

Beer Destinations

— Jim MacMillan —

Do you love craft beer? Ever wonder how it's made? Ever want to go to different pubs, breweries or tap rooms to try new brews? Well, this article is for you!

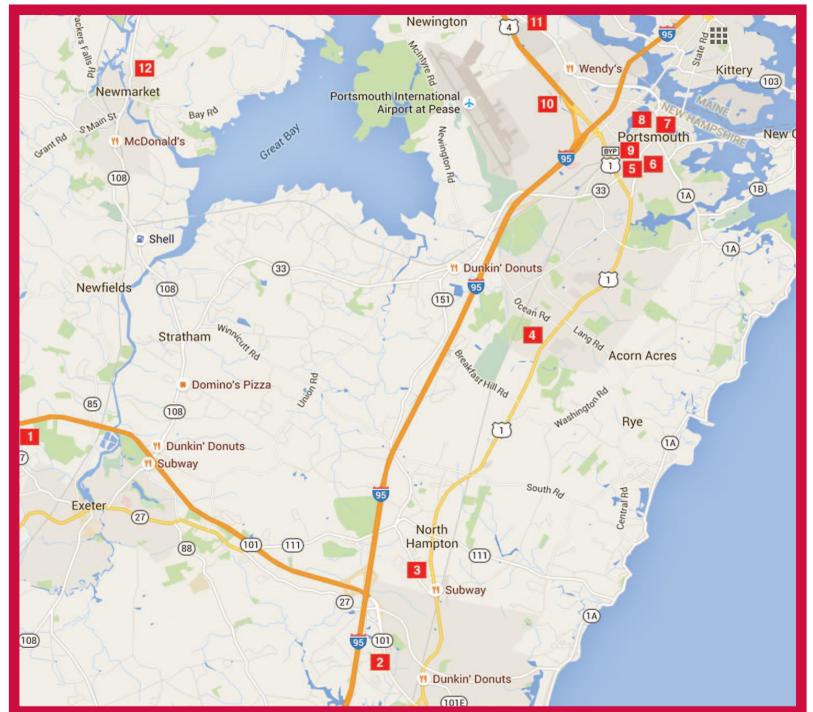
This is the first of a series of articles providing information about what I refer to as 'Beer Destinations' and will give you a bit of knowledge about clustered brewery spots in the greater New England region. In this series, I will try to select a number of breweries to travel to in onetrip where you can sample their craft, move on to the next, and manage to hit them all if you're up for the challenge...

To be clear, there is a TON of great beer out there! But since I live in New Hampshire, we'll start here. There are almost 60 breweries in NH alone with that number climbing every year. The term 'brewery' refers to a nano or micro brew-on-premise establishment (usually with food), tap or tasting room, or even a macro brewery, such as Budweiser's Merrimack location.

New Hampshire's seacoast city of Portsmouth has recently been voted one of the top 5 best places to live in NH by movoto.com and boasts of a thriving and charming tourist industry. As evidence of its growing popularity as a destination city, Portsmouth now possesses more restaurant seats than inhabitants of its city limits. Undoubtedly, it is a youthful city with an old-world feel. These days, Portsmouth is teaming with successful businesses, merchants, and proud residents who want to share its rich history and traditions with generations to come.

Portsmouth's own rich brewing history began when, in 1857, the Frank Jones Brewery opened and became the largest brewery in the country. While it experienced a financial setback during Prohibition in 1917, Portsmouth's reputation as a New England beer epicenter was firmly established.

Today, Portsmouth and the surrounding Seacoast area is considered to be one of the major beer destinations in not just New Hampshire, but in the entire Northeast. In addition to Portsmouth, local beer



destinations in this area include spots in Exeter, North Hampton, Newington and Newmarket. Check out 12 of the best beer destinations in the Portsmouth and NH Seacoast area below. For your convenience, all breweries and tap rooms on the list have been thoughtfully sequenced for the best brewery tasting tour of the NH seacoast, beginning in Exeter and finishing in Newmarket NH. See the corresponding map to plan your next beer adventure to the Portsmouth and NH seacoast!

1 One of the most recent arrivals to the seacoast beer scene is **Neighborhood Beer Co.**, 156 Epping Rd, Exeter NH. Opening in 2015, brewer Horst Dornbusch brings alive traditional German brewing and currently offer six styles of beer, all brewed from Germain-based recipes. The expertly developed taste of each beer makes up for the simple selection at Neighborhood Beer Co. — it's worth dropping by to try them all.

2 Smuttynose Brewery, 105 Towle Farm Road, Hampton, NH, boasts of a rich brewing history. Owner Peter Egelston first brewed in the early 1990's at Portsmouth Brewery downtown before opening

Smuttynose in 1994. At its original location, Egelston and his crew kept expanding to a growing market of thirsty customers. Growing pains and a desire to 'do it right' allowed them to create a \$24 million, eco-friendly facility on the Towle Farm property. With one of the most informative (and free) tours in NH, generous tastings to finish, farm-to-table food at their abutting Hayseed Restaurant and a restored barn for private parties, Smuttynose offers great beer and more.



3 Throwback Brewery 7 Hobbs Road in North Hampton NH was founded in 2011 by two women, Annette Lee and Nicole Carrier, who loved beer and loved brewing it. They realized their dream of a small brewery using locally grown hops and malts to produce great tasting beer. Their recent move from an industrial unit to the fully renovated historic Hobbs Farm, allows them to do their own hops growing, specializing in select malts such as hops, wheat, barley, fruit, and spices. They are now a 15-barrel brewhouse and eatery with delicious food, friendly help, and awesome beers on tap. You can get take-out meals as well as growler fills. Note: There is a two growler-per-person maximum purchase per visit in the state of New Hampshire.



4 WHYM Craft Beer Cafe, 3548 Lafayette Road, Portsmouth NH, has a remarkable offering of wonderful beers that can be found from around the world, and a knowledgeable service staff that is passionate about good beer. Don't overlook this gem; their food menu is an alluring attraction as well.



5 Great Rhythm Brewing Co., 105 Bartlett Street, Portsmouth NH, has newly renovated and expanded their brewing capacity since 2012 by opening a spacious tap room on the serene North Mill Pond. Chat with the brewmaster couple themselves, Scott and Kristen Thornton, who met at UNH, married and fell in love (with brewing) and are now living the brewing dream.

6 Liar's Bench Beer Co., 459 Islington Street #4, Portsmouth NH, a brand new effort by Dane Nielsen and Dagan Migirdith, two of the most fun people you want to meet. Turning an old industrial garage into a hip brewpub, the digs are modest but the brew is awesome. Stop in, hear their story and sample their craft.



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7 The Portsmouth Brewery, 56 Market Street, Portsmouth NH, is a must-stop for anyone



who wants to try really great beers brewed on premises. Opened in 1991 with Peter Egelstonas head brewer (prior to Smuttynose), PB's location helped make it a landmark of the growing Portsmouth culture and social

scene. Boasting over a dozen taps and great pub food, you won't be disappointed here.

8 Earth Eagle Brewings, 165 High Street, downtown Portsmouth NH, is the place to try sours if you were ever interested. They pretty much started the sour craze in the area. They brew really unique beers on premises, have super tasty food (Panini press sandwiches!) and also have guest taps from local and national brews. If you are a home brewer, they conveniently have a supply shop within the same building.



9 Thirsty Moose Tap House, 21 Congress Street, Portsmouth NH, allows you to choose from over 112 tap beers from around the world. Their pub food, entertainment and sports bar atmosphere are a real attraction. With eat-in or take-out, the Moose offers almost everything you'll need as you tour the brewery map.



10 Redhook Brewery, 1 Redhook Way, Portsmouth NH (near Pease Tradeport), is the east coast-based half of their sister brewery in Washington state. They offer informative and affordable tours on the hour with delicious tastings at the end. Coupled with excellent pub food inside, varied beer styles, outdoor seating and entertainment area, as well as many sporting events, there is always something good going on at Redhook.



11 Stoneface Brewing, 436 Shattuck Way, #6, Newington NH, offers a six-tap tastingroom of delicious brews freshly made in their brewery. They are most known for the dry-hopped IPA's and have a handful of awards to prove their worth. Make it a point to check them out.

12 Deciduous Brewing Co, 12 Weaver Street, Newmarket NH, creates some of the most interesting beers (and surprisingly wines) in the area. They have a crafting experience that will help you appreciate the process and results of local brewing.

Another way to experience these brew visits is to catch a ride on one of the **Granite State Growler Tour** buses. They organize groups of tours so you can choose which breweries you most want to see. Learn more by visiting their website, <http://nhbeerbus.com>



So, as you can see, the Portsmouth, NH area has a lot to offer and well worth making it a **Beer Destination!**

(Photos courtesy of brewery websites unless otherwise noted.)