

Independent Cider House, SoCal's First Cider-Centric Joint, to Open in DTLB

If you're in search of a cider house in our state, you'll have to take a lengthy trip from SoCal. The nearest would be off the 101 just south of Thousand Oaks for 101 Cider or, along the same route, at Atascadero for Bristol Cider House—and even then, these establishments are cideries that only serve their own ciders*.

In fact, you'd have to trek to San Francisco to Upcider to find a pub solely dedicated to serving the best cider around—and that is precisely why Jeffrey Moores is working diligently on SoCal's first cider-only pub right here in DTLB.

This is the Independent Cider House, taking over the former Peppercorner restaurant at the northeast corner of Broadway and Atlantic.

Cider has, in many ways, grown up—at least for American audiences. An English staple, especially in the West Country, cider's base is quite simple: take the juice of any apple—historically, it's been the cider apple, hence its name—and add sugar or fruit before fermentation to give it alcohol. And while many think of cider as super sweet concoctions like Angry Bird or maybe the common Strongbow, Moores is intent on introducing the sophisticated, culinary side of cider to the SoCal masses.

“The great thing about the craft beer explosion is that it is really communally driven,” Moores said. “It's experimental and dynamic—and cider is in the same place craft beer was a decade ago. I want to share that with people because, honestly, I think they'll love it. Cider is this really fascinating alternative to beer.”

Ciders aren't just sweet. No, no: they're sour, they're hoppy, they're barrel-aged, they have ABVs that run from 2% to 12%. They're just like beers and they're just like wines, filled with complexity and varieties that are adjustable to different palates.

Despite cider's ability to fit the mold of the booming craft cider renaissance, it would prove difficult to cider heads in finding spaces that are dedicated to one of apples' greatest offerings.

"The flavor profiles of cider truly ran the gamut," Moores said. "It was just pure happiness in my mouth when I started discovering craft cider... As I started discovering other people who loved it as much, Otto [Radtke, my business partner] and all of us struggled with one major issue: quality hard cider at beer bars were almost impossible to find."

Moores' love of craft alcohol isn't new. The Long Beach native once called Eugene, Oregon home and brought to it a type business that wasn't much heard of in 2009: a craft beer and wine bottle shop/tap room dubbed 16 Tons and home to 350+ bottles and twelve taps of everything from barleywines to wild ales. Oh, you had a growler? They'd fill it with whatever was on tap—a luxury if there ever was one considering most growlers are only filled at breweries offering their own brews.

Now, Moores is moving onto a new investment and he hopes you like these apples.

Set to open in the coming weeks, Independent Cider House is set to become SoCal's first cider house while proving that Long Beach is (yet again) the place to experiment with culinary and drinking concepts.

"Stop in—I promise you that you won't be disappointed, even if you haven't had cider," Moores said. "In fact, I'll happily teach you about the wonderful world of cider."

We're game, Mr. Moores.

Independent Cider House is located at 601 E Broadway. For more information, visit: <http://www.indieciderhouse.com>

*Note: Honest Abe Cider, a cider brewer out of Carson, has officially opened a tasting room that is opened to the public from 11AM to 2PM on Saturdays.