

A better brew

Now there are gluten-free beers that actually taste good. *By Shaun Chavis*

It's one thing to be an occasional designated driver, but quite another to never enjoy a beer because you can't handle wheat. But now you can raise a cold one, thanks to the rapidly growing variety and availability of new gluten-free beers that actually taste good.

These beers don't have gluten—proteins from wheat, barley, rye, and oats—which can make millions of people sick. In fact, they're the only choice for the nearly 2 million Americans with celiac disease who have to cut wheat from their diets because

their bodies can't process gluten.

Some early attempts at gluten-free beer weren't exactly tasty. But brewers have kept experimenting, substituting rice, sorghum, honey, or molasses for grains with gluten. And some of the newer results are much better. (See our taste-test results below.)

Trendy suds

You can enjoy these beers even if you're not gluten-intolerant, of course. Celebrities who simply choose to go gluten-free (we hear Hilary Swank is among them) are driving new interest.

That broader appeal has helped fuel demand—and breweries are racing to keep up. Three gluten-free beers are available nationwide, with more in the works. Lakefront Brewery's sales jumped 50 percent in the last year, more than two-thirds of it attributed to gluten-free New Grist. Bard's Tale is expanding its line. And Anheuser-Busch is brewing a sorghum beer called Redbridge. Restaurant chains Texas Roadhouse and P.F. Chang's China Bistro are offering them too. Even if you don't need to skip wheat, they're worth a taste. 🍷

The gluten-free showdown



Lakefront Brewery's New Grist

A golden beer with a delicious grain taste
\$9.99 per six-pack
www.lakefrontbrewery.com
for locations

Grade: A



Bard's Tale Dragon's Gold

Rich, earthy flavor;
quenched our thirst for a brew
\$14.99 per six-pack
www.bardsbeer.com for locations

Grade: A-



Ramapo Valley Honey Passover Beer

Sweeter than our
beer drinkers prefer
\$10.99 per six-pack
www.rvbrewery.com for locations

Grade: C-