



Brewhaha #16: The Atlantic Brewery, Bar Harbor ME

“Just outside town” turned out to be a tad misleading. Off Mount Desert Island, and another several miles down the road, I began to think *I musta missed it somehow!* Time actually was an issue since the last tour was at 4:30.

I had given up and decided to turn around in the next street I saw, but as I cut the wheel for the turn, I saw the small sign “Atlantic Brewery” with an arrow leading straight down that very road.

I already knew it was a long narrow road from Jill’s description, but when you’re thirsty, and they might be pulling the plug on your **FREE BEER** any second, a road can seem punishingly long.

I don’t remember for sure whether the road was dirt or not, but the parking lot sure was.

A big aluminum building on the left and some kind of kettle or drum out front signaled that I had reached my Valhalla. I kicked up a decent cloud of dust as I drove down around the ramshackle BBQ shack and parked snug up behind the brewery. As I dismounted, the tour was just beginning.

The guide, a young man in his 20’s with shaggy blond hair and the *thanks Mom and Dad* name of Ezra was just beginning his spiel. He nodded me welcome without breaking stride. There were about eight other people in this tour, a couple of whom looked to be dutiful wives tolerated the hubby’s craving. I looked around and wondered how the hell we were all going to fit between the tall kettles and barrels and walkways.

Reading my mind, apparently, Ezra commented, “We don’t have room to walk y’all around in here, so I’ll tell you everything you need to know without leaving this very spot.” He proceeded to fill us in on the history of Atlantic, and hand around some hops and some different shades of barley for us to handle, and even taste if we wanted. In all, he was a most amicable guide.

Half an hour later, it was off to the Tasting Room!

The rough-hewn log building was a sharp contrast to the bright new aluminum brewery itself, but it, too, was pretty new and in good shape. We gathered ‘round a bar in an open and empty chamber while Ezra, with a few back-of-the-bar Maine scruffies to add character, led us in a tour of the taps.

In order, we sampled: Mount Desert Ginger, Bar Harbor Real Ale (a repeat from the Lompoc), Bar Harbor Blueberry Wheat Ale (repeat from the morning tour), S.O.B. Ale [Special Old Bitter], Coal Porter, Sea Smoke Smoked Brandywine Ale (another repeat from the morning), and -- the one Ezra boasted the most proudly about -- Brother



Adam's Bragget Honey Ale, a high alcohol (10%), high priced brew that supposedly ages in the bottle. "Buy it and hide it for a year or two," Ezra advised.

The Tasting Room, through good planning, was the Souvenir and Gift Shop, as well. We were all encouraged to shop around and spend spend spend. I looked around, checking out the cool glasses and such, but bought nothing. I would have just broken it on the plane or something, and I always drink out of the bottle at home. If I ever get that kegerator, I might rue this missed opportunity, but for now, my money was better spent on some BBQ and a fresh cold pint of the newest brew – so new that it hadn't even nudged its way onto the tour yet -- Leaf Peeper Ale.



<p>Bar Harbor Real Ale</p>  <p>A good clean nut brown ale with a malty body and smooth finish due to a careful light hopping. Bar Harbor Real Ale is smooth enough for a domestic beer drinker to enjoy, yet still offers enough malt body for micro-brew aficionados. ABV 5.2%</p>	<p>Mount Desert Island Ginger</p>  <p>A refreshing wheat beer made with over 20 pounds of fresh ginger root. Island Ginger has a delicate wheat profile and a tangy ginger finish. ABV 5.2%</p>	<p>Bar Harbor Summer Ale</p>  <p>This ale is made with a light amount of grain but allowed to ferment to a distinct dryness, which results in a beer which is both light and refreshing. The finish is made with the German noble hop Tettnanger. ABV 5.0% Seasonal</p>
<p>Bar Harbor Blueberry Ale</p>  <p>America's original Blueberry Ale. A delicate fruit ale, made with Maine wild blueberries, which yield a subtle blueberry body and a slightly tart finish. ABV 5.2%</p>	<p>Special Old Bitter</p>  <p>For the hop enthusiast. We use pale, crystal, black and Munich malts and a veritable boatload of Northdown bittering hops for this ale. ABV 5.5% Seasonal</p>	<p>Macfoochie's Scottish Ale</p>  <p>This slow fermented high gravity beer is made in the fall with peat smoked malt. This strong ale is then finished with heather instead of hops to retain the distinctive sweetness inherent in the authentic style. ABV 7.0% Seasonal</p>
<p>Coal Porter</p>  <p>Coal Porter is a robust ale made with chocolate malt, yielding a distinctive roasted flavor. This beer was voted one of America's top 20 beers in a Parade Magazine survey. ABV 5.5%</p>	<p>Brother Adams Bragget Honey</p>  <p>This Welsh style barley wine is made with over 2,000 pounds of Maine wild flower honey, then aged for nearly a year. The result is a strong yet sweet brew which is a perfect finish to a fine meal. ABV 10% Seasonal</p>	<p>Old Soaker Root Beer</p>  <p>A Bar Harbor favorite for years, this soft drink is made without corn syrup, caffeine, or artificial flavors. Its old fashioned recipe yields a creamy head and full flavor. ABV 0%</p>
		<p>Bar Harbor Blueberry Soda</p>  <p>Made with real fruit juice, this soft drink offers the delicate flavors of wild blueberry with a frothy head. There are no artificial colors or flavors in this Maine made soda. ABV 0%</p>

Jill was right on all counts: excellent beer, great BBQ, long lonely road. I assume Ezra was her boyfriend; he seemed like the only one in her age range. He was a cool dude. I hope he enjoys that divine cleavage.

There was still some summer sun left, and a National Park just down the road, so I wheeled back to MDI to catch some opposite-sun-angle coastal views and mountaintop sunset rays. Like so:



Otter Cove, filled.

Sand Beach, lit up →



Sunset from the west side of Cadillac Mountain



Perfect ending to a very full day, yes? Ha! Not so fast, barley-breath! There were a couple of comfy looking watering holes back in Bar Harbor that were just crying for a visit, and I can't resist a crying bar.