

Night Owl coffee stout

Businesses collaborate to support
Olds College scholarship ▶ DON TSE

ALTHOUGH JEFF ORR and Graham Sherman of Tool Shed Brewing have chosen beer as their profession, they are at least equally passionate about coffee. For this reason, they have become great friends with Phil Robertson and Sebastian Sztabyb, better known as the duo behind Phil & Sebastian Coffee Roasters, who are also brewers, though they make Americanos and lattes rather than ales and lagers.

While Robertson and Sztabyb have thought about lending their coffee expertise to beer brewers before, it took Tool Shed, with their knowledge and appreciation of the finer aspects of coffee, to finally convince them to allow the P&S name to be associated with a beer. "We didn't want to just brew a beer that had generic coffee flavour in it," says Sherman. "In our coffee beer, we wanted you to be able to taste the distinct flavours of the specific type of coffee used in the beer. That was important for P&S."

Most other coffee beers are made with coffee dumped into the mash tun or fermenter, neither of which are hot enough for proper coffee extraction, or into the brew kettle, which is too hot. To ensure proper treatment of the coffee, Sherman developed a new process for brewing the coffee as part of the beer-brewing process.

Having satisfied P&S of their coffee-making skill, Orr and Sherman worked with the business to hammer out the details of the collaboration. "We chose a more esoteric coffee with flavours that would complement, but not be overshadowed by, a stout beer," says Jeff McCord, head roaster for P&S. "We chose Kenyan Kabingara coffee because it has intense currant and caramel flavours and a creamy mouthfeel."

Since Tool Shed is currently in the process of building its own brewery, it turned to Big Rock Brewery to supply the brewing equipment. "Graham, Jeff and I run in the same circles," says Big Rock brewmaster Paul Gautreau. "We've been talking about a collaboration brew for a while and when the opportunity to work with Phil & Sebastian popped up, we jumped at the opportunity."

So, one fine March morning, brewers from Tool Shed and Big Rock, together with student brewers from Olds College's Brewmaster & Brewery Operations Management program, gathered to create Night Owl, a stout beer made with Kenyan Kabingara coffee. All of the ingredients of the beer, including the coffee, were donated, and all of the proceeds from the sale of Night Owl will be used to establish a scholarship at the Olds College program, which is the only one of its kind in Western Canada.

Night Owl debuts on Tuesday, April 22 at Phil & Sebastian's newest location (2207 4 St. S.W.) and will otherwise only be available on draft at the Calgary International Beer Festival (May 2 and 3 at BMO Centre) and the Edmonton Craft Beer Festival (June 6 and 7, Expo Centre). This will be your only chance to try coffee beer made by coffee aficionados. ▶▶

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BOOZE