

Travel

Lifestyles & Entertainment Editor: Michael Felci • 778-4775 •

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Crack open a cold specialty brewski

It is the new hot spot for a "cold one." North San Diego County, a short drive from the desert, is now home to more than 30 award-winning micro-breweries offering a bounty of beer-related activities from festivals and food and beer pairing events to behind-the-scenes tours.

Take a day or a weekend to check the world of craft brews — in your own backyard.

Escondido-based Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens, with its distinctive gargoyle mascot, is recognized as one of the nation's best breweries, producing more than 50,000 barrels of beer annually.

The 55,000-square-foot brewery with distinctive architecture and ambience is lifting beer tasting to new levels. Visitors enjoy a fresh, organic menu in the bistro paired with its signature beers that are known for bold and aggressive flavors.

The Stone Brew pub is the site of regular tastings and tours, as well as interactive classes that transform visitors to beer connoisseurs.

North county's other breweries include San Marcos-based Port Brewing Company and the Lost Abbey, which has been named one of the top 10 brewers in the world by Rate-Beer.com.

Vista is home to Green Flash Brewing Company, known for its all-natural ingredients in its hand-crafted brews that are produced in small batches to ensure freshness and quality.

Oceanside Ale Works is the city's first brewery and one of the few manual brew houses in the nation. Using European-inspired brewing techniques and Old World recipes, Ale Works has captured the coastal setting with names like "Surfer Stout."

Poway's Lightning Brewery emphasizes the scientific side of beer making. Lightning is the only local beer maker to



kathy strong

going my way

If you go

San Diego North Convention & Visitors Bureau, 800-848-3336;
www.sandiegonoorth.com

Brew Hop Tours,
858-361-8457;

www.brewhop.com

Brewery Tours of San Diego,
619-961-7999;

[www.brewerytours
ofsandiego.com](http://www.brewerytours
ofsandiego.com)

Stone Brewing Company,
760-471-4999;

www.stonebrew.com

Port Brewing Company,
800-918-6816;

www.portbrewing.com

Green Flash Brewing Company, 760-597-9012;

www.greenflashbrew.com

Oceanside Ale Works,
760-721-4ALE;

www.oceansidealeworks.com

Lightning Brewery,

858-513-8070;

www.lightningbrewery.com

use the "step mashing" process to craft enhanced body and flavor.

To get the full microbrew experience, consider a Brew Hop tour that transports visitors to several local breweries. Choose a five-hour "Beer Connoisseur" tour that stops at four local microbreweries or the 2½-hour "Beer Tasters" tour, which includes two or three breweries. Brewery Tours of San Diego features three unique touring packages, all with transportation, beer tastings and behind-the-scenes tours.

For questions, submissions or welcomed ideas for "Going My Way," contact Kathy Strong at going.myway@live.com.