



## profile

# Harvester Brewing:

## America's First Gluten-free Brewery



On December 28, 2011, Harvester Brewing launched the first and only dedicated gluten-free brewery in the United States and their first batch of gluten-free ale. Located in Portland, Oregon, Harvester Brewing's commitment to providing safe, flavorful ales is further demonstrated by the company's recent Gluten-Free Certification from the Gluten-Free Certification Organization (GFCO) in June 2013.

The company was started by owners James Neumeister, the Research and Development Manager, and John Dugan, the Plant Manager. James' wife is gluten sensitive and he has numerous friends with celiac disease. James, a home beer brewer, thought someone should be making really good gluten-free craft beer and so the company was born.

The difference between producing gluten-free beer and gluten-removed beer is very important to Harvester Brewing. According to James, "our company is focused on making truly great gluten-free ales and we can't do that if we are also producing a barley-based beer. I am not a fan of production methods that use barley and attempt to remove gluten using enzymes." No gluten is allowed in their facility at any time, so cross contamination is not a concern.

As Oregon is known for its craft beer culture, Harvester Brewing is striving to provide a craft beer experience that everyone can enjoy regardless of their dietary restrictions. "If a company is only producing one type of gluten-free beer, then its taste is limited, so we can be more creative and give people choices," James said.

Beer is produced in two types: ales and lagers. Harvester Brewing produces only ales. Ale is traditionally brewed from malted barley and is fermented at a high temperature, therefore maturing more quickly. Ale typically has a more aggressive flavor and higher alcohol content.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

**Jennifer D. Harris** was diagnosed with celiac disease over 15 years ago and has turned her diagnosis into a thriving career and an opportunity to help the newly diagnosed. She is a Gluten-Free Product Specialist, Industry Consultant, and Marketing Coordinator for gluten-free products. Email Jennifer at: [jenniferharris326@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferharris326@gmail.com).

Pale Ale was the first batch to be bottled in Harvester Brewing's trademark 22-ounce bottles, followed closely by Dark Ale, Red Ale, and then IPA (India Pale Ale). These ales are available year round. Additionally, every two months or so, the brewery rolls out a new seasonal variety. Seasonal varieties are made with in-season ingredients, such as squash or raspberries. Harvester Brewing's ales average 6% alcohol and according to James, generally have a dry, snappy finish.

The ales are handcrafted from many locally sourced ingredients and are thoroughly researched to ensure their safety. The beers are brewed with chestnuts roasted to different degrees, producing different styles of ale. Sorghum, certified gluten-free oats (from Montana Monster Munchies in Bozeman, Montana), hops (from Indie Hops in Oregon), and cane sugar are all added ingredients.

Harvester Brewing's Pale Ale won a bronze medal at the 27th annual Great American Beer Festival in Denver in October 2012. This award is quite an impressive accomplishment for the brewery in both its first year of production and its first year entering the competition.



Harvester Brewing's ales are currently available for sale in Idaho, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington, and they have launched an online store as of March 2013 to allow residents in 30 states to order beer shipped directly from the brewery. Craft beer enthusiasts can also purchase their seasonal releases online.

As the company constantly researches production methods, ingredients, and flavor combinations, there simply is no telling what creative brews Harvester Brewing will unveil next. [SGF](#)



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