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Brewery Day Trip: San Francisco's Great American Beer Festival winners

Bartlett Brewing Co. and New Belgium Mission Bay won big at this year's Great American Beer Festival. Here's what to know about visiting these San Francisco breweries.



Antonio Lopez pours a pint of Fat Tire Ale at New Belgium Brewing, Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2023, in San Francisco, Calif. (Karl Mondon/Bay Area News Group)

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This year, my brewery day trips have spanned the region, from Silicon Valley to the Tri-Valley. This month, though, I'm homing in on San Francisco to highlight two breweries that brought home medals from the Great American Beer Festival last month.

Bartlett Brewing Co. earned bronze for its imperial stout, Postcard from St. Petersburg, and New Belgium Brewing Co.'s Mission Bay brewery won gold in the juicy or hazy IPA category for its new beer, Cloudy Joose.

Bartlett Brewing Co.



Bartlett Brewing Co., named after the early San Francisco alcalde Washington Allon Bartlett, is located near Union Square and won bronze at the Great American Brewing Festival for its imperial stout. (Courtesy Jay R. Brooks)

When the Bartlett Hotel & Guesthouse opened in San Francisco a decade or so ago, it also opened this gastropub and brewery. Located in the heart of Union Square, it's named for Washington Allon Bartlett, an early figure in San Francisco history. Bartlett served as the city's alcalde, a role similar to mayor. One of his last acts while in office in 1827 was to change the name of the city from Yerba Buena to San Francisco.

Head brewmaster Nick Mamere keeps seven to 10 Bartlett beers on tap at any given time, and he has won several medals at GABF, the World Beer Cup and other competitions. His Postcard from St. Petersburg is an 11.5% ABV imperial stout, which has chocolate and coffee notes. I also loved Mamere's Pizzicato Pilsner, an easy-drinking Italian-style pilsner, and Painted Devil, a solid, sweet Belgian-style strong golden ale. His Sun in My Hand IPA is a smooth, juicy hazy with big hop flavors.

Bartlett Hall serves a full menu of burgers, sandwiches and other pub favorites for lunch, and offerings such as pizza, steak, ribs, fish and chips and fish tacos for dinner.

Details: Open daily until 11 p.m. (kitchen closes at 9 p.m.) at 242 O'Farrell St.; www.bartletthall.com.

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Beer brewing equipment is front and center at New Belgium Brewing, Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2023, on Third Street in San Francisco, Calif. (Karl Mondon/Bay Area News Group)

New Belgium Mission Bay

You'll find New Belgium's Mission Bay taproom just steps from the San Francisco Giants' Oracle Park. The original New Belgium Brewing launched in Fort Collins, Colorado, in 1988 and made its name with its Fat Tire Amber Ale, one of the most successful early craft beers. New Belgium opened its Mission Bay taproom in 2021 on the opening day of baseball season.

Head brewer Ramon Tamayo is a veteran of the Bay Area brewing scene with a resume that includes Anchor Brewing and Russian River Brewing. Working with lead brewer Jess Lehr (Fog Hog Brewhouse), the duo entered their Cloudy Joose hazy at GABF when the beer had already sold out back home. A new batch should be ready by now.

The taproom serves most of New Belgium's core beers, but they also brew unique beers for the taproom at their pilot brewery and introduce roughly two new beers a week that can be found nowhere else.

The large space is quirky, modern and comfortable with lots of nooks and crannies. Bicycles — with

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Details: Open daily from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. at 1000A Third St.; http://newbelgium.com

Know a local brewery or brewpub that's knocking it out of the park. Drop me a line at BrooksOnBeer@gmail.com and tell me why you love them.

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