

| FEATURE |

CLASS OF 2014



If there's one thing that remains constant in the brewing industry, it's change. While the last 12 months brought a wave of mergers, expansions and acquisitions, 2014 also saw a spike in new brewery permit applications across the US. From revisiting—and reinventing—historic styles to brewing for a cause, it was a year for innovative brewery openings. Here we profile 28 newcomers.



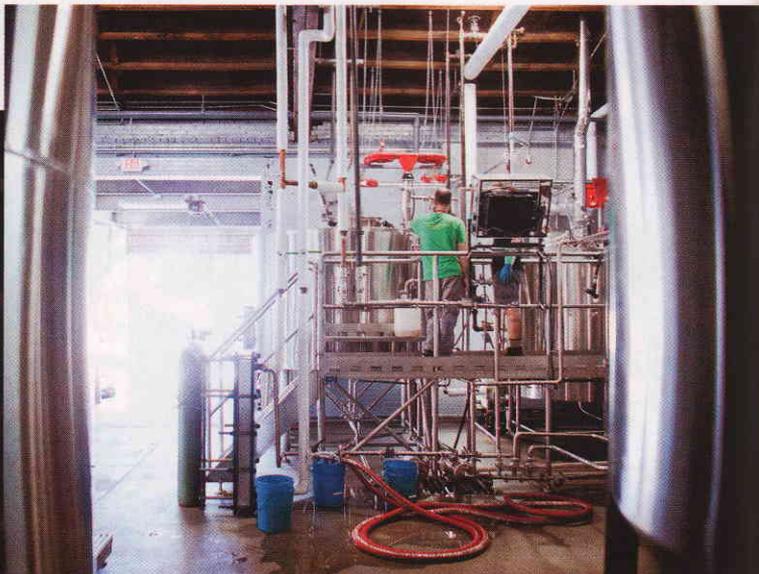
COMRADE | Photo by Candace Marie Peterson



ASLAN



CREATURE COMFORTS | Photos by Mike Donk



COMRADE BREWING CO.

DENVER, COLORADO
OPENED: APRIL 2014

Comrade Brewing—named with tongue in cheek for Communism—opened in a part of Denver with little nightlife, but the party—or the Party—has come to Comrade. Founder David Lin and brewer Marks Lanham have built a steady following at their taproom in part because of their Superpower IPA, which rivals some of the state’s best hoppy brews, but also with beers like Koffee Kream Stout and Quit Stalin, a Russian Imperial Stout. At GABF, Comrade took silver for a fresh-hopped version of Superpower. “Sometimes it’s luck, sometimes it’s skill,” Lin says. In this case it was all Lanham, who flexed his hops chops when he worked at Barley Brown’s in Oregon, which won gold in the same category. *[Jonathan Shikes]*

CREATURE COMFORTS BREWING CO.

ATHENS, GEORGIA
OPENED: APRIL 2014

As the first production brewery in Athens, Ga., since Terrapin Beer Company, Creature Comforts was greeted with larger-than-usual-anticipation. Plus, there’s co-founder David Stein’s pedigree as a BrewDog apprentice and alumnus of Georgia beer institutions like Brick Store Pub and Twain’s Brewpub and Billiards. Then, they won at GABF. “It was an insane moment,” Stein says of their bronze. “We hadn’t even been brewing six months, so it was a huge win for us.” They’re currently rolling cans of their core lineup—Tropicália (an IPA), Bibo (a Pilsner), Reclaimed Rye (an Amber), and Athena (a Berliner Weisse)—into the market, taking stock of how they sell, and plotting their next move. “We never know what’s next, which is just a part of who we are,” Stein says. *[Austin Ray]*

ASLAN BREWING CO.

BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON
OPENED: MAY 2014

Three friends in their early twenties, with no commercial brewing experience and an ambitious vision—Aslan could have ended in disaster. But Jack Lamb, Frank Trosset and Pat Haynes were determined to start a different kind of brewpub, with a menu of vibrant dishes made from local produce; low-impact resource management practices, and high-quality, 100 percent organic beer. With help from Trosset’s father Boe, they renovated an old sign company building with recycled materials and invited their friends and neighbors in Bellingham’s brewing community to provide input on the results from their 5-gallon pilot system. Today, the airy, high-ceilinged space is one of the best places to sip on clean, Northwest ales and lagers brewed with the occasional twist—for example, a ginger rye with a hint of lime. *[Adrienne So]*