



BEER TOURISM: UNTAPPED OPPORTUNITY OR FUTILE PURSUIT?



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1. WHAT IS BEER TOURISM?

Type of gastronomic / beverage tourism that involves visiting different places with the specific intention of immersing oneself in the local beer culture.

1.1 GASTRONOMY & REGIONAL IDENTITY

- Food and beverage customs can serve as a lens through which a destination's unique culture and heritage are viewed.
- The branding of local food and drink has become a potent mechanism in combatting the homogenising effects of globalisation.
- Governments across the globe have embraced gastronomic tourism as a vehicle for local and regional development; has the potential to create secondary economic activity (multiplier effect).

1.2 BEER TOURISM ON THE RISE

- While wine has a more prestigious tradition within the scope of beverage tourism, beer is quickly gaining ground.
- The global beer tourism market was valued at \$10.58 billion in 2023; forecasted to hit \$22.82 billion in 2030 (based on CAGR of 11.7% projected by Grand View Research).
- Asia-Pacific beer tourism market valued at \$1.136 billion in 2023 (ca. 9.8% of global market revenue); forecasted CAGR of 12.4% until 2030.
- Domestic tourists made up over 70% (in excess of \$7.4 billion) of the industry's revenue in 2023.

1.3 FAVOURED FORMS OF BEER TOURISM

- Brewery tours
- Beer festivals
- Ale trails
- Beer and food pairings
- Beer museums



2. EXAMPLES OF BEER TOURISM

2.1 BREWERY TOURS

GUINNESS STOREHOUSE



- Tour of the 7-storey St. James's Gate Brewery in Dublin.
- Immersive experience from grain to glass; standard ticket costs ca. \$34.
- Ireland's most popular fee-charging tourist attraction; welcomed 1.65 million visitors in 2024.

KIMAYA BREWERY TOUR

- Guided brewery tour and beer tasting session at Kimaya's production facility in Shirwal, Maharashtra (60 km from Pune).
- Tour led by Kimaya co-founder Saurabh Patwardhan; maximum 25 slots, standard package costs ca. \$21.
- Hosted by The Western Routes.



2.2 BEER FESTIVALS



OKTOBERFEST

- Largest beer festival on earth; held annually in Munich, Germany.
- Currently attracts over 6 million visitors per year, generating close to \$1.4 billion worth of revenue for the city in the process.
- Celebration of Bavarian culture that is emulated all around the world.



DEEP DIVE

- Three-day craft beer event in Pune, India.
- First held in 2022, eighth edition scheduled for January 2027.
- Showcases over 50 beers prepared by more than 25 local microbreweries; also features a series of educational talks, panel discussions, and WSET workshops.



2.3 ALE TRAILS

BEND ALE TRAIL



- Self-guided beer tour through Central Oregon, USA.
- Trail covers over 30 microbreweries and tasting rooms grouped into seven territories.
- Launched in 2010, first ale trail in the West.

HO CHI MINH ALE TRAIL

- Craft beer journey through the streets of a Southeast Asian metropolis.
- Route covers a total of 9 brewpubs.
- Participants provided with a booklet, collect a sticker at every visited location; eligible to receive a free T-shirt at final stop if all stickers are collected.



2.4 BEER AND FOOD PAIRINGS

- Diverse flavours and textures of different beer styles can complement or contrast the taste of culinary dishes, creating unique dining experiences which are both educational and engaging.
- The craft beer revolution has expanded the variety and sophistication of beers all around the world, making pairings more accessible and appealing to a broader audience.
- Pairing strategies can encourage the exploration of beers and culinary dishes alike by enhancing their perceived values through the promise of harmonious combinations.





2.5 BEER MUSEUMS

YE OL' WATERING HOLE BEER CAN MUSEUM



- Collection of over 4,000 different beer cans located in Northampton, Massachusetts.
- Museum is part of a traditional pub.
- Walls are covered with cans and other packaging-related breweriana dating back to the late 1930s.

SAPPORO BEER MUSEUM

- Japan's only museum dedicated to beer; situated in Sapporo, Hokkaido.
- Opened in 1987; explores the history of Japanese brewing through the story of Sapporo Beer, dating back to 1876.
- Combines brewing heritage, industrial architecture, brand storytelling, and beer tasting in one destination.



2.6 HYBRID INITIATIVES



OKAVANGO DELTA, BOTSWANA

- Largest inland delta on earth; one of the most popular tourist destinations in Southern Africa.
- Okavango Craft Brewery supports local farmers by using locally grown ingredients, like millet, in its range of beers.



OSAKA CRAFT BEER MAP

- City guide that shows the locations of brew pubs; also promotes local events.
- Printed in both Japanese and English; available free of charge at tourist information points in public transportation hubs.



3. PROS AND CONS

The successful adoption of beer tourism initiatives requires heightened cooperation and coordination between competing industry players, local levels of government, marketers, and the hospitality sector at large.

3.1 KEY BENEFITS FOR CONSUMERS

- **Experience & Education:** Tourists enjoy an interesting and educational experience in a typically scenic location, often for a minimal fee.
- **Product Engagement:** Through i.e. tasting sessions, sales at visitor centres, and organized tours of production facilities.
- **Enhanced Service:** Client-based approaches can lead to a heightened sense of competence (through instruction) and self-worth (through VIP treatment).

3.2 KEY BENEFITS FOR PRODUCERS

- **Economic Growth:** Stimulates new forms of local development, income, and employment.
- **Brand Exposure & Sales:** Engaging in beer tourism can result in enhanced brand awareness which leads to increased sales, both on-site and “down the line”.
- **Other:** Access to government grants; strengthens relationships with competitors, customers and suppliers.

3.3 OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES

- **Internal Deficiencies:** Lack of entrepreneurial skills, knowledge of consumer behavior, and marketing ability.
- **Operational Drawbacks:** On-site tours and festival booths require additional staff; increased operating and capital costs for visitor facilities.
- **Focus on Core Product:** Expanding into tourism can seem daunting and unrealistic for producers primarily focused on making good beer.