

# Good Brews

*Organic beer goes down a treat*

**T**HE RANGE OF ORGANIC products available to the public grows wider every year and now even includes that most popular of beverages – beer. The biggest market is in the US and in June some 75 organic ales and lagers were showcased at the North American Organic Brewers Festival in Portland, Oregon, the world's largest gathering of its kind.

Most operators tend to run small businesses serving a small geographical area but public demand for these products is growing rapidly and now even giant global brewers like Anheuser-Busch and Carlsberg are producing organic beers of their own.

In Hong Kong, the market is still at an early stage, but several organic beers are now available at PARKnSHOP International stores, TASTE and GREAT. Most interest comes from expatriate customers but as these beers become more popular, PARKnSHOP will look to source additional brands.

According to Produce Green Foundation, an environmental group which has set up the first organic farm in Hong Kong, this is another sign that Hong Kong people are becoming much more aware about green lifestyles.

"Like other organic products, organic beer is a step in the right direction. It's good for people's health and it's good for the planet. It's a welcome development," says founding chairman Simon S C Chau. "Total sales of organic products in Hong

Kong are doubling every few months. It's very encouraging."

The big question on the tip of everyone's tongue is, of course, does organic beer taste better? Brewers say that organic hops typically offer a better and stronger aroma and that organic malts and hops have no chemical residues to interfere with the fermentation process.

But let the last word go to some people who should know what they are talking about, the team at the authoritative website [www.BeerExpert.co.uk](http://www.BeerExpert.co.uk), who have this to say on the subject: "The demand for organic beer and lager has prompted a real interest amongst beer lovers about the way that their beers are made and how the ingredients are grown.

"Being in its relative infancy, organic beer brewing is limited in variety, but what it lacks in range it makes up for in consistent high standards. As there is currently no big money to earn in organic beer, its makers do it for the pure love of it. This dedication and love shows up in the final product."

Cheers!

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