



WORTHY BREWING LIVES UP TO ITS NAME

BY TAMARA MULDOON

AMONG THE EVER-INCREASING STABLE OF CRAFT BREWERIES in Bend, Oregon, Worthy Brewing (worthybrewing.com) stands out for its extraordinary facility (including its own observatory) and its innovative approaches to sustainability and hop research.

Within its on-site garden and greenhouse, Worthy Brewing grows experimental hops, along with herbs used by its restaurant. It serves as a testing ground for trying out and perfecting hop varieties. During my visit I came across Worthy's founder, Roger Worthington, in the garden, harvesting hop cones by hand.



Worthy Brewing lives up to its name by making the brewery as sustainable as possible. It reduces energy use with a 50-kilowatt solar electric system and 2,000-gallon solar water heating systems. Other efforts include high-efficiency machinery, skylights and extensive waste recycling and composting program. To Worthington, these measures are not only good for the planet, but also good for business, saving thousands of dollars in energy costs annually.

A recent 3,800-square-foot expansion added versatile indoor and outdoor seating. The Hop Mahal banquet room holds up to 85 guests, while the Beermuda Triangle bar accommodates an additional 60 persons. In addition to the original ground-floor patio, the new outdoor, second-floor Star Bar boasts amenities such as a firepit, Cascade Mountain views and balconylike seating for Worthy's summer concert series.

The Hopservatory—centerpiece of the facility offers quests a mind-expanding opportunity to view our solar system through a 16-inch telescope. Thursday through Sunday nights, guests can climb the 50-foot

tower for some stargazing, no reservation needed. And, on weekend afternoons, you can safely peer at the sun through a protective filter.

Worthington believes that looking into space can give people a better appreciation for life on earth and a more universal perspective. He seeks to create a place where customers can learn something and open their minds to possibilities. In his words, "A place where epiphanies are possible."

Besides an impressive facility, the beer and food alone are "worthy" of a visit. In keeping with its sustainable philosophy, ingredients are regionally sourced with a focus on natural and organic. Worthy's meat purveyors feed their livestock the brewery's spent grain and hops, raising meat to be served in the restaurant.

The menu, which includes appetizers, soups, salads, sandwiches, tacos, platters and pizza, lists a suggested beer pairing for each item, helping patrons choose from its extensive beer selections. I recommend the Lights Out Stout-braised pork ribs platter. Also, a lengthy gluten-free menu is available, including pizza.

Among Worthy's flagship brews, available in many retail stores and taprooms, are Worthy IPA and Imperial IPA, Prefunk American Pale Ale, Stoker Red Ale, Easy Day Kolsch (German-style ale) and award-winning Lights Out Stout—a dark, smooth, slightly-sweet beer with chocolate undertones (my personal favorite).

This stalwart lineup is supplemented by seasonals such as Farm Out Saison (Belgian-style ale), Kama Citrus India Pale Ale, Powder Keg Winter Ale and Dark Muse Imperial Stout. If available, try the Barrel Aged Dark Muse—aged more than two years in oak bourbon barrels.

In 2017, Worthy introduced Strata IPA, a singlehop beer featuring an all-purpose aroma hop developed by Oregon State University and Indie Hops, a Willamette Valley hop growing company (coowned by Worthington). Strata IPA took the 2017 Oregon Beer Awards gold medal award in the Hoppy Session Ale category.

The brewery devotes a five-barrel tank for its brewers to experiment with new hops, malts and unique flavor combinations. The finished experimental products, its Heart and Soul series beers, are served only at the Bend pub.

With all this to offer, you'll want to make familyfriendly Worthy Brewing a must-visit destination during your next trip to Bend. See visitcentraloregon. com to plan your trip to Central Oregon.