

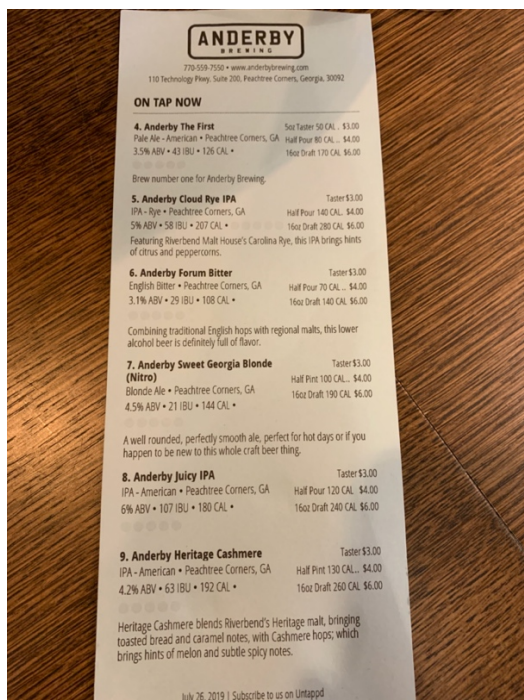


October 2019 Newsletter

~How do you stand out in a crowded market?

With nearly 8,000 breweries now operating in the US and another 1,000 in-planning, the landscape has never been more competitive in craft beer. The same goes for the rapidly expanding craft spirits market, growing at a rate of nearly 20% each year. Whether you are planning a taproom, brewpub, or will focus on wholesale, you must stand out to survive and thrive.

At Riverbend we have the luxury of meeting and interacting with all kinds of brewers and distillers. Standing apart goes beyond beer styles or exotic label design. To make matters more challenging, your brewery, which just opened its taps three years ago is now the old man on the block. Since 2016, the number of breweries has nearly doubled. It is human nature to be drawn to the shiny new toy, and the attention span of thirsty craft beer drinkers is more diluted as multiple breweries open in close proximity. It is vital to keep reinventing yourself while maintaining your authenticity. Here are three recommendations for your consideration:



- 1) **Hire great staff and continually educate them.** It does not matter how unique your story is, if your staff is not relaying that story to your customers. Have your brewers spend time educating staff whenever you release a new beer. Explain to servers what makes the beer special and why it tastes the way it does. Investing in Cicerone Server level certification is also a great idea. Consider taking them to visit your local malt house (shameless plug) or a yeast lab if they have never been. We meet servers at breweries all the time who are not able to discuss individual beers and styles. These folks are your front line for brand building and your main interaction with your customer base. They are your biggest marketing investment. Take care of them and they will take care of you!



- 2) **Be a storyteller.** By and large, the breweries and distilleries that are consistently telling stories are the most successful that we encounter. For some folks, this is natural and for others, it can be a bit more challenging. It is worth your time to develop a story for every beer. Make sure to take time to educate your staff on the background of each new release. Offer up printed menus with more than just the name and style of beer. Do not be afraid to be verbose and to provide technical data for each of your beers (beer geeks love it).

Sharing info about new releases and events at your brewery via social media is a must. Make sure that you post at a regular cadence to keep your fans engaged. When you have a really big announcement to make such as a brewery expansion, new year-round beer release, new seasonal release, you should consider issuing a traditional Press Release to media outlets. Getting other people to write about you is the best advertising (and its free)!

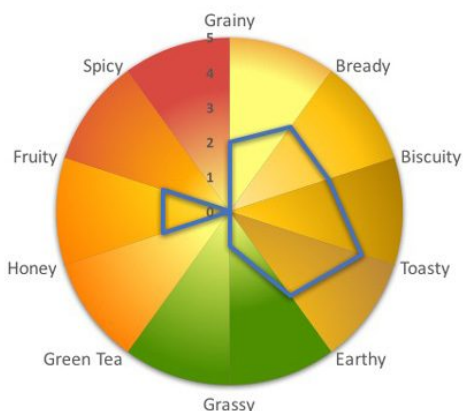
Pressure to constantly come up with a story about your beer can be challenging. When you encounter this roadblock, a tactic can be to come up with a clever name or something meaningful to build a narrative around. If you have an interesting story about your ingredients, this is another great way to build content. Perhaps you are using foraged, local ingredients in your beer. Or you are using custom malt from a local malt house. If you do not tell people you have missed an opportunity.

- 3) **Engage with your community.** Historically in America, the town tavern was the community gathering place. Today the modern brewery taproom, brewpub, or distillery tasting room is the center of the community. Locals will determine whether you succeed or fail. Make a point to budget time, money, and resources to support your community by hosting fundraisers, donating to local causes, and sponsoring events. It engenders goodwill with your neighbors and ensures that you maximize your reach. And it's the right thing to do. Get involved in your community!

~Ingredient Spotlight: Heritage Malt~

Way, way back in 2011 we created our first batch of malt on a tiny one-ton system. We took it home and ran a wort test. The malt was darker than expected, but had an incredible flavor! As novice maltsters, we did not know how or why it turned out this way. As we learned more about kiln design, we discovered that the fresh air intake on our homemade kiln was insufficient to produce a Pale or Pilsner style product. We quickly made some upgrades and soldiered on with our experiments. We kept producing our “original recipe” due to customer demand and that is how Heritage malt was born!

As we have grown, this recipe has been reverse-engineered several times in an effort to capture the characteristic blend of Vienna and Light Munich flavors. This product typically clocks in between 6-8 SRM. Normally, a maltster will sacrifice enzymatic activity to achieve this level of color. Heritage maintains a DP of 80 which is more than enough to provide adequate conversion in the brewhouse. Our customers have utilized this malt in SMaSH beers, Belgian Dubbels, and Extra Special Bitters. Smaller percentages in the grist can complement a Saison or German Lager recipe.



~What's Brewing? Featuring Brent Manning~

This recipe is inspired by one of my favorite beers from 2019, Allagash's Sun Drift. This beer really hit all the right notes for me. A complex (and locally-sourced!) malt bill balanced by an addition of fresh lemon zest and black tea. Fermentation blends a standard ale strain with *Brettanomyces Claussenii* which contributes some earthy, pineapple notes. The resulting beer is supremely refreshing!

For the Heritage Table Beer, I dropped the ABV and IBUs quite a bit. The malt bill provides a biscuity, sweet mouthfeel that balances the slight astringency from the tea and lemon zest.

Heritage Table Beer

Grain Bill:

*75% Riverbend Heritage
10% Riverbend Southern Select
5% Riverbend Appalachian Wheat
5% Riverbend Hull and Oats*

Mash at 152F for 60 minutes.

Target O.G. 1.043

Color: 8 SRM

Hop/Spice Schedule:

Cascade @ 60 min (~15 IBU)

Citra @ 5 min (~10 IBU)

Lemon Zest

Fresh Black Tea

Yeast:

WLP568 Belgian Style Saison Blend

Ferment @ 68F to encourage proper attenuation. Allow brett to condition for 6 weeks or more.

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~Grain & Grist Festival @ Riverbend Malt House~

We will be hosting our annual Grain & Grist Festival on Thursday, October 17th, 2019 from 4pm – 8pm. We will have live music, beer and spirits featuring Riverbend Malt, and good camaraderie with fellow industry folk. If you did not receive an invitation, please reach out to matt@riverbendmalt.com.



Grain & Grist 2018

~Flaked Wheat & Flaked Rye Discontinued~

Effective immediately, we are discontinuing our Flaked Wheat and Flaked Rye products. Customer demand has not been at a level for us to continue to offer flaked material. As alternatives, you may consider our Appalachian Malted Wheat or our Carolina Malted Rye. Apologies if either of these ingredients have become part of any core recipes.

~About Riverbend Malt~

Riverbend Malt House, founded in 2010 and headquartered in Asheville, NC, is one of the original craft malting facilities in the US. Utilizing grain sourced from local, family owned farmers, Riverbend malt fuels high quality, unique beverages produced by hundreds of North America's finest craft breweries and distilleries. For a Product Catalog or Pricing, please reach out to matt@riverbendmalt.com. We offer same day shipping on orders received before Noon, Monday – Thursday. Pre-Milling is available for an additional charge and additional lead time.

Cheers!

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Perfect Plain Brewing, Pensacola, FL