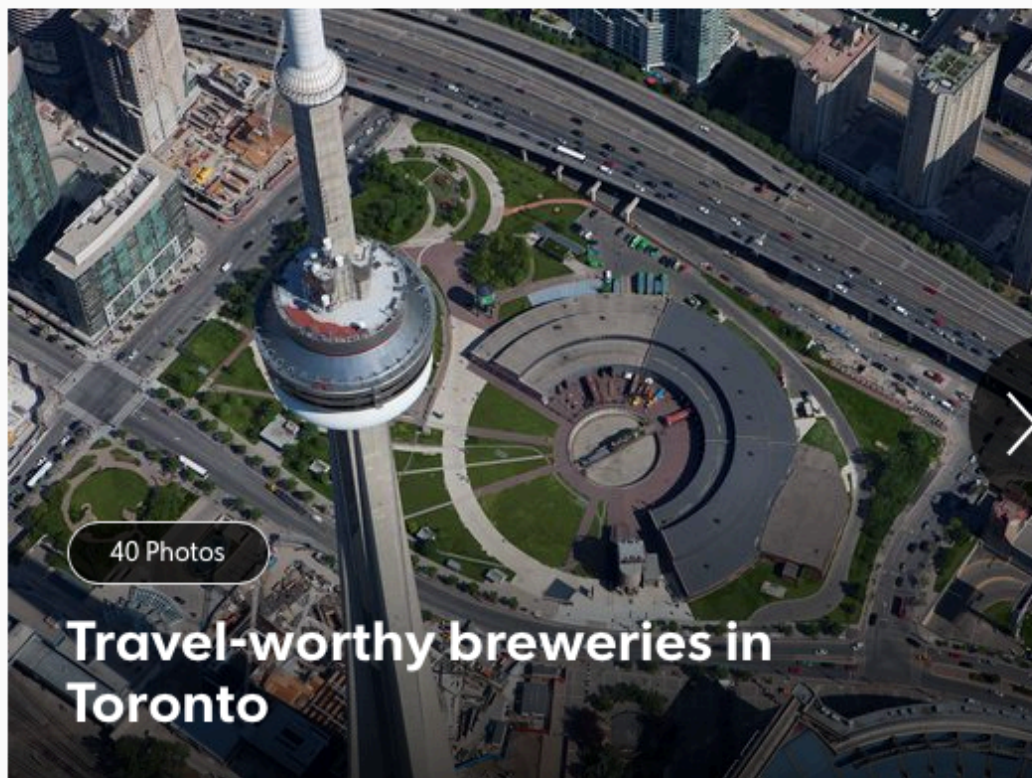


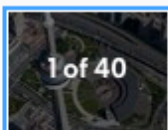
Toronto's boom boosts craft beer scene

Jerry Soverinsky, Special for USA TODAY Published 6:21 a.m. ET Aug. 16, 2017 | Updated 9:43 a.m. ET Aug. 16, 2017



40 Photos

Travel-worthy breweries in Toronto



1 of 40



POPULAR STORIES



Hong Kong Airlines to begin flying to U.S. mainland with new Airbus A350s

[usatoday.com](#) | 17 hours ago



Blue Ridge Parkway: A nearly 469-mile photo op

[usatoday.com](#) | 22 hours ago



Air Berlin files for bankruptcy after Etihad pulls plug

[usatoday.com](#) | 17 hours ago



(Photo: Celine Kim Photography)



f 3
CONNECT



TWEET



in 3
LINKEDIN



COMMENT



EMAIL



MORE

Toronto's downtown is booming — skyscrapers are multiplying and a steady influx of residents has helped the [population](#) outgrow that of Chicago. Cultural diversity is embraced by 200 ethnic groups who speak a collective 140 languages, crime is low (really low) earning it a distinction as one of the [top 10 safest major cities in the world](#), and you can get an all-beef hot dog any time of day or night from any one of hundreds of food trucks. It seems only fitting that Ontario's capital also boasts a top-notch craft beer scene.

Turns out, you can have it all.

Today, Ontario is home to roughly 300 breweries, "with Toronto capturing a fair share of that number," says Les Murray, a 21-year veteran of the Canadian beer industry. BeerAdvocate counts at least 50 breweries in the city, many popping up in the last handful of years. Yet despite the rapid growth, Murray characterizes the overall craft beer scene as still in its infancy. "There's a lot of room to grow, and a lot of great products that are finding an audience."

While mass producers Labatt, Molson and O'Keefe dominate shelves at Toronto's Beer Stores and Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) outlets (along with grocery stores, which recently gained the right to sell beer), it's the city's craft breweries that are making the most headway among local and visiting beer aficionados.

LCBO sales numbers reveal that craft beer is its fastest-growing segment, "growing anywhere from 20 to 30% per year," according to Ontario Craft Brewers, an association of more than 80 makers.

"Toronto has always been a mecca for beer," says Murray. "The three big brewers were all based here, but in the last 15 years, it's amazing to see the growth of the small [craft breweries]."

Owner and president of Beerlicious, a company that stages some of Canada's largest beer sampling events, Murray serves as president of Toronto's Festival of Beer, an annual summer gathering that stretches back to 1996. Held at the city's massive Exhibition Place, the three-day communal celebration of beer serves more than 30,000 attendees beer samples from dozens of Canadian breweries, both established as well as newcomers.

"We're on an amazing ride... You'll find more than 100 producers who are putting out more than 400 beers today."

All of which is great news for residents and travelers. For whether you favor a pilsener, pale ale, wheat beer or something more experimental, there's a neighborhood Toronto brewery producing flavorful craft offerings to try (and a hot dog vendor nearby selling the perfect, spicy accompaniment).

Truly an embarrassment of riches.

Browse the photo gallery above for a sampling of Toronto craft breweries worth a tour or taste.

More beer travel: [Sample Grand Rapids, Mich.'s craft beer scene](#)



Deal watch: Three nights in Iceland for \$799
[usatoday.com](#) | 19 hours ago



Drinking problems? Ryanair wants airports to curb alcohol sales
[usatoday.com](#) | 8 mins ago