

New brewery rises out of the ashes of Brew Brothers

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"LAST BEST WEST" was the slogan used to advertise the Canadian west to easterners and immigrants in the early 20th century. The phrase represents new frontiers and western life.

Use of the phrase by Calgary's newest brewery, Last Best Brewing and Distilling, is indicative of a desire on its part to break some new ground. While Last Best is the new Calgary operation of Bear Hill Brewing, with existing operations in Jasper, Banff and Fort McMurray, Bear Hill promises that Last Best will be different.

"We want our beers to resonate with Calgarians," says Socrates Korogonas, owner of Last Best. "There are centres around the world with beer styles associated with them — pilsner from the Czech Republic, or pale ale from Burton-on-Trent, for example. Calgary doesn't have a beer like that yet and we want to brew it."

Last Best has acquired the brewing equipment and space formerly occupied by Brew Brothers Brewing Company, Design District Urban Tavern and Amsterdam Rhino. A brewpub model will occupy the space on 11th Avenue S.W. in the fall, but beers brewed at the facility are already available on draft, with canned product expected to hit the shelves later. A still has also been ordered, with plans to begin whisky production later this year.

Four Last Best beers are currently available and the brewery is eager to receive feedback from Calgary beer fans. Last Best will receive comments via Twitter (@lastbestbrew) and tweak recipes in an effort to fulfil its goal of creating a uniquely local beer. Visit Calgary bars like National, Beer Revolution and Midtown Kitchen to taste the first brews.

• **Show Pony Pale Ale** — The very first beer brewed at Last Best was this pale ale. It has a firm maltiness and yet there is also a very nice hop flavour provided by a combination of Galaxy and Cascade hops. The Galaxy hops provide notes of peach while the Cascade hops provide grapefruit and pine flavours.

• **Last Best IPA** — IPA is the backbone of the craft beer movement. You can hardly call yourself a craft brewer without one. Last Best IPA has an intoxicating bouquet of tropical fruits, courtesy of the liberal use of Mosaic, Amarillo and Chinook hops. Look for notes of pineapple and spruce with a touch of wood.

• **There Will Be Porter** — While the first two beers are all about the hops, the next two are all about the malt. There Will Be Porter is black and features nice notes of chocolate. The beer is 5.5 per cent and the alcohol gives the beer a slight sweetness, but hop bitterness and a touch of smoke help keep things in balance.

• **Dirty Bird Black Lager** — Don't be fooled by the almost-black colour of this beer. Dirty Bird is a black lager, also known as a "schwarzbier," and has a light body. Despite this, it has a lot of flavour, including a gentle roastiness, but is dry and, at 4.5 per cent, highly quaffable. ▶▶

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— Socrates Korogonas, Last Best Brewing

