

The mother of all beer

By  Eugene Yiga

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Motherland Brewers is serving up a selection of unique craft beers for the Cape Town crowd. Eugene Yiga spoke to owner Alistair Kernick to find out more.

Where did your love for craft beer begin?

In Cape Town. I was exploring the idea of opening a craft beer bar so I needed to do a lot of research trying every craft beer I could get my hands on. The more I drank it, the more I liked it.



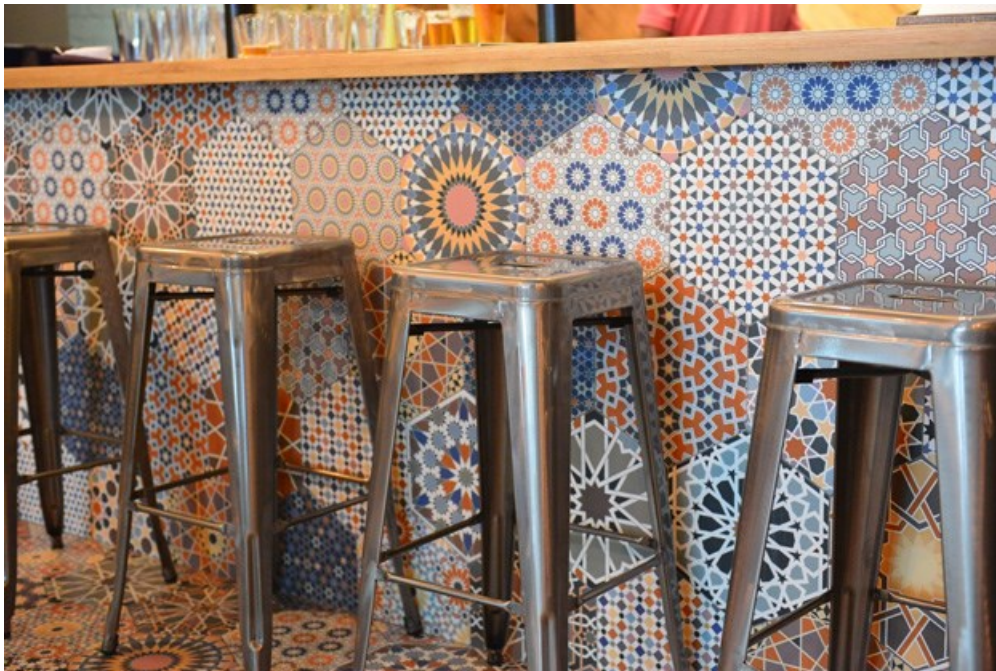
What was the inspiration for the restaurant?

I opened the Cape Town Motherland Coffee store in early 2013. I had a large floor size – almost twice what we needed – so I was looking to do some other product offering to use our space more efficiently. I played around with other ideas but I liked the beer bar concept.



How do you select your beers?

Through a lot of testing. I give a lot of thought to having a well-balanced mix of high quality beers on the taps. Unlike coffee, where if you have a good coffee most people agree that it's good, beer is a lot more polarising and what one person likes the next may not. So I try to have an option for most, though the emphasis is finding good beer that's not well-known. Our taps all rotate so what you have one week will change somewhat to the next.



How's it been received so far?

We have great feedback on the beers, the interior design, and the food, especially the chargrilled fish taco, the cheeseburger, the Vietnamese hotdog, and our salted caramel beer float. We are still new so our business is steadily growing.



Why do you think Cape Town has gone crazy over craft beer?

Beer can be a convenient way to get drunk or it can be an amazing journey through taste. I think Cape Town decided to choose the latter. There are so many different types of amazing beer which are still to be discovered. I feel we are going to see many more microbreweries offering more options in the near future.

What are some of the current trends in craft beer?

Big in-your-face beers are becoming more popular. In the past, beer was mainly lager and one-sided. Now the trend is toward interesting, unusual, and flavourful ale options: things like coffee stouts using actual coffee beans, ales which taste like mangos or granadillas, or Indian Pale Ales that are 12% alcohol by volume.



What do you have planned for Motherland Brewers?

We're going to do evenings with brewers and winemakers where they will do tastings and talks. We'll probably tie the tastings in with Tuning the Vine #InnerCityWineRoute and First Thursdays. We're also looking at evenings where we'll do

unusual pairings, e.g. beer and ice cream.

Motherland Brewers is at the Mandela Rhodes Building (corner of Wale Street and Georges Mall) in Cape Town. Hours of operation are Monday to Friday from 12pm to 10pm and Saturday from 12pm to 8pm. Call 021 422 0960 or www.facebook.com/motherlandbrewers.

ABOUT EUGENE YIGA

Eugene graduated from the University of Cape Town with distinctions in financial accounting and classical piano. He then spent over two-and-a-half years working in branding and communications at two of South Africa's top market research companies. Eugene also spent over three-and-a-half years at an eLearning start-up, all while building his business as an award-winning writer. Visit www.eugeneyiga.com, follow @eugeneyiga on Twitter, or email hello@eugeneyiga.com to say, um, hello.

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