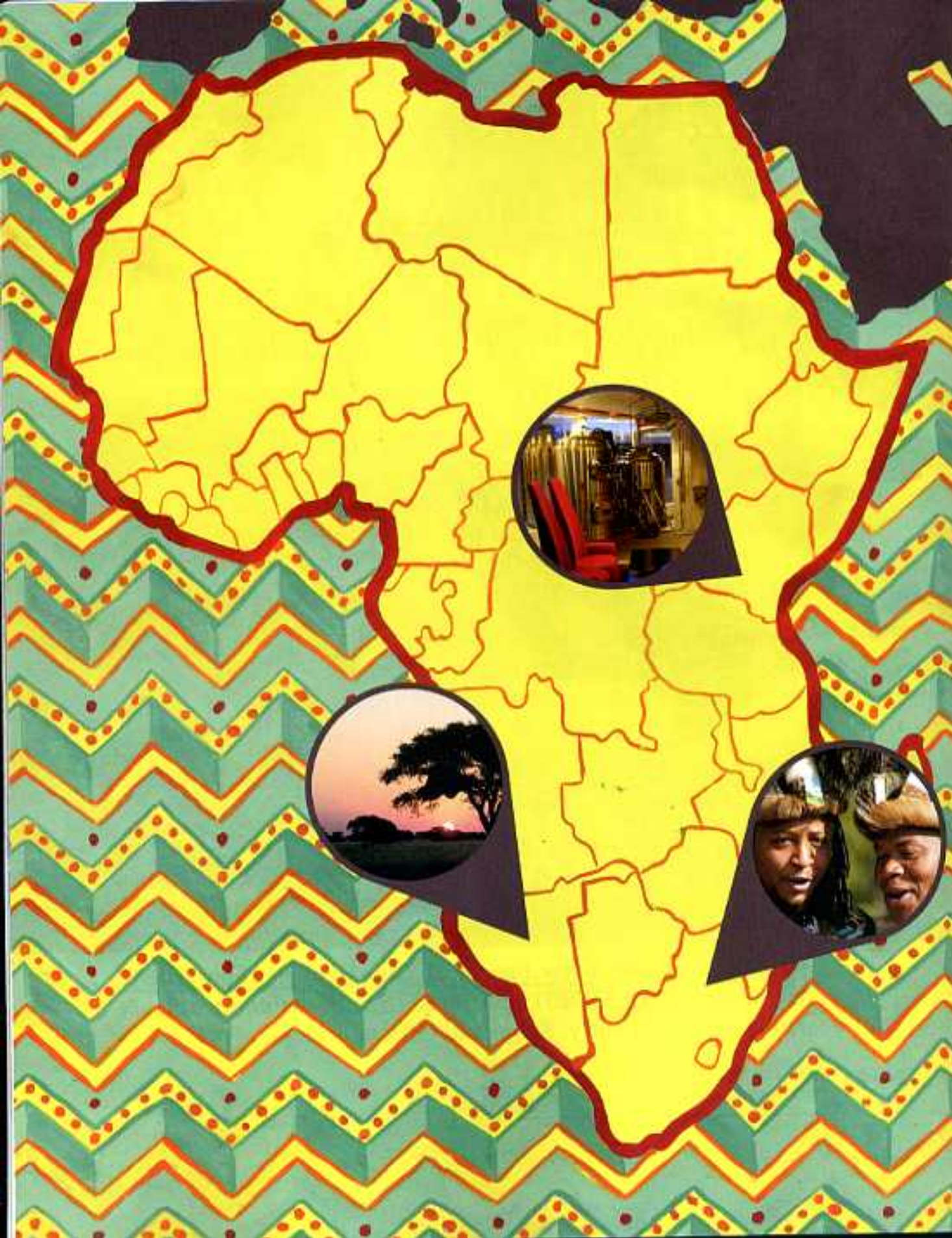


PITTSBURGH'S EAST END | BREWBICLES | "DARK" DAYS IN ROTTERDAM | DRAFT PICKS
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Beeradvocate





SOUTHERN AFRICA'S BEER BOOM

A Look at the Heart of Africa's Beer Scene

During a long night of tasting beers from all across the world at the Copenhagen Beer Festival last May, Dan Shelton sampled a few brews from the Namibian brewery Bierwerk Afrikan Ales. That night, Shelton left with three thoughts about Bierwerk: One, they put out good, high-quality beers. Two, he'd never had high-quality beer brewed in Africa. But most importantly, he says, "It really didn't taste like any other beer I've ever had."

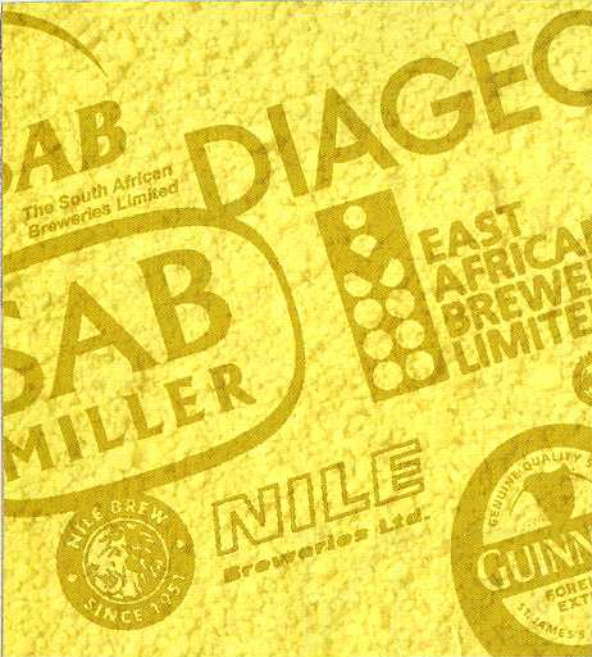
Bierwerk's beers, made by Danish head brewer Christian Skovdal Andersen, include Aardwolf, an oak-aged Coffee Stout brewed with Namibian molasses and roasted African coffee beans, and Vlakvark, a 3.8-percent ABV British-style Bitter made with South African barley malt and Southern Promise hops.

Andersen's beers are set to arrive in the United

States this May, imported by the Shelton Brothers, along with some beers from Camelthorn Brewing Company, where Bierwerk contract-brews, in Windhoek, Namibia.

Bierwerk and Camelthorn signify a burgeoning craft beer scene in Namibia; meanwhile, Namibia's border-country of South Africa has seen nearly 30 microbreweries open in the past decade.

For years, beer connoisseurs have dismissed the continent as the lost land of Pilsners due to the proliferation of corporate breweries that operate there, like Heineken, Guinness and SABMiller, which has breweries in 17 African countries. But the Shelton Brothers shipment isn't the only indication that now may be the start of a new era for craft brews in the southern countries of Africa.



As Global Beer Sales Dip, Macrobreweries Invest in Africa

While craft brewers find their footing in southern Africa, the corporate beer industry is responding to the rest of the continent's rising middle class by increasing production. In 2011, research firm Euromarket International estimated beer volumes to grow 6 percent by 2016 in the Middle East and Africa, compared to the global market's projected rise of just 2 percent.

Right now, the major companies engaged in turf wars are SABMiller (which, according to analyst Trevor Stirling, holds 34 percent of the continental market in volume, 24 percent of which is in South Africa), Castel (holding 20 percent, although they share an alliance with SABMiller), Heineken (16 percent) and Diageo (7 percent)—Diageo also owns a 25 percent stake in Heineken).

As commercial brewers invest in the African market, nations are hoping to capitalize on those investments, says Ebrahim Rasool, South African ambassador to America, in an interview during his recent visit to Boston. South Africa consumes the most beer out of any country in Africa, and SABMiller ("SAB" was formerly South African Breweries, which bought Miller for \$5.6 billion in 2002) dominates that market.

"We are beginning to use SABMiller as a vehicle to enter ... places like Europe and, slowly, the US as well," Rasool says, reaching up his open palm to emphasize his vision of the South African beer industry expanding upward throughout the continent. (A practicing Muslim, he was quick to add that he does not drink beer himself.)

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THE GLOBALIZATION OF BEER

Beer has been a pillar of the African culture and economy for centuries. The Bantu people, which had migrated throughout most of the eastern and southern parts of Africa by 700 BCE, were sustained by beer, their primary source of nutrition: The Bantu employed an agricultural system of clearing land to grow sorghum and millet, which they then fermented in order to extract the nutrients.

When the Dutch and British immigrants arrived in the 17th century, they brought with them lagering techniques and Western European beer styles. Then, during apartheid (until 1962), most South Africans were not only banned from consuming European-made beer or liquor, but they were not permitted to brew sorghum beer either, according to apartheid laws. This led to the proliferation of illegal breweries called shebeens, in which the locals brewed and served traditional African beer, which is made from malted sorghum or cassava, although maize (corn) and millet flour are also used in some regions. The alcohol content is low, averaging around 3-percent ABV, and the grains lend a nutritiously high level of vitamin B.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, homebrewing became a lucrative industry in the south: Women in South African cities brewed and sold beer to support themselves, and beer was even used as currency among men. In 1929, in apartheid South Africa, the ban of homebrewing within the Natal townships incited picketing and boycotting among the women who had been denied their livelihood.

The homebrew industry is still thriving; a survey by SABMiller, the corporate brewery that accounts for 90 percent of beer sold in South Africa, found that the homebrew market is four times as large as the commercial market in volume. Looking to upend that statistic, the commercial breweries are starting to capitalize on the country's taste for local ingredients by releasing indigenous-style beers.

SABMiller's first move into this market was Impala lager, a cassava-based beer that launched in Mozambique, in November 2011; SABMiller is already planning to increase production of the beer to meet the high demand. Impala comes on the heels of Eagle beer, a sorghum ale, from Nile Brewery, a subsidiary of SABMiller. As of June 2011, Eagle accounted for 35 percent of all the beer sold in Uganda.

Then there's Chibuku, a thick, opaque beer brewed with maize and sorghum, and sold in cardboard cartons. Chibuku is being peddled at cheap prices by SABMiller as an attempt to target lower-income Africans. The beer is based on Brukutu, a traditional homebrew style that's milky and a little sour. Chibuku has a shelf life of just five days as it continues to ferment in the carton, but SABMiller is currently testing Chibuku Super, sold in plastic cartons with a shelf life of 21 days.

INGREDIENTS IN CHIBUKU
BEER SEPARATE IN THE
CARTON, EARNING THE
PRODUCT ITS FULL NAME:
"CHIBUKU SHAKE-SHAKE."

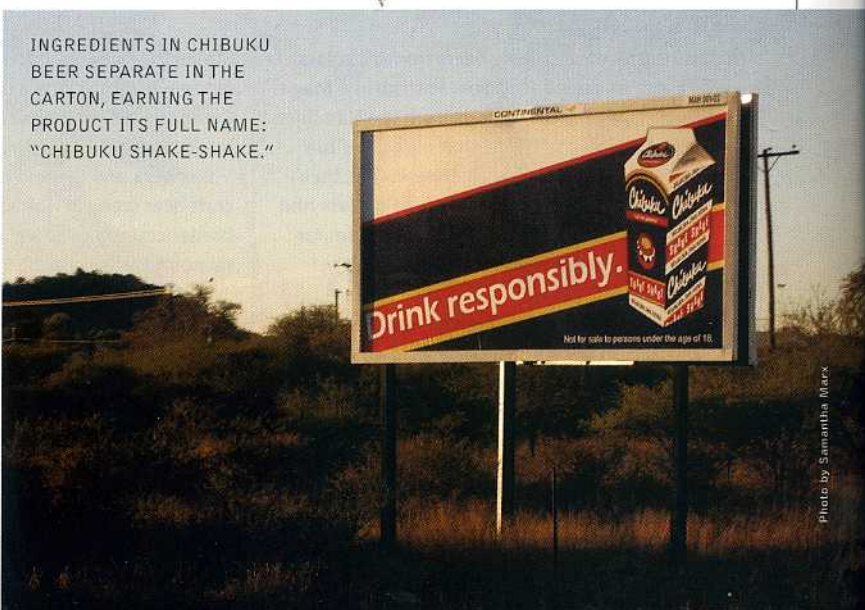


Photo by Samantha Marx

That expansion is well underway. SABMiller already operates the only brewery in Sudan. And in February of this year, SABMiller announced it would be spending \$80 million to build a new brewery at its subsidiary, Nile Breweries, in western Uganda, the fastest-growing beer market in Africa. That brings the company's total investment in Uganda to a cumulative \$130 million in the past three years.

Though SABMiller dominates in South Africa, the company faces some competition in East Africa—namely, Kenya-based company East African Breweries, a subsidiary of Diageo. EAB just purchased all of SABMiller's shareholdings in Kenya Breweries Limited—which totaled 20 percent of the company—at \$225 million. EAB, a 90-year-old company, employs over 1,000 people, and their portfolio includes Tusker, Senator, Guinness, President and Windhoek. They're also building a brewery in the Kilimanjaro area of Tanzania, a joint venture with Serengeti Breweries Ltd., which just invested \$40 million into the project. Parent company Diageo also just purchased a brewery in Ethiopia for \$225 million.

"We are beginning to use SABMiller as a vehicle to enter ... places like Europe and, slowly, the US as well."

Heineken and Diageo are also looking to move in on SABMiller's home market; the two companies have jointly opened a malting plant and a brewery with a capacity of 6 million hectoliters in South Africa.

To the west, Diageo brews (among other brands) Guinness and Guinness Foreign Extra Stout (FES) in Cameroon, Ghana and Nigeria, which is the second largest market for FES in the world. Guinness Nigeria also announced in April they'd be pouring \$225 million into an expansion, doubling the company's capacity to 7.5 million hectoliters.

The reason for these rapid investments? Beer sales in Africa have doubled in volume over the past 10 years. Even after the most tumultuous years of Robert Mugabe's presidency in Zimbabwe, the country's Delta Corporation doubled beverage production in 2010 and increased another 15 percent in 2011. On the commercial level, beer in Africa is seen as a sure bet.

The slightly sour taste of non-barley beer is one most foreigners are not accustomed to, although producing tasty gluten-free beer is something American brewers are experimenting with. But those raised on gluten-free beer for generations have acquired a different taste. The question is, with incomes in Africa rising, will tastes change, too?

Calestous Juma says yes, tastes *are* likely to change. Juma is a professor of the practice of international development at the Harvard Kennedy School and a Kenya native.

"When income levels rise for these groups, there is always a tendency to aspire to a different level of quality among consumers," Juma says, adding that this is already apparent in the increased consumption of processed food in Africa.

"There is a status issue associated with it as well, because you are no longer just drinking in your village—you are going into a pub or into a social setting. You are circulating in different networks, you have different activities there that involve certain improvement in status and class."

So while commercial breweries start mimicking African homebrew styles, locals with more disposable income may actually start to look for new styles and higher-quality beers—SABMiller may be meeting that demand now, but eventually, Juma says, the craft beer industry should feel some effects of the middle class rising.



THE CRAFT OF BREWING IN SOUTH AFRICA

One place where the microbrewery industry is starting to pick up is South Africa, where nearly 30 microbreweries have opened in the shadow of SABMiller. From Triggerfish Brewing, which sent brewers to the US for a year to study, to Three Skulls Brewery, which offers a Mango, Passionfruit and Lavender Wheat beer, breweries serve up mostly European-style beers with a mix of imported and local ingredients.

These brewers gather each year at the Clarens Craft Beer Festival. Over 50 microbrews from South Africa and Namibia are poured, plus a few from the festival's sponsor, SAB (South African Breweries), and from Mitchell's, the second largest brewery in the country. (These two were the only brewers to bring indigenous-style beers, like Tamarind beer and Milk and Honey Ale, to February's festival.)

Dirk Van Tonder opened the Irish Ale House five years ago in Broederstroom, South Africa. It's a small restaurant and farm, serving mostly day-trippers from Johannesburg, which is a two-and-a-half-hour drive away. Its name pays homage to the Irish who fought in the South African wars.

The Big Five Breweries Ltd.

Craft breweries are also opening elsewhere on the continent. Aleem Ladak, master brewer at Big Five Breweries Ltd. in Nairobi, Kenya, draws inspiration from the "big five"—the five most sought-after big-game animals. Ladak brews European and American beer styles, but nods to the local culture by associating each beer with the spirit of an animal—below are his descriptions of each one.

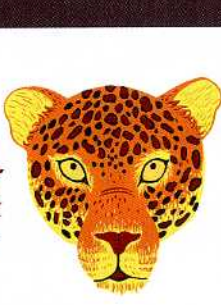


SIMPILS

STYLE:
CZECH-STYLE PILSNER

ORIGIN:
"SIMBA"
("LION")

THE PILSNER LAGER IS USUALLY THE MOST DOMINANT OF LAGER BEERS AND THUS IT WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LION.

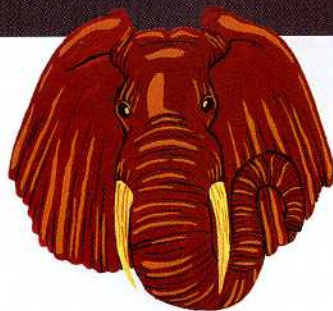


CHUIKÖLSCH

STYLE:
GERMAN-STYLE
KÖLSCH

ORIGIN:
"CHUI"
("LEOPARD")

THE KÖLSCH IS A LIGHT, EASY-TO-DRINK ALE ... ASSOCIATED WITH THE AGILITY AND SPEED OF THE LEOPARD.



TEMSTOUT

STYLE:
ENGLISH-STYLE
CHOCOLATE STOUT

ORIGIN:
"TEMBO"
("ELEPHANT")

ITS DARK COLOR AND FULL-BODIED, MALTY CHARACTER IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DARK COLOR, PRESENCE AND STRENGTH OF THE ELEPHANT.



KIFABOCK

STYLE:
BELGIAN-STYLE BOCK

ORIGIN:
"KIFARU"
("RHINO")

THE BOCK IS ONE OF OUR STRONGER, FULL-BODIED, DARKER BREWS AND IS THUS ASSOCIATED WITH THE COLOR AND STRENGTH OF THE RHINO.



NYATIPA

STYLE:
AMERICAN-STYLE IPA

ORIGIN:
"NYATI"
("BUFFALO")

THE IPA IS ALSO ONE OF OUR STRONGER BLONDE BREWS, ASSOCIATED WITH THE POWERFUL KICK OF THE BUFFALO.

Van Tonder says he brews "true" Irish beer. He makes an Irish Red Ale, and an Irish Dry Stout in the winter and for St. Patrick's Day. He also serves an IPA, known in Broederstroom simply as "the Blonde."

Operating a small-scale brewery with ingredients designed for large-scale production is a constant source of frustration for van Tonder. The pale malt used in all of the Irish Ale House beers comes from SABMiller—which van Tonder refers to as "Big Brother."

The quality of this malt is not dependable because it's harvested in bulk, says van Tonder. "The sugar levels fluctuate, as they are constantly blending yield from their irrigated farms on the Orange River with what comes off dry-land farming in the Cape Province."

He faces a similar situation with hops. The hops cultivated in South Africa are "all crap," according to van Tonder, who adds that SABMiller's aromatic hops taste like "pine needles mixed with weeds" (brewers have even nicknamed them the "khaki-bos hops," after a local weed). Van Tonder uses SABMiller's local hops, which come in cheap at roughly R200 per

kilogram (~\$25/kg) for bitterness, and he imports US hops for around R700/kg (~\$88/kg) to "add character and flavor."

"You just cannot crack it with the local stuff," he says. "If you go over a certain threshold, your beer resembles pine needle soup with a touch of cat pee. Not good."

Van Tonder's local hop of choice is the high-alpha acid, dual-purpose Southern Promise breed, which is one of a handful of hop varieties that can tolerate South Africa's short days of sunlight; other regional hops include Outeniqua and Southern Star, and an experimental Citra-like variety—US4/78—that Andersen, from Bierwerk, says "may become the next Nelson Sauvin," if enough can be produced..

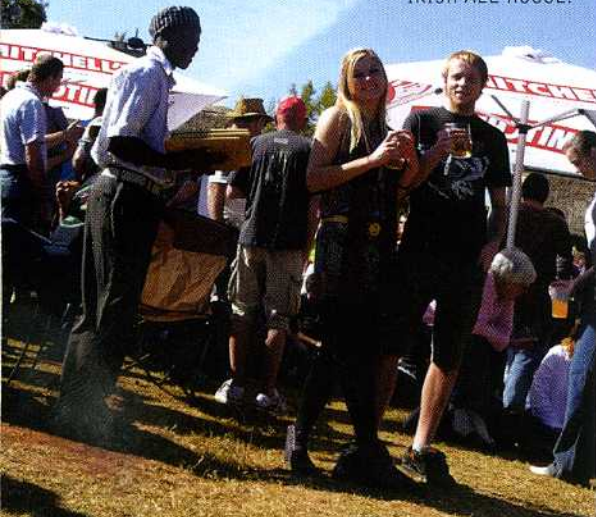
Licenses are another source of frustration for van Tonder—it took him three years to get his brewing license. He's since applied for a bottling license, but has been told it won't even be looked at for one year's time.

He says that right now, there is a moratorium on all new liquor licenses and extensions due to fraud and bribes. "Apparently, there are now too many fraudulently issued licenses," van Tonder explains.

There is one aspect van Tonder remains optimistic

"When income levels rise for these groups, there is always a tendency to aspire to a different level of quality among consumers."

THE ANNUAL SOLSTICE
FESTIVAL AT SOUTH AFRICA'S
IRISH ALE HOUSE.



about: his beer festival. Every June, he hosts the Solstice Festival, which will celebrate its sixth anniversary this summer. Last year, van Tonder says that he had over 2,000 paid entrants; this year has 22 regional microbreweries slotted. Craft beers in hand, festival goers participate in tomato throwing, pillow fights and Zulu dance lessons.

This year, van Tonder is also bringing in Nick Downs, a brewer with whom he has developed a friendship during Downs' frequent trips to the area. Downs splits his time between operating the Reformation Brewery in the US, and flights to and from South Africa as a Delta Air Lines pilot.

"I think it's ripe there," says Downs, of the South African craft beer scene. Downs and other employees from Reformation Brewery, in Ball Ground, Ga., visited van Tonder earlier in the spring to brew their West Clay IPA on the Irish Ale House equipment. Downs says it's the "grassroots" connections like he has with van Tonder that are bound to push the craft movement forward.

The West Clay IPA will be ready in time for the Solstice Festival. This trans-Atlantic collaboration is an example of what van Tonder sees as the increasing foreign influence on the African beer culture at large. "We hope that this small step will open a floodgate of interest and motivate our market to buy more craft," he says.

NAMIBIA: AN EMERGING MARKET

The booming craft beer culture in South Africa has filtered up into its border country of Namibia. In 2008, Jörg Finkeldey, from Camelthorn Brewing Co. (the only craft brewery from outside South Africa to attend the Clarens festival), was awarded the second-ever brewing license in the country—the first was issued in 1920, a year after Namibia gained independence from Germany.

Over 70 years since, Finkeldey says the German colonial heritage influences his high standards when it comes to beer. "We see ourselves adding to this legacy by offering more variety," he says.

For their four regular offerings (a Weissbier, Pilsner, Red Ale and light 2.5-percent ABV Weissbier—"for the ladies"), Camelthorn uses malt from SABMiller. Other ingredients are imported from Germany and the United States. Their sources reach as far away as Oregon, where they get Cascade hops for their Red Ale.

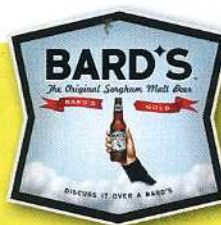
Many gluten-free beers replace regular brewing malts with malted sorghum. Here are a few of the most popular sorghum beers, according to reviews on BeerAdvocate.com.



Harvester Brewing's Pale Ale
Portland, Ore.
American Pale Ale, 5.8%
Chestnuts, sorghum, gluten-free oats, pure cane sugar; Nugget, Cascade & Meridian hops



Dogfish Head's Tweason'ale
Milton, Del.
Fruit Ale, 6.0%
Strawberries, sorghum syrup, buckwheat honey



Bard's Original Sorghum Malt Beer
Buffalo, N.Y.
American lager, 4.6%
100-percent malted sorghum



New Planet 3R Raspberry Ale
Boulder, Colo.
Fruit Ale, 5.0%
Sorghum, corn extract, natural raspberry puree, orange peel, hops, yeast

Africa Mai Bok

Here, we add millet and sorghum to play off Bokbier, a popular style in Namibia and South Africa.

(WARNING: THIS IS NOT A GLUTEN-FREE BEER!)

For 5.5 gallons at 1.073, 32 IBUs, 5.7 SRM, 7.5% ABV, 90-minute boil

MALT / GRAIN / SUGAR

9.00 lb Pilsner Malt
2.00 lb Millet
2.00 lb Munich Malt
0.25 lb Aromatic Malt
2.00 lb Sorghum Extract (added during the boil)

MASH

The starches in grains must gelatinized first before mash enzymes can convert them to sugar. For most brewing grains (barley, wheat, oats), gelatinization (the breaking of the starch matrix) occurs below mash temperatures. For grains such as sorghum, millet, corn and others, they must be cooked first to break down. This process is cereal mashing—it's part boiling and part decoction mashing, a classic method of brewing.

Strike the Munich, the Aromatic and 8 pounds of Pilsner to rest at 125°F. While this sits, heat 1 quart of water to boiling and add the millet. Stir until the mixture thickens into lava! Add cold water to pull the temperature to 150°F. Add the pound of Pilsner and rest for 20 minutes. Slowly bring back to the boil, stir continuously (wear gloves). Boil for 10 minutes and add to the main mash. The mash temperature should come to a rest somewhere around 150°F. Let rest for 45 minutes.

HOPS

0.75 oz Magnum Pellets
11.0%AA 60 minutes

YEAST

WLP833 German Bock Lager

FERMENTATION

Ferment at 52°F for two weeks with a healthy starter. Raise temperature over one day to 65°F. Hold for two days before slowly crashing the temperature to 35°F over a week. Rack and hold for at least two-four weeks before bottling.



FARMERS FROM SOUTH AFRICA'S ROOIBOS LIMITED HARVESTING ROOIBOS, WHICH IS OFTEN USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR AROMA HOPS.

In fact, the first batch of beer Finkeldey ever brewed was an American Red Ale in Redondo Beach, Calif., in 1993. Like many of the brewers starting up in southern Africa, Finkeldey spent his early beer years overseas, selling brewing equipment before returning home to Namibia.

Camelthorn also hosts Bierwerk's brewing setup. Together, the two brewers import ingredients from Europe, where Andersen, from Bierwerk, has the closest ties. Andersen was the co-founder of Ølfabriken in 2004, a brewery in his home country of Denmark.

Business in Denmark was going well, but Andersen says he saw an opportunity to fill the niche for craft beer in Africa. Most importantly, he says, he was looking for some adventure.

"The continent is full of interesting ingredients and has many traditional brewing methods that would be fun to explore," he says.

In 2008, he sold all of his shares Ølfabriken and went to South Africa. He started contract brewery BeerHeer, and then in 2009, opened Bierwerk.

Working with Finkeldey has been a happy pairing between two opposites. Andersen says his approach—barrel aging and using nontraditional ingredients—is far removed from the German roots of Camelthorn but, he adds, "Jörg has shown true New-World attitude when discussing recipes and brewing methods."

Now, Finkeldey is committed to experimenting with local ingredients. "That is what gives us the edge—brewing with ingredients indigenous to our African bush," he says.

The quintessential African bush ingredient: rooibos. It's the plant that gives African redbush tea—a favorite non-alcoholic drink of Andersen's—its distinct flavor.

To make this work in beer, they substitute some of the rooibos with aroma hops. The result, says Finkeldey, is a subtle, yet pleasant taste. That's a taste Dan Shelton says he's looking forward to experiencing and sharing with consumers. He says part of the allure is not just the flavor, but the story behind it.

"With every beer comes this whole history and cultural story," Shelton says. "That's what drives us to bring in these beers from all these places—because we want to learn more."

Susan Zalkind lives in Cambridge, Mass. She is a freelance writer and the multimedia coordinator at the Frederick S. Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer-Range Future at Boston University.