

Verde Brewing Co.

From “farm to mug” — that’s the mission at Verde Brewing Co., which pairs its locally brewed beer with a menu that appeals to purists and gourmands alike, all in a comfortable, historic space.

KATHY MONTGOMERY

PAIRING BEER AND BURGERS is nothing new — they’ve gone together like peas and carrots throughout culinary history. But Camp Verde’s Verde Brewing Co. has upped the beer-and-burger ante by creating a menu that appeals to purists and gourmands alike, all in a comfortable, historic space and with a beer slate that rivals big-city breweries.

For traditionalists, there’s a classic cheeseburger and a bacon burger topped with a fried egg. For the more adventurous, there’s a whole menu of specialty burgers, including a Southwest burger with guacamole, bacon, pickled jalapeño aioli and pepper jack cheese; an elk burger with sautéed mushrooms, port

wine Derby cheese and fried onions; and a red wine burger with Thousand Island sauce, jack cheese, sautéed mushrooms and red wine onion jam made with wine from Clear Creek Vineyard & Winery. And that’s just the beginning.

The menu grew over time to include weekend specials (fish and chips, prime rib and fried chicken), steaks, brats and hot dogs. The classic Polish bratwurst includes sauerkraut, caramelized onions, pickles and honey mustard aioli on a pretzel bun. The Sonoran hot dog comes wrapped in bacon and topped with diced tomatoes, pickled jalapeño aioli, and sautéed onions and mushrooms.

Owner Alex Goetting started brew-

ing beer while he was a student at the University of Arizona. Beginning with a Kickstarter campaign in 2013, he opened a brewery in a 900-square-foot space next to his parents’ Camp Verde restaurant, The Horn. Three years later, he moved the rapidly growing brewing operation to a warehouse more than three times the size.

The burgers-and-beer concept grew from The Horn’s closure following a roof collapse and an electrical fire. The Goettings had already purchased Camp Verde’s historic Boler’s building with the idea of turning it into an art gallery, wine tasting room and business incubator. As it turned out, the only business it incubated was Verde Brewing Co.

“We were sitting in that building one day while we were waiting for insurance, and we just decided we could do something really simple and easy,” Goetting recalls. “Once it hit us, it was like: ‘Eureka! We’ve got the beer; we’ve got a great chef. Let’s put those two together.’ Within about three weeks, we opened

up and have done really well ever since.”

VBC’s mission and goal is to be “farm to mug,” with six beers on tap at any given time. Some of the staples with local ingredients include the Pecan Nut Brown and Juniper Amber ales. The Gold Buckle blonde ale, VBC’s most popular beer, is made with local honey.

Goetting gives the spent grain from the brewing process to area ranchers who, in turn, provide local beef for the burgers.

“We keep looking for ways to incorporate our business with the community,” Goetting says, “and then try to build a great experience with flavors of the Verde Valley.”



CAMP VERDE Verde Brewing Co., 325 S. Main Street, 928-567-7033, www.verdebrewing.com