

FOOD&WINE

20 Craft Breweries Where the Food Is as Big a Draw as the Beer

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When Michael Carroll promised a "Michelin mindset" in the business plan for Band of Bohemia five years ago, the longtime chef (Alinea, Bouchon, Wildwood) and former brewer (Half Acre) had a modest goal in mind: to open an establishment known as more than just a burger-slinging brewpub. He didn't expect to earn a mention, let alone a spot, in the influential guidebook. He certainly didn't expect to open what would become the world's first Michelin-starred brewpub.

Jackson Hole-based hospitality vet Gavin Fine has seen the same thing happen with his home turf's emerging restaurant scene. Jackson was still in a meat and potatoes state of mind when he opened Rendezvous Bistro in 2001, but now, locals and tourists alike can be found expanding their horizons at a gold medal brewery that serves a 'Chiang Mai cheesesteak' (Thai Me Up) or a refurbished gas station (Bodega) that stocks its own artisanal ice cream and charcuterie at the foot of Grand Teton National Park.

As for Fine's contribution to the increasingly mainstream craft beer market, he tapped home brewer Colby Cox to man the tanks at Roadhouse Brewing Co. last year. Later this summer, its proper brewpub will open in the heart of town, so look out for that. Here, Fine will pair 30 rotating pints with "unique, worldly flavors, carefully curated ingredients, and thoughtfully sourced meats and produce."

"Brewpub fare has come a long way in recent years," Fine says squarely. "Guests want more than just food to soak up the beer. They want to know about the travels that inspired a dish, where the pork came from, and their server's favorite pairings. Every part of our experience needs to be as unique as the beer itself."