

Branford Beer Wars



What's going on in Branford, Connecticut? One would think that the *very* small shoreline town less than an hour from the Rhode Island border could support one brewery, tops. Not the case, in just a few short months Branford will be home to three sizable breweries pouring pints for a community that regularly stands in line for lobster rolls each summer at the nationally recognized "Lobster Shack" (Bobby Flay is a regular). The Thimble Island Brewery and Duvig Brewery will soon be facing down an adversary in Stony Creek Brewery

Thimble Island came first, opening in 2009 with plans to relocate to a new expanded site in the summer months of 2015. Thimble Island's first beer an American Ale, was less a homegrown beer than its successor, the bold Coffee Stout which is made with coffee beans from a local coffee roaster.

Thimble Island Brewing is a townie's dream – complete with founders whose family also own a thriving bakery in town.

There is also Duvig Brewery, born during the Blizzard of 2013 (one of many), when two families had nothing to drink but the beer they were making themselves. The name of the brewery comes from a merging of both those family names, Dugas and Vigliotti.

That being the case, one would think Stony Creek Brewery has its work cut out for them. A conversation with Stony's resident brewmaster, Andy Schwartz, would suggest otherwise.

Andy Schwartz – *"The craft beer market has definitely exploded in the last decade or so," he told me during a recent visit to the sprawling site where tastings have already begun. "It's been a revolution. Craft beer is just the latest trend in everything that America was built upon; individualism, ingenuity, resourcefulness and a thirst for something better."*

Andy Schwartz – *"In 2013 alone the craft beer segment of the beer industry was up nearly 18% in production and sales. American exports of craft beer were up almost 50%. We are absolutely thrilled to be a part of this revolution, to bring something homegrown and hand crafted to not only the people of Branford and CT, but the entire craft beer community. The market could never have too many craft brewers, that's like saying that the music industry has too many artists."*

Andy Schwartz – *"As for the beer, or beers, about to be added to Branford's already-considerable roster, Crimsang is part of our Flip The Bird Series. It is a Belgian take on a big time double IPA that features fresh blood orange juice, so you are going to get a ton of citrus notes from both the hop profile and the blood orange. This beer will also be slightly soured to give it a little bit of tartness. Lastly it will be fermented with our house Saison yeast."*

Schwartz began brewing on the west coast and has been brewing on the east coast for about a decade now. He definitely brings a little west coast influence into a lot of his brews, resulting in the tag line "Aggressively laid back beer."