



# HOPLINE

*Newsletter of the Crescent City Homebrewers Club*

**March 2026**

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Location: *Deutches Haus***

**2026 Edition**

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER – MARCH 2026

Greetings all!

We have some great events coming up this month. On March 20th we will have our monthly meetup, this time at Winston's Pub & Patio on Metairie Rd. The First brewoff of the year will be on Saturday, March 28th at the Deutsches Haus. This will also be the return of the sausage stuffing event. Both will be occurring at the warehouse. Please see the calendar pages for times and addresses.

Looking further ahead; 2028 will be a big year for us as it will be our 50th anniversary. I feel that we should mark this milestone with a year of great events; so to that end we are establishing a committee to do some planning. If you would like to get involved, please let us know by emailing [crescentcityhomebrewers@gmail.com](mailto:crescentcityhomebrewers@gmail.com). Once we get a date set for the first meeting, we'll let everyone know.

Until next time, keep brewing!

- Will

## CRESCENT CITY HOMEBREWERS – EXECUTIVE BOARD 2026

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## BREWOFF SCHEDULE FOR 2026 (Subject to Change, Really)

Date	Style	Host	Location	Brewmaster
January 1/17/26	<i>Winterfest Break</i>			
February 2/??/26	--	--	--	--
March 3/28/26	Porter	Fish Fest Sausage Stuffing Brewoff	Deutsches Haus	Mike Mailey
April 4/18/26	Stout	Eva Biggers	--	Craig Laginess
May 5/16/26	Rye Beer	Greg Hankenberg	--	Will Thompson
June 6/13/26	BIABS Saison	Neil Barnett	5636 Hawthorne Pl NOLA, 70124	Neil Barnett
July 8/1/26	<i>BUS TRIP</i> Mead Day	--	--	--
August 8/8/26	BIABS	Barney and Diane Ryan	--	--
September 9/??/26	--	--	--	--
October	<i>Octoberfest Break</i>	---	--	--
November 11/7/26	LTHBD	Matt and Rachel Ault	--	--
November 11/??/26	Oyster Stout	Charles Sule	6325 Perlito Dr NOLA	--

\*BIABS = brewing in a bathing suit

Standard Wort price \$30.00      Standard Lunch price\$10.00

For any new members, a Brewoff is a group event in which we make 50 gallons of beer with the Club equipment. The wort is then split up into ten, 5-gallon units. The units are given out to the Host(1), Brewmaster(1), Chef(1), Equipment Movers(2), and Grunts(5). Guests and Alternates are encouraged to sign up and join in the fun. Wort participants must bring their own 5-gallon fermenter, and yeast. If you are interested, email DUMBOS at jack.horne@gmail.com or sign up at the meetings. [Buy a truck](#)



Hey Buckeroo's,

Please sign up, if you know what's good for you.

My email is [neilwbarnett@yahoo.com](mailto:neilwbarnett@yahoo.com).

Take care, and keep brewing,

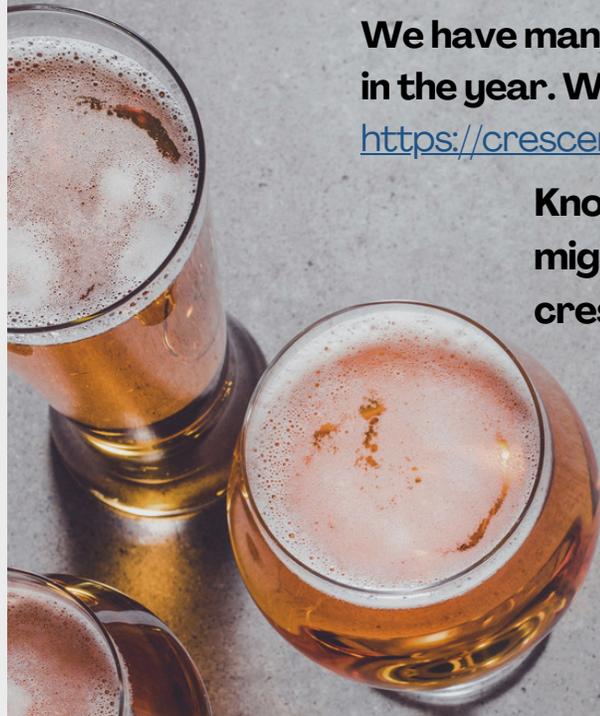
DUMBO

# UPCOMING EVENTS

HERE ARE SOME  
GREAT EVENTS  
THAT YOU MAY BE  
INTERESTED IN:

<b>Apr 1</b>	<b>General Meeting</b> 7 PM – Deutsches Haus
<b>Apr 7</b>	<b>National Beer Day</b> 1933 - The Cullen-Harrison Act goes into effect, ending prohibition
<b>Apr 7</b>	<b>CCH Meetup</b> 7 PM – Bayou Beer Garden
<b>Apr 10-11</b>	<b>Hogs for the Cause</b> <a href="https://hogsfest.org/">https://hogsfest.org/</a>
<b>Apr 11</b>	<b>Boot Brewfest</b> <a href="https://bootbrewfest.com/">https://bootbrewfest.com/</a>
<b>Apr 18</b>	<b>Brewoff - Stout</b> 8 AM - 214 Dorrington Blvd, Metairie
<b>Apr 25</b>	<b>Chandyfest 2026</b> Chandelur Island Brewing - Gulfport
<b>Apr 25</b>	<b>Zwanze Day</b> Cochon Butcher
<b>May 6</b>	<b>General Meeting</b> 7 PM – Deutsches Haus
<b>May TBD</b>	<b>Brewoff - Rye Beer</b> 8 AM - TBD

<b>May 30</b>	<b>CCH Meetup</b> 11 AM - Woldenberg Park - BYOB
<b>Jun 3</b>	<b>General Meeting</b> 7 PM - Deutsches Haus
<b>Jun 6</b>	<b>Crawfish Boil</b> 10 AM setup - First batch at 12 PM - 233 Labarre Rd
<b>Jun 12</b>	<b>CCH Meetup</b> 7 PM - The Swamp Room
<b>Jun 13</b>	<b>BIABS Brewoff</b> 8 AM - 5636 Hawthorne Place
<b>Jun 27</b>	<b>Larry Brew Fest</b> 4 PM - Castine Center, Mandeville
<b>Jul 1</b>	<b>General Meeting</b> 7 PM - Deutsches Haus



**We have many more events in the works for later in the year. Watch this space, or check out <https://crescentcityhomebrewers.org/calendar/>.**

**Know of any events going on that we might be interested in? Let us know at [crescentcityhomebrewers@gmail.com](mailto:crescentcityhomebrewers@gmail.com)**



# BOTTOM FERMENTED IN THE BIG EASY:

## Lager Breweries of New Orleans



By Ryan Pachmayer

Photos courtesy of Brioux Carré Brewing Co., Miel Brewery & Taproom, and Parleaux Beer Lab

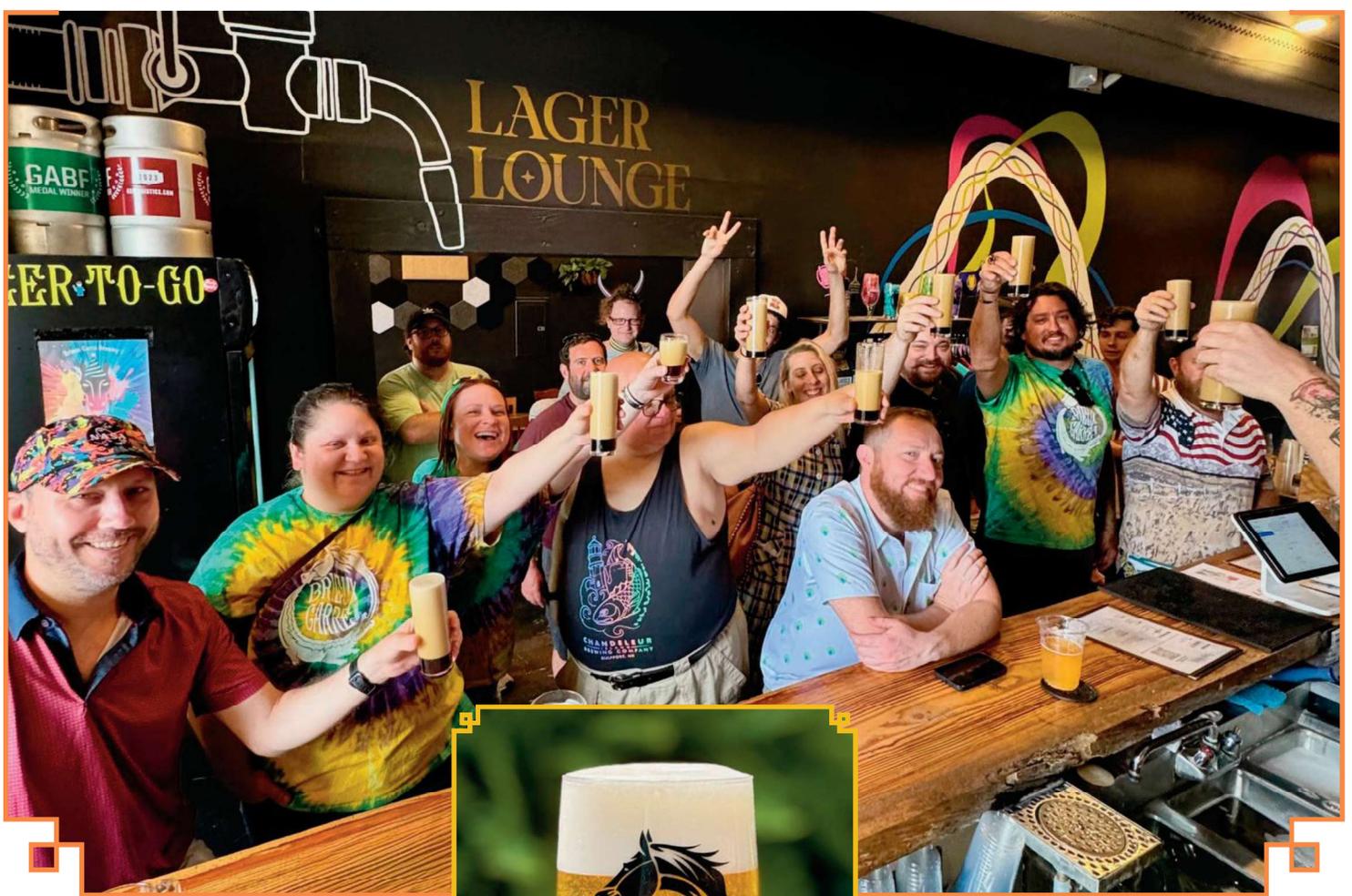


*In New Orleans, the air hangs heavy and the sweltering heat is never far away. A city like this would seem destined to be a lager drinker's paradise. For years, it was anything but. With the exception of stalwart Abita, the local lager scene was a desert. That's finally beginning to change. Over the last half-decade, a growing scene has evolved, providing some unique spaces to drink intentionally crafted lager.*

Charles Hall started helping his older brother Steven homebrew at the age of 13. "Steven was a hop head," recalls Hall. "He would dry-hop vodka and pour it into Miller High Life," he says. Hall also remembers his brother's monthly trips to Florida, loading up a trunk full of IPA and coming back to disperse cases among his friends. These memories form the basis for Hall's entrance into craft beer.



Hall's professional career would start in east New Orleans. "I was the brewer for three years, with no input on recipes at all," he says, adding that he had to sneak ingredients into the beer in order to improve it. This wasn't the most inspiring start to a brewing career. "I mean, we made a red bean beer, cooked red beans in the mash. It was horrible," he says. But Hall graduated to better times when he helped open up Brieux Carré on April 1, 2017.



The Lager Lounge at Brieux Carré.

## BRIEUX CARRÉ

Brieux Carré is located just outside the French Quarter on the edge of the Marigny neighborhood. Frenchmen Street is just around the corner. It's very much a tourist area, but it has a slightly different feel to it compared to the iconic French Quarter. It's a touch grittier and has more local flair.

The brewery wasn't all about lagers from day one. "When we opened, our owner wanted us to be an esoteric-style brewery—heather beers, off-the-wall stuff, non-beer, that type of thing," says Hall. When COVID hit, everything changed. "We weren't really selling a lot of beer during COVID, so we had time," says Hall. He brewed several batches of Pilsner and ended up having to can all of it. To everyone's surprise, except perhaps Hall, four different Pilsners were each outselling the regularly brewed hazy IPA.

"Our true, local drinkers come in here thinking they want IPA or sour beers, but now they're all drinking Pils or Helles, and they're mad as hell when we run out," says Hall. The lagers at Brieux Carré run the gamut from German Pilsner to Helles, Export Helles, and even a newer house lager called HAUS LGR.

Hall has been making HAUS since 2023.

His goal was to make the beer as efficiently and cost-effective as possible, without sacrificing the quality of the ingredients. The beer is still brewed with Weyeremann Pils. It also gets a quality five-week lagering time. At just 4.2% ABV, Hall will brew to a higher gravity on the hot side before adding filtered, pH-adjusted water to the wort post-boil, allowing him to yield roughly 8.5 barrels of beer on his seven-barrel brew system.

Combating the lower alpha acids of recent European crops by using cryo hops for bittering has actually led to an overall process improvement. "Loral is one of the

new American noble-esque hops," he says, pointing out its 22+ alpha acid percentage. This more affordable option also adds less vegetal matter to the boil, a choice that Hall says has been holding up well. Homebrewers seeking to go this route can purchase Loral® Cryo online directly from Yakima Chief, or the regular (but still high alpha) version from their local homebrew supply store or retailers like LD Carlson. Loral is described as having "floral, pepper, lemon, citrus, and dark fruit" notes.

Hall still likes to mix in some lower-alpha-acid hops. "I think the vegetal matter can really help boost the head and get some of that lingering foam," he says. He sees great foam on a lot of beers these days but cautions that if you're using a lot of low-alpha-acid hops, you have to be wary of your beer tasting too green.

He uses Fermentis 34/70 for most of his lagers and IPAs, re-pitching the yeast for a handful of generations. He even uses 34/70 for his Czech lagers. The pale ones get mashed higher—up to 156°F (69°C)—leaving more residual sugar, which contributes to the body and mouthfeel expected of those styles.

Hall sees Hallertauer Mittelfrüh hops as sort of a "house hop" at the brewery. "I prefer a delicate approach," says Hall. "I



The Miel Brewery & Taproom team.

Photos courtesy of Miel Brewery & Taproom

still want those big IBUs, but I don't want to blow you over with the hoppiness," he says. *Mittelfrüh* is prominently featured in the brewery's German Pils, aptly named *Malcom* in the *Mittelfrüh*. A 100% Pilsner base sets the tone for all the subtle hop character in the beer. Hall will sometimes add *Perle* or *Saphir* on top of *Mittelfrüh*, if he wants to add another dynamic to the hop load. Classic lemon, herbal spice-scented German *Mittelfrüh* pellet hops can be purchased from BSG and YCH, but they are becoming increasingly scarce as climate change disproportionately affects the old landrace variety harvests. Homebrewers might consider U.S.-grown *Hallertau* as a substitute, as well as *Liberty*, *Vanguard*, and *German Tradition*. Hopefully *BarthHaas* will begin making its climate-hardy *Huell Classic* hop, bred as a potential substitute for *Hallertau Mittelfrüh*, more available to homebrewers in the near future.

Lagers with these delicate hops are what *Brieux Carré*'s regulars crave, and the brewery has found a magic bullet with its steady stream of regulars. The key lies in its mug club—a simple yet effective program that creates a community of local drinkers. The "*Brieuxminati*," as they are called, pay \$365 per year and in turn receive their first beer every day for free. Subsequent beers are 20-ounce pours for the cost of a 16.9-ounce pour. "It encourages people to make us their regular," says Hall. And it's worked

out well. The club has over 300 people, and Hall estimates around 50 regulars come at least three times per week.

### MIEL BREWERY

*Brieux Carré* isn't the only brewery in New Orleans that's developed a lager program that has been embraced by its regulars. At the south end of the Garden District, near the banks of the Mississippi River, sits Miel Brewery. Head brewer Shawna Hays started bartending at the age of 18, at *Sprecher* Brewing outside of Milwaukee.

While Hays would eventually move to the brewing side (and spent a few years making beer in Colorado before settling

into New Orleans), that early front-of-house experience allowed her to really tune into what people wanted to drink. "Milwaukee is very German-like, and at *Sprecher* it was all German-style beers, so that's kind of where I started," she says.

When Hays got to Miel about four years ago, the brewery's tap list was dominated by fruited and hazy beers. Her affinity for lagers eventually caught on, though. "I kept making lagers and it's really hot here, so I always had something refreshing on tap," she says. "Slowly, the clientele was convinced that we don't need as many fruity, sour, and hazy beers," she adds. Now, regulars are looking for something easy to drink that doesn't cost \$9 a beer, and Miel's lineup of lagers is proving quite popular.

Hays feels that consistency is the foundation for lager making: "Consistency with temperature and pH," she clarifies, adding, "I go slow in the process." She targets a mash pH of 5.2–5.4, usually landing at the lower end of that range, depending on the specific lager. After knockout, she uses lactic acid to bring the pH down to 4.8. She believes this helps improve the longevity of the beer's flavor profile.

Initially coming on as a brewer, Hays has transitioned into the role of head brewer over the last couple of years. One of the beers she's designed is called *La Ventana*. She calls it a Central American lager, inspired by one of Miel's owners, Janice Montoya, who has Honduran



Eric and Leah Jensen of Parleaux Beer Lab.



## Flek Me?? No, Flek Ú!!



### Czech Dark Lager

Recipe by Charles Hall, Brieux Carré

Ryan's Notes: "Brieux Carré won a bronze medal at the 2023 Great American Beer Festival for its Czech dark lager. Hall says that the dark malts and higher alcohol level give the beer plenty of body, while the lower fermentation temperature helps the beer finish dry and increases its drinkability."

<b>Batch volume:</b>	5 U.S. gal (18.9 L)
<b>Original gravity:</b>	1.059 (14.5°P)
<b>Final gravity:</b>	1.012 (3°P)
<b>Bitterness:</b>	30.8 IBU
<b>Color:</b>	~27 SRM
<b>Alcohol:</b>	6.2% by volume

#### MALTS

5 lb	[2.27 kg] Weyermann Bohemian Pilsner Malt (44.2%)
5 lb	[2.27 kg] Weyermann Floor Malted Bohemian Dark Malt (44.2%)
14 oz.	[397 g] Weyermann CaraBohemian Malt (7.6%)
7 oz.	[113 g] Weyermann Carafa Special Type 3 (4%)

#### HOPS

0.35 oz.	[10 g] Herkules, 14.5% a.a., @ 60 min (16.8 IBU)
1 oz.	[28 g] Saaz, 3.75% a.a., @ 30 min (9.6 IBU)
0.75 oz.	[21 g] Saaz, 3.75% a.a., @ 15 min (4.4 IBU)

#### YEAST

Fermentis 34/70 lager

#### BREWING NOTES

Mash at 148°F (64°C) for 60 minutes. Boil 75 minutes. Chill wort to 46°F (8°C). Oxygenate and pitch. Ferment at 48°F (9°C) for 10–13 days or until terminal gravity is reached. Spund to 15–18 PSI on day 5, if possible. (That's about the max pressure rating for Hall's tanks, and he routinely hits it on his lagers.) Lower temperature to 40°F (4°C) and hold for a week, then lager at 33°F (1°C) for at least 6 weeks.

roots. "Honduras is known for using a lot of honey," says Hays. Her twist on what would otherwise be a Mexican lager was to add honey malt to the grist.

She initially used as much as 15% honey malt in the beer, but she's dialed it back to under 4%. "It was adding too much sweetness," she says. While actual honey, or *miel* in Spanish, would be prohibitively expensive to add at a commercial scale, homebrewers might consider a small addition in the whirlpool for aromatics—as long as they recognize it will have the opposite effect of using honey malt in the mash and will dry the beer a bit. La Ventana is bittered early with Magnum, before being rounded out with a hefty dose of Saaz hops late, giving it a nice herbal component.

Hays approaches fermenting at a low temperature up front, before ramping it up for a diacetyl rest after day 4. She uses AEB's Fermolager Crisp yeast for most of her domestic lagers and the Munich Heritage strain for her German-style lagers.

Hays initially got involved in the Pink Boots Society in Colorado, a nonprofit that assists, inspires, and encourages women and nonbinary people in the beverage industry, and she is now the leader of the New Orleans chapter. She wrote the proposal that resulted in her chapter hosting the 2026 conference in New Orleans.

#### PARLEUX BEER LAB

Another pillar in New Orleans' burgeoning lager scene is Parleaux Beer Lab. Parleaux



A busy night at Brieux Carré.

opened its doors in April 2018. It's situated about two miles east of Brieux Carré, at the edge of the Bywater neighborhood. The expansive outdoor beer garden holds an eclectic mix of plants and seating. It's as much a place to enjoy a book alone with your beer as it is a place to gather with friends.

The 2-vessel, 10-barrel brew system is a typical American, single-infusion brew-house. "This is a mom-and-pop brewery," says owner Eric Jensen. "My wife and I started this with our savings, and we didn't have a lot of money to buy fancy equipment." According to Jensen, the initial focus wasn't so much on lagers. "Ten years ago, mixed fermentation was in a really fun place," says Jensen, but pretty quickly we leaned into lagers."

Jensen's mother is from Germany and his grandmother is from the Czech Republic—this made traditional lagers feel like a natural extension of his heritage. "Drinking really good European-style beer was part of my Midwestern upbringing," says Jensen. The lack of good, crisp, clean lagers in the area was another good reason to get into lagers. He feels that the U.S. domestic beer makers have done a disservice to the style in a lot of ways, that they've built a reputation for American lagers needing to be "cheap, yellow water," he says.

Jensen also points to the environment as naturally conducive to lager drinking. "I've lived in Louisiana for 20 years now, and when we started Parleaux, I quickly realized that clean, refreshing lagers are



## La Ventana

### Central American-style Lager

Recipe by Shawna Hays, Miel Brewing

Ryan's Notes: "Hays made this recipe as an ode to Miel's owner's Honduran heritage. She initially used quite a bit of honey malt in the recipe, before dialing it back. The result is a touch of honey sweetness from the malt, with some added depth from the flaked corn. With moderate bitterness and a dry finish, the beer is interesting but drinkable—the perfect lager to enjoy on a warm day."

<b>Batch volume:</b>	5 U.S. gal (18.9 L)
<b>Original gravity:</b>	1.049 (12.25°P)
<b>Final gravity:</b>	1.011 (2.25°P)
<b>Bitterness:</b>	25 IBU
<b>Color:</b>	4.6 SRM
<b>Alcohol:</b>	5% by volume

#### FERMENTABLES

7 lb	(3.18 kg)	Great Western Superior Pilsen Malt
1 lb	(454 g)	flaked corn
8 oz.	(225 g)	Great Western Munich Malt
4 oz.	(113 g)	Briess Honey Malt

#### HOPS

0.25 oz.	(7 g)	Magnum @ 60 min
2 oz.	(57 g)	Saaz @ 10 min

#### YEAST

AEB Fermolager Crisp Yeast

#### WATER

To 5 gallons of RO brewing water, add 3 g calcium sulfate and 1.5 g calcium chloride.

#### BREWING NOTES

Mash at 152°F (67°C), adjusting mash pH to 5.2–5.4 with lactic acid. Boil 75 minutes, adjusting pH to 4.8 by the end of the boil. Ferment at 52°F (11°C) and raise to 62°F (17°C) after day 4. Slowly raise to 65°F (18°C) as terminal gravity is reached.



Brew  
This!

## Heads in the Sky



### Mexican-Style Lager

Recipe by Charles Hall, Brieux Carré

Ryan's Notes: "Parleaux's green corn lager has become a yearly beer for the brewery and a local favorite. 'I think Caleb [Michalke, owner of Sugar Creek Malt] is one of a bunch of different craft maltsters that's doing fun things,' says Jensen. 'He sent us the green corn a week after he malted it, and it's got a distinct, fresh, earthy sweetness to it, even though it's not a sweet beer,' he says. 'It really emphasizes the corn flavor. When we can access interesting and well-made adjuncts, we'd rather use that than flaked maize,' says Jensen. He advises turning up your flame or heating element for this beer. 'Our kettle rips, and we get a really good flavor from our boil,' he says."

<b>Batch volume:</b>	5 U.S. gal (18.9 L)
<b>Original gravity:</b>	1.045 (11.2°P)
<b>Final gravity:</b>	1.008 (2°P)
<b>Bitterness:</b>	19 IBU
<b>Color:</b>	3 SRM
<b>Alcohol:</b>	4.9% by volume

#### FERMENTABLES

6.25 lb (2.83 kg)	Sugar Creek Pilsner Malt (75%)
2.25 lb (1.02 kg)	Sugar Creek Malted Oaxacan Green Corn (25%)

#### HOPS

0.35 oz. (10 g)	Zuper Saazer, 3.5% a.a., FWH (5 IBU)
0.65 oz. (18 g)	Zuper Saazer, 3.5% a.a., @ 30 min (6 IBU)
2 oz. (57 g)	Zuper Saazer, 3.5% a.a., whirlpool 20 min (8 IBU)

#### YEAST

INIS-760 Czech Budvar Lager Yeast

#### BREWING NOTES

Mill the grains and mash at 149°F (65°C) for 60 minutes, with a liquor-to-grist ratio of 1.25 quarts/lb. Recirculate until the runnings are clear, then run off into the kettle, adding the first-wort hops. (Stop the runnings if the wort drops below 1.010 or rises to 5.7 pH.) Boil for 90 minutes. After the boil, do a whirlpool step: Stir or recirculate gently to create a vortex and add whirlpool hops. Knock out beer at 46°F (8°C), oxygenate, and pitch the yeast. Let free-rise to 49°F (9°C) and ferment at that temperature for the first 3 days, then raise to 52°F (11°C) until terminal gravity. When gravity has stabilized, drop the yeast or rack to secondary, and lager the beer at 35°F (2°C) for 4–6 weeks. Once finished, package and carbonate to 2.7 volumes.

Brewer's Optional Notes: A step mash schedule with a protein rest at 129°F (54°C), beta rest at 145°F (63°C), and alpha rest at 160°F (71°C) is optional for further conversion of the corn. Spunding the fermentation at 4–5 gravity points (or 1°P) will help capture some natural carbonation.



Parleaux lagers.

the perfect beer for this climate," he says. "After a long brew day at 100% humidity on a 90°F day, you just want to reach for a German Pilsner, and you want to crush two of 'em," he says.

Former Parleaux head brewer Brad Holderness and Jensen were initially most intrigued by the process of making lager. "We kind of figured out a way for us to make it the best we can," Jensen says, "and we've been refining it for years."

Holderness was inspired to begin homebrewing after a few trips to Ireland and Scotland. He was the general manager at a restaurant in the neighborhood, so he already knew Jensen. He came on as an assistant brewer in 2020 and eventually became the head brewer in mid-2021.

"I didn't have enough experience, but it was a great opportunity and challenge for me," says Holderness. "One of the best things about working at Parleaux was that Eric's and my tastes in beer, and inclina-

tions on which way to head with beers, were perfectly aligned." Holderness is now a brewer at Cerebral Brewing in Denver, where he and his wife relocated in mid-2025.

Parleaux doesn't have a flagship, but Jensen says the Bohemian-style lager, named Czuck Pils, is probably what most people around town associate with the brewery. The beer uses what Jensen calls a base water—the softest profile you'll see at the brewery. One thing that Jensen cautions against is using a water that's too soft in the more bitter lagers—anything from German Pilsners to West Coast lagers. "They become really flabby," he says.

Like Brieux Carré, Parleaux tends to mash its lagers across a wide spectrum of single-infusion temperatures. "We'll go as low as 146°F (63°C) and then sparge really hot," says Jensen, adding that the high end of their temperature range on some



The dog-friendly Miel taproom.

lagers is 155–156°F (68–69°C).

The brewery uses Czech Budvar yeast for most lagers—Jensen considers it his house strain. It also uses a German strain derived from the Augustiner Munich brewery. Parleaux uses Denver, Colo.-based Inland Island for all its yeast. Holderness notes that the Budvar strain, INIS-760 Czech Lager, produces less diacetyl and a lower pH, lending itself to great-drinking beer for New Orleans’ hot and humid climate.

Parleaux knocks out to 46°F (8°C) and then ferments all its traditional lagers at 48°F (9°C) for the entirety of fermentation. “There are no diacetyl rests,” says Jensen. He points out that this requires paying careful attention to the fermentation itself and VDK tests, as well as making sure that the brewery is constantly using healthy yeast. The beers take 10–13 days to finish primary fermentation, depending on the generation of yeast (they’ll go 5–10 generations, depending on the brew schedule). To mimic this schedule, homebrewers will need a dedicated means of chilling wort to a low temperature and continuing to control the temperature during fermentation, especially when brewing in the warmer months, although it’s important to note that Inland

Island recommends a temperature range of 50–55°F (10–13°C) for its Czech lager strain.

Next, the beer is lowered to 40°F (4°C), where it sits and cleans up for anywhere from a few days to a full week. This is when the team harvests yeast for future generations. After that, the beer sits at 33°F (1°C) for at least six weeks and up to 10–11 weeks during the slower summer season.

The beers come out of the fermenters at around 2.5 volumes of CO<sub>2</sub>, all from natural carbonation. “We may add just a little bit of CO<sub>2</sub> in the brite tank,” says Jensen. The resulting lager usually drops out pretty clear, but a little Biofine is sometimes used to further clear up the beer. Homebrewers may prefer to use a gelatin solution added at packaging.

Holderness saw Parleaux move more towards West Coast IPA and lagers of all types during his tenure, with less of an emphasis on hazy IPAs and mixed fermentation beers. He says that they start at the same 48–50°F (9–10°C) cold primary fermentation temperature in the hoppy lagers but then raise the temp to 55–60°F (13–16°C) within two to three days. The goal, he says, is to try to keep the temperature low during the early stages of fermenta-



## West Coast (New Zealand-style) Pilsner

Recipe by Eric Jensen, Parleaux Beer Lab

Ryan’s Notes: “Soul is a Verb is a New Zealand-style Pilsner particularly well received by patrons. It is an example of the type of hoppy lagers that Parleaux has become known for, in addition to its traditional-style lagers.”

<b>Batch volume:</b>	5 U.S. gal (18.9 L)
<b>Original gravity:</b>	1.050 (11.2°P)
<b>Final gravity:</b>	1.009 (2.3°P)
<b>Bitterness:</b>	38.5 IBU
<b>Color:</b>	2 SRM
<b>Alcohol:</b>	5.4% by volume

### MALTS

9.5 lb (4.31 kg) Great Western Pure Idaho Pilsner Malt

### HOPS

0.13 oz.	[4 g] Simcoe Cryo, 20% a.a., FWH (5 IBU)
0.2 oz.	[6 g] Simcoe Cryo, 20% a.a., @15 min (7 IBU)
1 oz.	[28 g] NZ Cascade, 7.5% a.a., 30 min whirlpool @ 180°F (82°C) (5 IBU)
1 oz.	[28 g] Wakatu, 7.5% a.a., 30 min whirlpool @ 180°F (82°C) (5 IBU)
1.25 oz.	[35 g] NZ Cascade, 7.5% a.a., 20 min whirlpool @ 180°F (82°C) (5.5 IBU)
1.25 oz.	[35 g] Wakatu, 7.5% a.a., 20 min whirlpool @ 180°F (82°C) (5.5 IBU)
5 oz.	[142 g] Riwaka (dry hop)

### YEAST

Mexican Lager Yeast

### BREWING NOTES

Mill the grains and mash at 149°F (65°C) for 60 minutes, with a liquor-to-grist ratio of 1.25 quarts/lb. Recirculate until the runnings are clear, then run off into the kettle, adding the first-wort hops. (Stop the runnings if the wort drops below 1.010 or rises to 5.7 pH.) Boil for 90 minutes, adding the 15-minute hop addition. After the boil, do a whirlpool step: Stir or recirculate gently to create a vortex and cool to 180°F (82°C). Add 30-minute and 20-minute whirlpool hops accordingly. Knock out the beer at 47°F (8°C). Oxygenate and pitch the yeast. Let free-rise to 50°F (10°C) and allow to ferment for the first 3 days, then raise to 54°F (12°C) until finished. When primary fermentation is complete and gravity has stabilized, drop the yeast or rack to secondary, and then dry hop with Riwaka at 50–55°F (10–13°C) for 36–48 hours. Cold-crash and drop the hops or rack to secondary, and then lager the beer at 35°F (2°C) for 3 to 4 weeks. Once finished, package and carbonate to 2.7 volumes.

Brewer’s Optional Notes: Because of the heavy load of Southern hemisphere hops, adding Biofine prior to packaging may help clear the beer up to a more desirable brightness. Homebrewers can substitute adding a gelatin solution at packaging.



A stein-hoisting contest at Parleaux.

tation, when the yeast can throw off more expressive esters at those higher temps. The higher temperatures during middle and late fermentation allow the beer to finish fermentation faster—an advantage for a beer with delicate hop flavors and aromas.

For its West Coast lagers, Parleaux uses Columbus, Citra, Simcoe, Mosaic, Idaho 7, and Nectarone, as well as some newer hops such as McKenzie and Papillon. Parleaux uses Kazbek hops for bittering its Czech beers, to go along with classic Saaz and some Michigan-grown Zuper Saazer as well. “It’s a little less spicy, a little more lemony,” says Jensen, who really likes it in the brewery’s American Pilsner.

For German beer styles, Perle is a favorite choice for the team, as is Hallertauer Mittelfruh. “Saphir is another favorite,” says Jensen. “It has a distinctly noble character,

“I’ve lived in Louisiana for 20 years now, and when we started Parleaux, I quickly realized that clean, refreshing lagers are the perfect beer for this climate.”

— Eric Jensen

but then a fun lime leaf character to it.” Another key hop for the brewery is Styrian Aurora, a hop it uses in its Italian Pilsner. It’s a beer that Jensen says he approaches like a German Pilsner, with a light, late-fermentation dry hop. Most of these hops should be available for purchase by homebrewers, but some might be harder to procure. “There’s a new generation of Slovenian hops, but because they’re not used much, they can be hard to find,” says Jensen.

For its malts, Holderness says that Parleaux likes to marry the beer style’s country of origin to the malt. This means using a malt like Weyermann’s Eraclea for its Italian Pils. In recent years, the brewery has diversified its malt selection, using products from smaller maltsters like TexMalt out of Texas and Sugar Creek Malt Co. out of Indiana.

Photos courtesy of Parleaux Beer Lab



The Miel beer garden.

Holderness really recommends focusing on freshness first. “When you’re mashing in, the delicacy and richness of the malt character is pretty cool,” he says, referring to very fresh malt from Sugar Creek that he’s used at Parleaux. Holderness believes that not only corn, but alternative grains like rye and spelt are especially complementary in lager brewing. “Because you’re not hiding anything, you can really showcase the malt character,” he says.

When asked about his perfect lager, he thinks of one fermented at a low temperature, but with a characterful yeast, like a non-34/70 strain. “I think you lose a lot of distinctions between styles if you’re using the exact same strain for everything,” he says. He also imagines this perfect lager having spelt in it. “I think that having that connection to growing in agricultural

(Shawna) Hays feels that consistency is the foundation for lager making: “Consistency with temperature and pH,” she clarifies, adding, “I go slow in the process.”

history is really cool, as well as being able to showcase some grains that aren’t just all about agronomics, that are also about flavor,” he says, adding, “I love a lot of European noble hops.” He thinks back to a particularly good batch of Hallertauer Mittelfrüh, recalling, “it had a beautiful floral and light spice character to it.”

A pale lager featuring spelt, fermented low with a flavorful traditional lager yeast, along with choice European noble hops sounds like the perfect beer for a steamy New Orleans evening.

**Ryan Pachmayer is the marketing and events director at New Image Brewing in Wheat Ridge and Arvada, Colo., and former head brewer at Yak and Yeti Restaurant and Brewpub in Arvada.**

This article appears on the Label Peelers Blog. It pertains to wine making but many of the thoughts apply to beer brewing.

Submitted by Mike Retzlaff

## Checking your PH before Fermenting? You Should!

Posted by Matteo Lahm on 10th Jan 2023

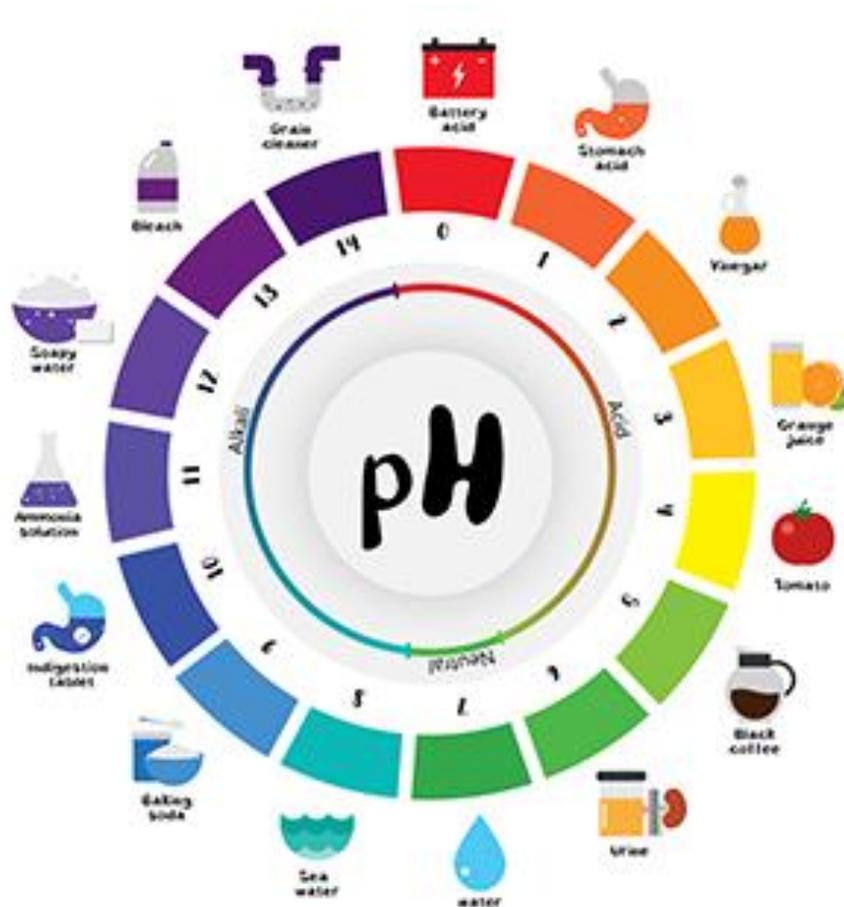
Label Peelers Blog

If you think you've taken every precaution, yet you are still getting stuck fermentation and/or spoilage, your problem is probably low acidity. Unlike sugar measurement, acidity is often overlooked. Most home winemakers get introduced to testing for sugars right off the bat.

Hydrometers are inexpensive and easy to use. Testing for pH however is a bit more involved and can be intimidating. Reading pH is not as straightforward as sugars however, scary or not, if you are serious about making good wine (or beer), this is a mountain you must climb. Most importantly, you must adjust your pH before pitching your yeast.

In the end, proper acidity is every bit as important as the right amount of sugar and if your juice (or wort) is outside the optimal range, you are almost guaranteed to have difficulties and undesirable results. Unless you are working with wine kits or fruit bases which come with acidity already adjusted, you most certainly want to learn how to measure and adjust pH.

Before even discussing what high pH environments actually do to your yeast, let's talk about the pH scale and how to interpret it. First, the lower the number, the higher the acidity. Fruits that can be used for making wine include grapes, apples, blueberries, cherries, cranberries, pears, peaches, plums and raspberries. The pH of these fruits varies, but generally ranges from 3.2 to 4.0. If you have never studied pH, these numbers mean absolutely nothing so let's dive in further.



The pH scale is 0-14. 7 is neutral. A good example of neutral pH is distilled water. Solutions with pH below 7 are acidic and above 7 are basic. Though acids and bases are technically opposites, they have very similar dangers at the ends of the spectrum. Sodium hydroxide is a base with a pH of 14 and Battery acid has a pH of 0. Both can cause severe burns to skin and eyes and are not too different than the blood of Alien that burned through the floor of the spaceship.

So, if a pH of 0 can burn off your limbs and dissolve metals, how do you visualize the differences in the amount of acids in fruits? The pH scale works by measuring the concentration of hydrogen ions in a solution. The lower the concentration of hydrogen ions, the higher the pH and the more alkaline the solution. Conversely, the higher the concentration of hydrogen ions, the lower the pH and the more acidic the solution.

The pH scale is logarithmic, meaning that each unit on the scale is 10 times greater than the previous one. For example, a pH of 5 is 10 times more acidic than a pH of 6, and a pH of 4 is 100 times more acidic than a pH of 6. The difference between a pH of 3.6 and 3.4 much bigger than you think. 3.4 is 10 times more acidic than a pH of 3.6! So, when your fruit measures 3.7, you now know just how much less acidic that is than a 3.4.

Now let's discuss what happens to your yeast in lower acid environments. Yeast can struggle to complete fermentation because it needs a certain level of acidity in order to thrive and convert the sugars into alcohol. If the environment is too low in acidity, the yeast will become stressed and may not complete fermentation, resulting in a sweet, low-alcohol wine. Additionally, a low-

acid environment can create the ideal conditions for bacterial growth, resulting in off-flavors, cloudiness and even spoilage.

Acid blend can help to balance the low acidity and create a more optimal environment for the yeast to thrive. Acid blend is a blend of tartaric, malic, and citric acids that is added to the must to raise the overall acidity. This will give the yeast the ideal environment to complete fermentation and create a balanced, stable wine.

Adding acid blend can be tricky. You need to take measurements and add acid blend with caution. Putting acid in is easy, getting it out is not. There are inexpensive methods like test strips and paper to measure pH but these work better with clear and low pigment fruits. With darker pigments, it gets more difficult because these methods involve color coded results, and the pigments tint the strips making them harder to read.

Another much more reliable method is the trusty pH meter. There are an array to choose from that will fit your budget. Once you get beyond the learning curve of calibrating them before use, there is no better way to test the pH of your juice.

- For best results, in virtually all beer styles, the mash pH should be 5.1–5.5 when measured at mash temperature, and 5.4–5.8 when measured at room temperature. (At mash temperature the pH will measure about 0.3 lower due to greater dissociation of the hydrogen ions.) Darker malts have more natural acidity, and therefore require more residual alkalinity to balance them to arrive at the optimum pH. This relationship is a general one – different malts of the same Lovibond color value can have a different degree of acidity. You can use the calculated color of a beer recipe as a guide, but don't rely on it as gospel to determine the appropriate amount of residual alkalinity; it is a general relationship, like cloud color and rain. **This pH level accommodates the mash enzymes.**
- The pH of the wort drops with the addition of hops during the boil. The pH of the beer continues to drop during fermentation. Most finished beer should be about pH 4.6 or slightly less. Higher pH will cause the beer to taste dull or flabby. Think of it as squeezing a lemon on fish or a salad; it brightens the flavors. Many beer styles such as Wit and Stout should have a slightly lower pH. There are a number of sour beers which normally range down to pH 3.2 because of a ferment inoculated with bacteria.

So, there you have it! Acidity is not only a major component of the harmony of your wine (beer), it is critical that you adjust it before you ferment. Think of your juice like a symphony with your yeast as the conductor. If the instruments are not in tune, you'll end up with a mess. Tune your acids correctly and your yeast will make beautiful wine (beer). Good luck!



**Rock'n Ron got a brand new hip!**



## BREW FOR THOUGHT – MARCH 2026



# Instant Pot Goulash

**Total Time** Prep: 25 min. Cook: 50 min. + releasing

**Test Kitchen Approved**

Make a comforting pot of savory Instant Pot goulash in just under an hour. Tender beef, rich spices, and a hearty sauce come together for an easy, satisfying meal.

## Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 boneless beef chuck roast (2-1/2 pounds), cut into 2-inch cubes
- 4 small onions, thinly sliced
- 1 cup beer or beef broth
- 1/2 cup dry red wine or beef broth
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 tablespoons sweet Hungarian paprika
- 1 tablespoon beef base
- 1 teaspoon caraway seeds
- 1 teaspoon dried marjoram
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 2 bay leaves
- Hot cooked pasta

## Directions

1. Select saute or browning setting on a 6-qt. electric pressure cooker. Adjust for medium heat; add oil. When oil is hot, brown meat in batches. Remove and keep warm. Cook onions in drippings until tender, 4-5 minutes. Press cancel. Combine the next 10 ingredients; add to cooker. Return beef to cooker.
2. Lock lid; close pressure-release valve. Adjust to pressure-cook on high for 25 minutes. Let pressure release naturally for 10 minutes; quick-release any remaining pressure.

3. Select saute setting and adjust for medium heat; bring liquid to a boil. Cook until sauce reaches desired thickness, about 20 minutes. Remove bay leaves. Serve with pasta.

## Nutrition Facts

0.750 cup: 326 calories, 19g fat (6g saturated fat), 92mg cholesterol, 468mg sodium, 7g carbohydrate (3g sugars, 2g fiber), 29g protein.

Goulash always reminds me of living in Germany when my father was in the Army there. We had a German friend who didn't speak English, but she would always bring us her traditional dishes to try and this was one of my favorites. I'm sure she cooked it in the oven or on top of the stove for hours, but having a pressure cooker speeds up the time so it's ready in less than an hour. —Johnna Johnson, Scottsdale, Arizona

# BEEF, STOUT, AND BARLEY SOUP

Prep Time 20minutes minutes

Cook Time 2hours hours

Servings 4 servings

## Ingredients

- 01 ½ lb **beef blade roast**
- 01 large **onion**
- 02 cloves **garlic**
- 03-4 sprigs **each fresh parsley and thyme**
- 01 **bay leaf**
- 0olive oil, as needed
- 0500 ml **can stout beer**
- 06 cups **beef broth**
- 02-3 **carrots**
- 0½ cup **pearl barley**
- 0½ cup **chopped fresh parsley**
- 0**kosher salt and pepper**

## Instructions

1. Cut the blade roast into bite-sized pieces. Place the beef pieces onto a paper towel-lined plate and blot the beef to dry. Make a bouquet garni by tying together a few sprigs of thyme, parsley, and a bay leaf. Chop the onion and finely mince the garlic.
2. Place a heavy bottomed pot over medium high heat and add 2 tbsp of olive oil. When the oil is hot add about a third of the beef pieces to the pot, making sure not to crowd them. Let cook until browned on the bottom. If the beef sticks to the pot, let it cook a little longer – the meat will release from the pan once fully browned.

3. Turn the beef pieces over and brown the other side. Once browned, transfer the beef to a separate bowl. Repeat with the remaining beef until it has all been used.
4. After removing the beef from the pot add the diced onion. If the pot is dry add a bit more olive oil so that the onions don't stick. Sauté the onions for 3 to 5 minutes until tender. Add the minced garlic and sauté for another minute until fragrant.
5. Carefully pour the stout into the pot – it will spatter when it comes in contact with the oil. Cook for a minute, using a wooden spoon to scrape any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Add the bouquet garni and a pinch of pepper along with the beef broth.
6. Return the beef to the pot along with any accumulated juices. Bring the broth to a simmer then turn down the heat. Cover and cook gently at a simmer over low heat for 1 hour.
7. While the beef is braising, chop the carrots into bite-sized pieces. Finely chop some extra parsley and set aside.
8. After the beef has cooked for 1 hour, add the barley and carrots. Cover and continue to simmer on low, stirring regularly, until the barley is tender, about 45 minutes.
9. When the barley is tender, remove the bouquet garni. If the soup has thickened too much add a splash more of beef broth. Taste the soup and adjust the salt as needed. Stir in the chopped parsley and it's ready to serve. Enjoy!

## SITES OF INTEREST

### **Crescent City Homebrewers:**

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[CCH Member Application](#)

### **Local Brewing Supply:**

[Brewstock](#)

### **Louisiana Craft Beer Info:**

[Louisiana Craft Brewers Guild](#)

### **Breweries:**

[Big Easy Bucha](#)  
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