

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Bottled brilliance

From little things, big things have grown

VICTORIA'S burgeoning micro-brewing industry has glasses filling, heads turning and a niche market booming.

The science of beer brewing — known as zymurgy — has been studied diligently by several keen micro-brewers who are now taking matters into their own hands and producing world-class beer.

Bridge Road, Mountain Goat, Red Hill, Grand Ridge, Holgate, Jamieson, 2 Brothers, Buckleys, William Bull and Otway Estate are some of the many breweries attracting recognition and healthy sales.

The 2 Brothers Brewery is the newest Victorian boutique brewery.

Based in Moorabbin, it is, of course, operated by two brothers, Andrew and Dave Ong. Their Rusty is a Belgian-style pale ale, the Trickster a Belgian-style wit bier, the Growler an American-style brown ale, and the Taxi a German-style pilsener.

All four brews won awards at this year's International Australian Beer Awards.

The Ongs claim to have the shortest distance from tap to tank. Their bar taps draw directly from the beer tanks.

Free tours are available on Thursdays and Fridays. If that doesn't build the thirst, the German sausages they serve will.

More established brewers are the team at Mountain Goat. What began as a project in a suburban back yard 10 years ago has become a well-known brand based in Richmond with a killer tagline — bottled, not tamed.

Owners Cam Hines and David Bonighton have set themselves apart by making four ales with no additives or preservatives.

Hines says that in the early days they had to remind themselves to be persistent.

"When we started, no one seemed to know what a micro-brewery was or what we were trying to do," Hines says.

"Just as we've seen a revolution in good bread, good coffee and cheese, we're now seeing people take much more interest in quality, handcrafted beer."

Red Hill Brewery has battled obstacles to create the Mornington Peninsula's first micro-brewery. Husband and wife David and Karen Golding persevered with a prolonged VCAT hearing and had to mortgage their home to finally realise their micro-brewing dreams.

The Goldings have embraced hop farming and the distinct link to the environmentally conscious use of land put in place by the planning scheme.

"The brewery has now been growing hops for its own production for seven years and has a unique point of difference to other micro-breweries," David says.

The varieties grown include Tettanager, Hallertau, Willamette and — keeping it close to home — a variety called Goldings.



The Goldings were awarded a substantial Federal Government grant that helped them get their project back on track and building under way.

Since opening, the brewery has been a major success. All the beers have won major awards in the Australian International Beer Awards.

Otway Estate is another micro-brewery with a wide range of beers to choose from.

Brewed using pure Otway rainwater, its 12 varieties include Otway light,

summer ale, pilsener, wheat beer, Otway ale, red ale and stout.

It also has a Farmhouse Trilogi in Saison, Pierre De Garde and Reserve.

For the adventurous, the brewery has begun making a triple-fermented strong ale and an organic lager.

More and more bars and shops are starting to stock the boutique beers that Victoria is producing. Lambsgo Bar, Mrs Parmas, Purvis Cellars and the World Beer Shop are a few that are catching on.

Sparkling: Marcus Cox has had success with his 3 Ravens micro-brewery in Thornbury.