



# A view from a broad

Georgia-based beer writer **Kerri “Beer Wench” Allen** recently took a whirlwind beer tour of the Cape, along with 32 fellow American beer fanatics. Here is her take on the South African scene.

started writing about craft beer not long after I started drinking it in the early 1990s. I fell in love with beer that was bursting with flavour and came to appreciate a plethora of styles, but I live in Georgia, part of the deep south of the United States, and the beer scene here took off slowly. We would travel to other states to find good beer and explore different styles. The craft beer scene in Cape Town and the rest of South Africa reminds me of those early years and the beginning of our current explosion of breweries and brewpubs in the USA over the last ten years.

What makes up some of these similarities? Take a population hooked on light, fizzy lagers, rooted for decades in tradition, and living in a hot and humid climate. Add into the mix a group of passionate brewers, brewery owners, beer lovers, and foodies; and you get the start of a craft beer revolution. Finding a way to market a

9.5% ABV Russian Imperial Stout can prove daunting, but brew it, and they will try it - eventually. Most of the breweries we visited in South Africa make a light lager as a concession to the majority of the population. Along with more adventurous styles, many of our American breweries have done the same but are slowly learning that they have to brew the flavourful styles that they themselves want to drink, and then educate the masses in a way that encourages them to try these new beers.

Give the people the same old bland beers, and they will never change their palates. Brew the amazing beer that you want to drink, and people will become curious about what is so special about it. Michigan-based Founders Brewing Company almost went under because they were brewing beer to please the masses - beers they thought would sell. Almost out of business, Founders decided to go out with a bang and brew ☺



The Georgia contingent descends on Cape Brewing Company to join Wolfgang for a beer or three.



Kerri and her compatriots were impressed by the sorghum saison from Ukhamba Beerworx in Woodstock.



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