

SIERRA NEVADA BREWING CO. RELEASES FIRST BOTTLES OF HARVEST ALE

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For the second time this year, Sierra Nevada is bottling one of its limited draft-only beers. The company, which recently released its 27th Anniversary Ale for the first time in bottles, has decided to do the same with one of its most coveted brews, Harvest Ale, a fresh hop ale scheduled for release in late September.

“People have been asking us to bottle Harvest for years and we just didn’t have the capacity to do it,” said brewery owner and founder Ken Grossman. “Each fall we gear up for production of our winter seasonal beer, and up until now that hasn’t left room for us to do any of our specialty beers. But this year we decided we would find a way to bottle Harvest Ale, because so many people have asked for it.”

Eleven years ago, Sierra Nevada was the first American brewer to experiment with “fresh hops” when brewing their first batch of Harvest Ale, using nothing but hops that had been harvested in Yakima, Washington the same day. Freshly harvested hops are richer in the hop oils that impart hop aroma and spiciness into beer. The popularity of Harvest Ale—combined with the growing enthusiasm for highly-hopped ales among craft beer aficionados—has created dozens of new entries into the fresh-hop ale category.

Brewing fresh hop ales for eleven years has really helped Sierra Nevada understand that fresh hop ales are more art than science. “As the brewing develops, you usually find that you have more or less of one variety than the other,” said head brewer Steve Dresler. “This allows you to reformulate the brews as you go along to use all the hops shipped, and consequently the different fermenters each have unique flavors and aromas that can be experienced prior to blending.”

Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. was founded in 1980 and is one of America’s first microbreweries. It is regarded as the standard of quality for American craft brewers and has won numerous awards for its beers and ales. Its flagship product, Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, has been the number one selling craft beer brand in America for the past five years according to IRI scan data. The brewery, located in Chico, California, is still 100% owned by Ken Grossman.

In addition to Pale Ale, Sierra Nevada makes a Wheat, Porter and Stout year-round, a host of draft-only specialty beers, and offers five seasonal beers. Harvest Ale will be available in limited supply nationwide in 24-oz. bottles and draft. The cost is slightly above Sierra Nevada’s year-round products.