human, ecological, geographic, etc. – that continually influence our evolving relationship with this complicated brew. Though beer is something enjoyed leisurely, it is not a passive thing. Beer influences tastes, revitalizes urban spaces, and inspires social and sustainable innovation. It is a driving force.

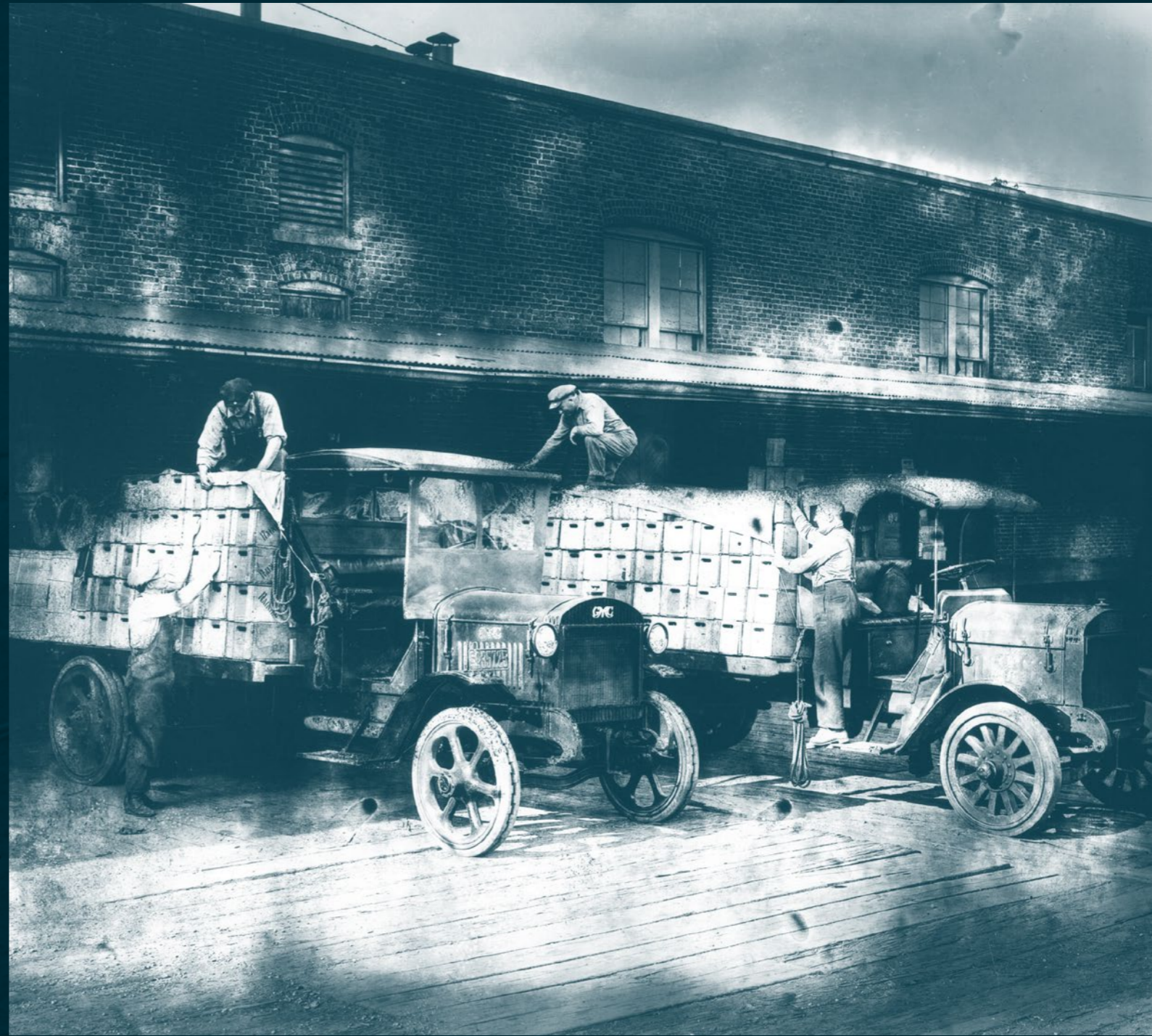


Image Credit:

Vancouver Brewery trucks, 1923. Photograph by Stuart Thomson.
City of Vancouver Archives: AM1535-: CVA 99-1404

Mount Pleasant & Brewery Creek

What is now known as Vancouver's Mount Pleasant neighbourhood was once a dense, resource-rich rainforest, which local First Nations communities harvested for millennia.

Game, fish, and shellfish were plentiful – the land even supported small herds of elk. Salmon, whose life cycles balanced this delicate ecosystem, ran in the large creeks which drained down a ravine into the salt waters of False Creek below.

With the arrival of settlers, the creeks became an advantageous water source for various industries, breweries included. Brewery Creek was so named due to its usage to power the mills that ground the malt barley Charles Doering's Vancouver Breweries used to brew its beer.

Image Credit:

Goad's Atlas of the City of Vancouver, Plate 82: Mount Pleasant [Dock Street - False Creek - Ontario Street - Seventh Avenue], 1912.

City of Vancouver Archives: AM1594-: MAP 342b-: MAP 342b.18



Labrador Tea

Near what is now 16th Avenue between Main and Fraser Streets, Brewery Creek was backed up by a large beaver dam, creating swampy conditions that invited the growth of a variety of berry bushes and medicine plants.

A common bog plant throughout Canada, Labrador tea (*Rhododendron groenlandicum*) would have been found here. Its flowers and evergreen leaves are truly multipurpose. Due to its high tannic content, Indigenous people used Labrador tea both to tenderize and flavour meat and to treat wounds and sores. When brewed potently, Labrador tea produces a mild narcotic effect, which made it useful for relieving pain during childbirth.

Settlers used Labrador tea leaves to brew a much less potent herbal tea, which led to them dubbing the area Tea Swamp. Today, Tea Swamp lives on in a city park of the same name, located at 266 E 15th Avenue.

Image Credits:

Labrador tea specimen (*Rhododendron groenlandicum*) University of British Columbia Herbarium: Accession No. V231997

Three children near Old Mount Pleasant Beaver dam, 1940.
Photograph by Pacific Press.
City of Vancouver Archives: AM1616-S1-: CVA 136-533



Recollections of Brewery Creek

“Day after day... my sisters and I would repair to our Ravine for play. This was our special preserve, our forest retreat, our playground, and my own personal conception of a fairyland on earth! In the spring time we gathered violets, mostly yellow ones; also may-flowers, twin-flowers, pigeon-berry blossoms, ferns, and mosses...

In summer time, we sampled fully of the crops which the Ravine so generously provided for our delectation. We hunted out the buried licorice root and chewed it assiduously. We coloured our lips with the juice of salal berries. We ate the yellow and red salmon berries, the thimbleberries, and the wild raspberries. Also we picked bucketsful

of blueberries, red huckleberries, black caps, and blackberries to take home to Mother for pies or winter preserves...”

— Gladys Schwesinger, from *Recollections of My Early Childhood in Vancouver, 1893 – 1912*

Image Credit:

Vancouver, BC, from Mount Pleasant, c. 1890. Photograph by Bailey and Neelands.
City of Vancouver Archives: M54-S4: Van Sc P104

First Ferment: Vancouver's Early Breweries

At the time of its incorporation in 1886, Vancouver was a city populated by labourers. Loggers and longshoremen slaked their thirst in the saloons that occupied the main floors of the city's hotels.

Charles Doering, a machinist of German extraction, arrived in Vancouver in 1885 and began a campaign of buying up these saloons, starting with the Stag & Pheasant on Water Street.

To supply his many saloons, Doering opened Vancouver Brewery in 1887 and began producing beer at Scotia St. and 7th Ave. San Francisco Brewery (later renamed Red Star) and Mainland Brewery established themselves in the area and by 1896 Lion Brewing (later Stadler Brewing) joined them, defining the area as a brewery district.



Image Credits:

Colourized detail of Carl (Charles) Doering, c. 1890
Courtesy of Dayle Mutter

Exterior of Stag & Pheasant Hotel on Water Street Between Cambie and Abbott Streets, c. 1888 City of Vancouver Archives: AM54-S4-: Hot P22.1

Wohlsein, Employees of Doering & Marstrand Brewery in Mount Pleasant, c. 1890 City of Vancouver Archives: AM54-S4-: Dist P18

The water's edge on the south end of Burrard Inlet, though less prolific, was also a desirable spot for breweries. City Brewery (later Red Cross Brewery) began brewing in 1887. Columbia Brewery (later Columbia Lager Beer Brewery) followed in 1888 and Stanley Park Brewery in 1896. An outlier was Cedar Cottage Brewery, which began brewing in 1901 at what is now Kingsway and King Edward.

At Vancouver Brewery, Doering had several partners over the years, most notably veteran Danish brewer Otto Marstrand; however, Doering was always the driving force behind the brewery's growth. In 1900, Doering, Marstrand, and John Williams, owner of the rival Red Cross Brewery, amalgamated their operations under the name Vancouver Breweries. To accommodate increased production, Vancouver Breweries left Mount Pleasant in 1913 and relocated to Yew St and 11th Ave. As with Brewery Creek, the establishment of Vancouver Breweries' new facility facilitated the development of the area – the presence of housing and businesses increased, as did access to downtown Vancouver.

By 1922, Vancouver Breweries had swallowed the remaining independent breweries and controlled 95% of the local supply.



Image Credit:

Vancouver Breweries Ltd.
[2700 Yew, corner 11th
Avenue], c. 1926
City of Vancouver Archives:
AM1535-: CVA 99-3063



Image Credits:

Cascade Ale clothes brush, c. 1925

Museum of Vancouver
Collection: H983.21.31

Stanley Park Brewery beer
bottle, 1896-1905

Museum of Vancouver
Collection: H990.320.1

Vancouver Breweries Cascade
Ale beer glass, 1909 -1957

Museum of Vancouver
Collection: H2022.13.1

BC Breweries BC Export beer
bottle, c. 1925

Museum of Vancouver
Collection: H973.336.1

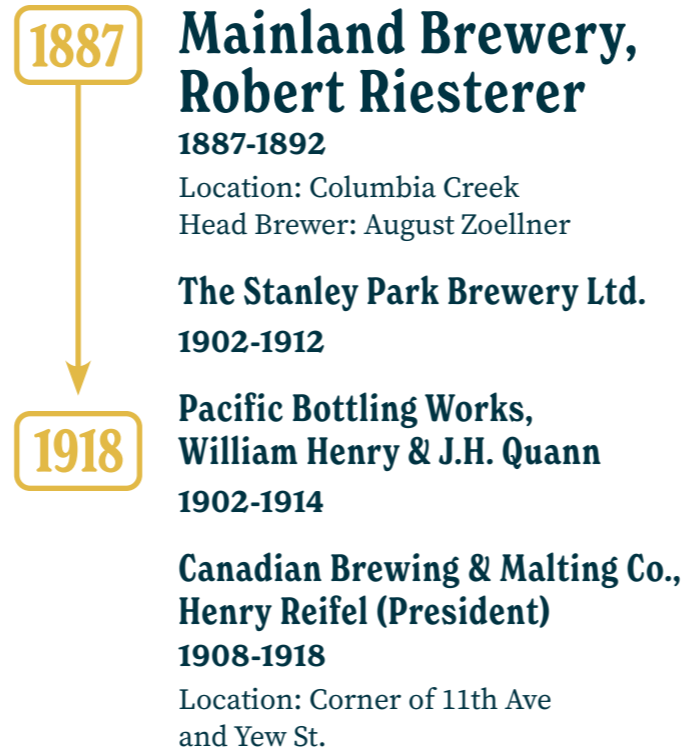
Vancouver Breweries Cascade
beer bottle, 1925-1955

Museum of Vancouver
Collection: H987.243.1

The Cascade recipe dates from 1902. In June of that year, a contest was held to come up with a name for Vancouver Breweries' new beer. The contest was advertised in local papers, with a prize of \$50.00. The winning name was 'Cascade'. They had received multiple entries for the name Cascade, but a Mr. Green was the first entry received and therefore declared the winner.

Barrel Aged: Timelines of Vancouver's Early Breweries

Takeovers and amalgamation were the name of the game in the early days of brewing in Vancouver. These timelines illustrate how the city's core breweries started and, after expansion (or failure) and various ownership changes, how they ended.



1888

**San Francisco Brewery,
Henry & Jack Reifel &
Charles Miller**

1888

Location: NW corner of Main St. and
E 11th Ave.

**Red Star Brewery,
Jacob William DeWitt**
1889-1891

Lion Brewing Co.
1896

Location: 286 Front St., corner of
E 1st Ave. and Scotia St.

August Stadler Brewing Co.
1898-1900

1900

1888

**Columbia Brewery,
Joseph Kappler & Co.**

1888-1893

**Columbia Brewery, Joseph Kappler &
Emile Gerhauser**
1893-1895

Columbia Brewery, Joseph Kappler & Co.
1895-1900

**Columbia Lager Beer Brewery, Joseph
Kappler & Co.**
1900-1904

Columbia Lager Beer Brewery, A. Mueller & Co.
1904-1910

Columbia Lager Beer Brewery, Mary Mueller
1910-1911

Columbia Lager Beer Brewery, Andrew Mueller
1911-1912

Location: Powell St.

Vancouver Breweries Limited
1912-1921

Vancouver Breweries Limited
1921-1946

Vancouver Breweries Limited
1946-1957

The Carling Breweries (B.C.) Limited
1957-1972

The Carling O'Keefe Breweries Limited
1972-1990

Molson and Carling merged operations
in 1989

1990

1925

**Vancouver Malt &
Sake Co. Ltd., Manager
Ken Samikya**

1925-1926

**Vancouver Malt & Sake Co. Ltd.,
President F.A. Jackson**

1926-1929

Location: 2235 Triumph St.

Vancouver Malt & Sake Co. Ltd.
1929-1934

Location: 1445 Powell St.
Purchased by Fitz Sick in 1932

Capilano Brewing Co. Ltd.
1934-1944

Location: 1445 Powell St.

Sick's Capilano Brewery Ltd.
1944-1953

Location: 1445 Powell St.

Sick's Capilano Brewery Ltd.
1953-1959

Location: 1550 Burrard St.

Molson's Capilano Brewery Ltd.
1959-1978

Location: 1550 Burrard St.

Molson Brewery B.C. Ltd.
1978-1990

Location: 1550 Burrard St.

**Molson Breweries, Western Division,
BC Region, Vancouver Plant**
1990-2019

2019

Location: 1550 Burrard St.



Image Credits:

Exterior of Columbia Brewery at Cedar Cove - north side of Powell Street at Wall Street and Victoria Drive, c. 1892.

Photograph by William Stark.

City of Vancouver Archives: AM54-S4-: Bu P127

Columbia Brewery - Corner of Powell Street at Wall Street and Victoria Drive, 1909

City of Vancouver Archives: AM54-S4-: Bu P728

Cedar Cottage Brewery Southeast corner Westminster (Kingsway) and Knight Streets, 1902

City of Vancouver Archives: AM54-S4-: Dist P69

Exterior view of Carling Breweries, 1958. Photograph by Mercer and Mercer Architects.

City of Vancouver Archives: AM1431-: 2012-116.4.22

Image Credits:

Vancouver Breweries Ltd., interior view of mechanics, c. 1926.

City of Vancouver Archives: AM1535-: CVA 99-3067

Mercer & Mercer Architects sketch of proposed Vancouver Breweries Ltd. building on Yew Street, c. 1947.

City of Vancouver Archives: AM1431-: 2012-116.2.62

to reunite with relatives and engage in ceremony at a time when the Potlatch Ban made this difficult and even dangerous.

Once harvested and processed, hops were distributed locally, but also across Canada and overseas. The railway was a key component in this distribution, and to this day, feral hops that escaped from railcars can be found along railway tracks across BC. In Vancouver, plentiful hop vines grow along the Arbutus Greenway, between 37th and 40th Avenues.

A team of researchers at Langara College is studying these feral hops to determine if they can be bred selectively to capitalize on beneficial mutations, for example, resistance to drought or desirable aromatics.



VIDEO

British Columbia Feral Hops

By Justin De Leon, Ben Kwok, and Paola Ortiz, 2022

National Consolidation: The Big Three

Though Canada is a large beer market, it is also, geographically, a large country. Instead of shipping their beer interprovincially, the most efficient way for national breweries to enter local markets was to buy out local breweries and use their existing set ups to brew their own beer.

By the late 1950s, national consolidation eliminated what was left of Vancouver's independent breweries. Sick's Capilano Brewing Co., present in the city since 1932 when Fritz Sick purchased and rebranded the Vancouver Malt & Sake Co., fell to Molson in 1959. Molson continued operations at the south end of the Burrard Street Bridge until 2019 when a larger brewing facility opened in the Fraser Valley.

Vancouver Breweries, the original orchestrator of local consolidation, was itself subsumed by Carling (later Carling O'Keefe) in 1957. Carling



Image Credits:

Cartons of beer on a cart at the Habitat 76 Forum held in Vancouver, 1976
City of Vancouver Archives: AM1671-: CVA 395-06551

Labatt's Expo 86 beer coaster, 1986
Museum of Vancouver Collection: H2013.20.1

Carling Breweries Pilsener Beer bottle, 1958-1980
Museum of Vancouver Collection: H2021.49.1

Exterior view of Carling Breweries, 1958. Photograph by Mercer and Mercer Architects.
City of Vancouver Archives: AM1431-: 2012-116.4.22



maintained production at Vancouver Breweries' Kitsilano plant before merging operations with Molson in 1989.

With a stranglehold on the market, Canada's "Big Three" macrobreweries – Molson, Carling O'Keefe, and Labatt – saw little necessity for experimentation or innovation, especially when the beer-drinking public kept buying their product. One challenge, however, came from "Uncle" Ben Ginter. Based in Prince George, the heavy machinery businessman turned brewery owner introduced aluminum cans to the market. When the cans caught on with consumers, Molson and Carling O'Keefe were forced to install canning lines in their Vancouver breweries to meet demand.

Another challenge came from a former Carling O'Keefe employee who was about to key a hole in the side of the Big Three's cans and pop the tab.

Image Credits:

Capilano Brewing staff for MacLaren Advertising, 1947
City of Vancouver Archives:
AM1545-S3-: CVA 586-6706

WWII Old Style beer carton,
1939-1945.
Museum of Vancouver
Collection, H984.111.62

Vancouver Breweries Pilsener
Beer bottle, 1953-1958
Museum of Vancouver
Collection: H2021.49.3



Fritz Sick, the original proprietor of Sick's Capilano Brewing Co., got his start in beer in Lethbridge, Alberta, where he operated Sick's Breweries Ltd. There, he brewed the (in)famous Old Style Pilsner, which, though now owned by Molson Coors Canada, is still brewed today.



From a Manifesto, a Microbrewery is Born

“The stage has been reached where all the big breweries are making virtually the same product, with different names and labels. Accompanying this trend is a shift in power from the hands of the brewmaster to the marketing, accounting and advertising men.

Like tasteless white bread and the universal cardboard hamburger, the new beer is produced for the tasteless common denominator. It must not offend anyone, anywhere. Corporate beer is not too heavy, not too bitter, not too alcoholic, not too malty, not too hoppy, not too gassy or yeasty. In other words, corporate beer reduces every characteristic that makes beer beer.”

— Excerpt from Frank Appleton’s “The Underground Brewer”, published in *Harrowsmith Magazine*, 1978.

Four years after Appleton’s scourge against big breweries was published in *Harrowsmith Magazine*, he and John Mitchell started what became the first microbrewery in Canada – Horseshoe Bay Brewery. There they produced beer for Mitchell’s nearby Troller Pub in West Vancouver and could barely keep up with the demand for their English style brews. Appleton and Mitchell left in 1984 to open the now legendary Spinnakers Brew Pub in Victoria, but the ripple they created soon started a wave.



Image Credit:

Bay Ale beer label, Horseshoe Bay Brewery, 1982-1999.
Simon Fraser University Archives: F-314

Second Ferment: The (Re)Birth of Craft

An anomaly in its location in the once industrial zone of the same name, Granville Island Brewing was the first craft brewery to open in Vancouver proper in 1984.

Shaftebury Brewing, which followed in 1986, was the first to take advantage of the light industrial zoning that was, in part, a convenient footprint left by the city's old breweries. Shaftebury's original location at 1973 Pandora Street was just a four-minute walk from where Columbia Brewery stood at 1973 Powell Street one hundred years before.

Storm Brewing opened in 1994, downstream from where Brewery Creek once flowed. R&B Brewing started making beer in 1997, just a short distance from where Vancouver Breweries had once dominated beer production in the city. The craft boom of the early 2010s emphasized these two distinct brewery districts as they emerged once again in the city and introduced a plethora of options for Vancouverites seeking a crafty brew.

Despite the legacy of Vancouver's early breweries, attitudes and laws regarding liquor control had changed significantly. City regulators struggled with how to license brewery tasting rooms. The slow process saw brewery proprietors work together to advocate for their burgeoning craft. This spirit of collaboration, in part a product of the homebrew community inspired by Frank Appleton, has become a defining quality of the craft beer movement in Vancouver.

Surviving the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic, while devastating for the hospitality industry, was also an opportunity to showcase the resiliency that is born of collaboration and kindness. Most breweries emphasized beer-to-go during lockdown, but the Beer Van Collective took it even further, delivering beer direct to consumers in the Vancouver area.



Image Credit:

Members of the Beer Van Collective team, including Nigel Springthorpe of Brassneck Brewing and Ryan Parfitt of Luppolo Brewing.
Courtesy of @beervancollective Instagram

Other breweries came together to produce collaboration brews for restaurants that had been their biggest supports pre-pandemic.



Sustainability

Beer, by nature, is not exactly sustainable. It requires a lot of resources to produce and in turn produces a significant amount of waste. In addition to the pallets, shrink wrap, and malt bags that accumulate over a brewery's lifetime, organic waste poses a significant challenge to greening the brewing process. The rapid influx of breweries in Vancouver strained the sewage system - all that malt, hops, and yeast needed to go somewhere, and it couldn't go down the drain!

As a solution, many breweries now divert their organic waste to local farmers who use it as feed for livestock. We can even eat it, too! Vancouver-based Susgrainable works with local breweries such as Faculty Brewing to collect spent grain and "upcycle" it into fibre-rich barley flour and mixes for baked goods.



Image Credits:

Alibi Room collaboration brew beer can, 2020
Museum of Vancouver Collection

Faculty Brewing, closed in support of Climate Strike, 27
September 2019

Photo by David Niddrie

Susgrainable's upcycled barley flour products

New Craft City: Timeline of Vancouver's Contemporary Breweries



1984

Granville Island Brewing

Purchased by Andrew Peller Wines in 2005, Molson Coors Canada in 2009

1997
R&B Brewing [Brewery Creek]



1994

Storm Brewing Ltd. [Brewery Creek]
Yaletown Brewing



1980



1987

Shaftebury Brewing

Purchased by Sleeman Breweries 1999



1995

Steamworks Brewing Co.



1998

Dix BBQ & Brewery

Closed 2010

8 — NEW CRAFT CITY: TIMELINE OF VANCOUVER'S CONTEMPORARY BREWERIES

2014

Bomber Brewing [Yeast Van]
 Purchased by Donnelly Group 2018
Main Street Brewing [Brewery Creek]
Postmark Brewing
 Becomes Settlement Brewing 2020
Strange Fellows Brewing [Yeast Van]
Steel Toad Brewing
 Closed 2018



2012

Parallel 49 Brewing [Yeast Van]
Powell Brewery [Yeast Van]



2013

33 Acres Brewing [Brewery Creek]
Brassneck Brewery [Brewery Creek]



2015

Callister Brewing [Yeast Van]
Off the Rail Brewing Co [Yeast Van]
Red Truck Beer Company [Brewery Creek]
Doan's Craft Brewing (closed 2019) [Yeast Van]

2016

Faculty Brewing [Brewery Creek]
Luppolo Brewing Company [Yeast Van]
Strathcona Beer Co. [Yeast Van]



2018

33 Brewing Experiment [Brewery Creek]
BREWHALL
Electric Bicycle Brewing [Brewery Creek]



2020

Settlement Brewing [Yeast Van]
Superflux Beer Co. [Yeast Van]



2022

Brewing August [Brewery Creek]



Today

Beer for All: Diversity in Brewing

Do you notice anything about these two photos? Here's a hint — white men.

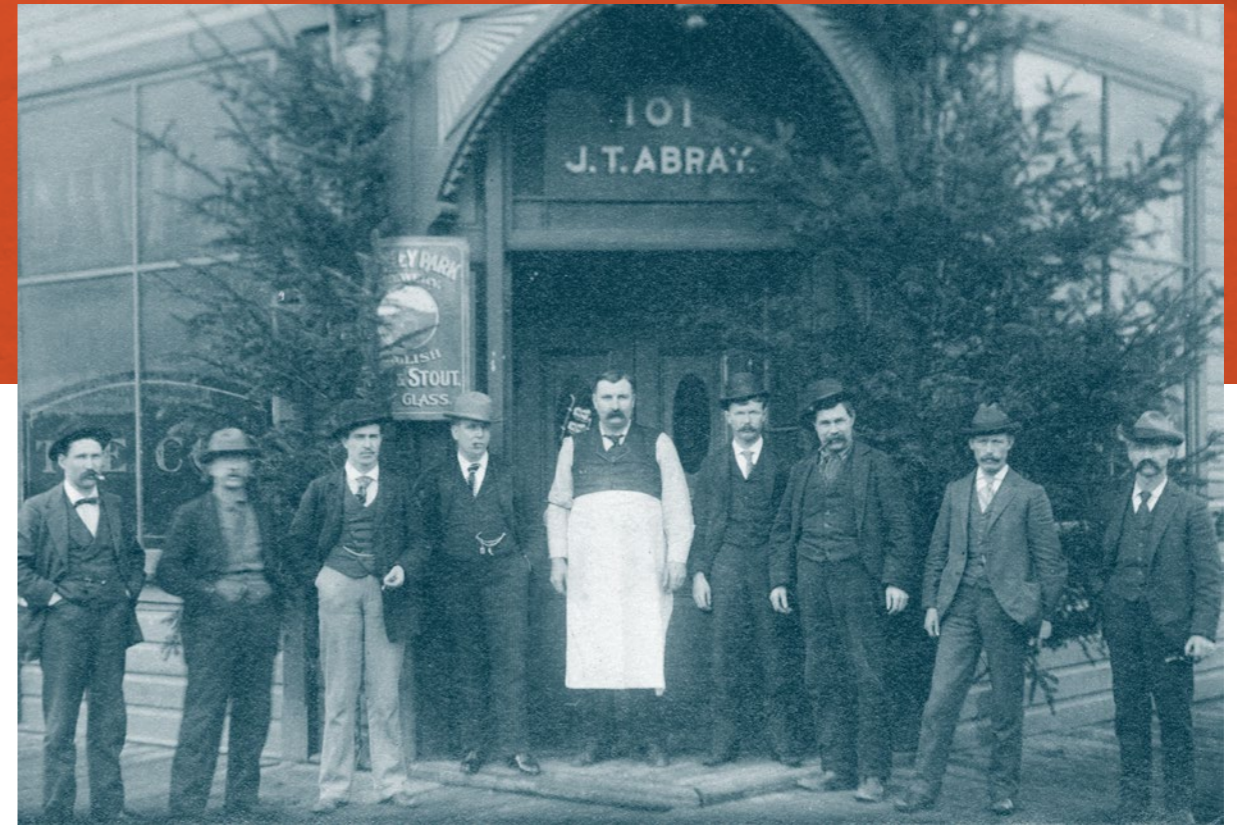
For many years, beer was not an inclusive space. Vancouver's early saloons were generally the domain of hard-labouring, hard-drinking men, though working-class women were known to “rush the growler” – purchase a jug of beer from a saloon and drink it elsewhere.

The beer parlours that opened after BC's brief flirtation with prohibition (1917-1921) were, to varying degrees, segregated by gender. The establishments had separate entrances – one for men and one for women and their escorts. During WWII, parlours were required to install six-foot-high partitions to further discourage fraternization.

Image Credits:

Jackson T. Abray (far left) and others in front of the entrance to the Cosmopolitan Hotel at 101 Cordova Street, c. 1900
City of Vancouver Archives:
AM54-S4-2: CVA 371-1302

Group of men drinking beer, c. 1912. Photograph by James Luke Quiney.
City of Vancouver Archives:
AM1584: CVA 7-197



In addition to gender discrimination, marginalized and racialized people were generally unwelcome in beer parlours. Though there was no law against serving Black individuals, some parlours elected not to; Asian Canadians were not allowed to own or work in beer parlours; and Indigenous people, under the Indian Act, were barred from consuming alcohol until they were permitted to frequent beer parlours in 1951.

Liquor control was a way of regulating who was an acceptable member of society. Though such laws may not be in place now, it is still reasonable to consider who is (and who is not) made to feel welcome in the tasting rooms of today's breweries.



Image Credit:

Ikigai HYPHA Project beer can, featuring Never Above Nor Below by KC Hall, 2021
Museum of Vancouver Collection



VIDEO

Diversity in Beer

Kain Huang, Joyce Lau, Jerry Li, and Kevin Lyu, 2022

Produced by the Museum of Vancouver



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