

# D | LIFE & FOOD

RECIPES

## New cooking buzz

Beer is a popular ingredient in area restaurants. You can cook with it at home, too.

By Susan Dalzell  
Contributing Writer

Whether it's the mini explosion of local breweries opening or the increasing number of beer-related food items on restaurant menus, it's becoming clear that folks in the Miami Valley are getting serious about their beer.

While wine is certainly not going anywhere, beer is asserting itself more and more as the alcohol of choice for area chefs. We checked in with a few area restaurants to see how they are using beer in their menus and to glean a few tips for amateur cooks.

"The nice thing I find with beer is the wide range of what you can do with it," said Chef John Hudson of MoJos Bar and Grille in Troy. "Wines are so delicate. Beer is kind of in your face."

Hudson uses beer in everything from the obvious — beer cheese soup — to the not so obvious — green beans. Mojo's beer battered green beans are made using Bud Light. "I wanted a beer with a light taste. You don't want a really heavy beer flavor that could overpower the beans," he said.

But, for the beer cheese soup, something a bit stronger is required. "We use an IPA of around 50 or 60 IBUs because you want a good strong flavor," he said. "It's really to get that crisp, hoppy flavor."

pork chops, it's another story. "When we are grilling our beer-brined pork chops, we brine it in New Holland The Poet Oatmeal Stout," Shipp said. Patience is key. "We mix and marinate for a minimum of six hours. That way the flavor of the beer really comes through. If you cook it instantly, it won't have that flavor."

He takes even more time with a bourbon salmon made from Kentucky Bourbon Barrel Ale: "We do that for 24 hours." To amp the flavor up even more, Shipp makes a glaze from the ale, which is added to the fish before it gets served.

Shipp loves cooking with beer and is looking to develop some new recipes, possibly using some of the Warped Wing Brewing Co. beers Chappy's has on tap. "I'm going to try and get some more creations using beer on our menu soon and see what we can do with these local brews," he said. "It's a great chance to showcase local beer."

That's a trend Lucky's Taproom and Eatery in the Oregon District is also tapping into with its recently revamped menu. "We use a lot of beer in our recipes," said Executive Chef Jimmy Brooks.

The new menu includes ale-soaked chips, made with Rivertown's Little Sip IPA, and beer battered chicken tenders and fish and chips made with the draft beer of your choice.



MoJos Bar and Grille in Troy has several food items on its menu that are made with beer, including (bottom to top) Beer Cheese Soup, Loaded Beer Cheese Fries and Beer Battered Green Beans. JIM WITMER

PHOTOS / STAFF



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As for which IPA, that depends. MoJos keeps its bar well-stocked with local brews. "Usually, we work with whatever's on tap. We use a lot of beer from Toxic Brew Co.," he said.

Dane Shipp, kitchen manager for Chappy's Tap Room and Grille in Moraine, also saves his nicer beers for nonfried dishes. For his restaurant's biggest seller, beer-battered chicken tenders, he uses Pabst Blue Ribbon.

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As a guideline for cooks at home, Brooks suggests using IPA with chicken or pork. "It gives it a more citrus flavor to it. The hops come out and you have a lighter, more summery flavor," he said. For darker meats, use darker beers: "They are more robust and help lend flavors that are deeper and richer."

Even desserts can use a little

**Beer continued on D2**



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PHOTOS / STAFF



MoJos Bar and Grille Chef John Hudson uses different types of beer — including local brews — in his cooking. "The nice thing I find with beer is the wide range of what you can do with it," he says.

## 'Wines are so delicate. Beer is kind of in your face.'

**John Hudson**

Chef at MoJos Bar and Grille in Troy

## Beer

continued from D1

beer. "The mousse parfait we introduced in our new menu uses 10 Ton Oatmeal Stout from Warped Wing," he said. Stouts are great for baking. "A lot of stouts are infused with coffee, so it's a little sweet but also a little bitter, which gives the cake a nice complexity."

At Blind Bob's in Dayton, you can start your day with beer. "Our French toast has beer in it," said Chef Devon Rousculp. "We use a wheat beer, Goose Island 312, along with Cointreau in the batter." The bread gets dipped in orange juice before it's dipped

in the beer and booze batter.

Blind Bob's also offers diners the options of beer battered pickles or pineapples. "We like to use a brown ale, typically Mount Carmel Nut Brown out of Cincy," he said.

One last piece of advice: If you are trying this at home, Hudson of Mojo's suggests refraining from serving the beer you've just cooked with. "I don't tend to cook with the beer I'm pairing it with," Hudson said. "In my opinion, if you add the beer to the food you are kind of cheating." Instead, look for complimentary flavors.

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Here are a few recipes from our chef's to try at home:

### BLIND BOB'S BEER BATTER

**1 can of beer**  
**2-3 tablespoons of lemon juice**  
**2 tablespoons of salt**  
**Flour until right consistency.**

### CHAPPY'S BEER BRINE CHOPS

Does 20 to 40 pork chops. (Cut recipe in half if making for just your family.)  
**6 cups of New Holland The Poet Oatmeal Stout**  
**6 cups of water**  
**20 cloves of crushed garlic**  
**9 tablespoons of brown sugar**  
**6 tablespoons of kosher salt**  
**3 tablespoons of cracked black pepper**  
**1/2 jar of molasses**  
 Mix and marinate for a minimum of six hours.  
 Grill on a charcoal grill

9-10 minutes for medium to well or closer to 17-18 minutes for well done. Use medium heat: Don't place meat on the hot spot of the grill. Flip it four times to make diamond marks.

### LUCKY'S BEER CHEESE

**22 ounces shredded and mixed cheese**  
**4 cloves of garlic, sliced**  
**1/2 teaspoon ground mustard**  
**1 teaspoon of hot sauce**  
**12 ounces Ermal's Cream Ale**

Place garlic in food processor and puree to a fine mince. Add cheese, hot sauce, and mustard powder and blend to a grainy consistency.

While cheese mixture is blending, slowly pour in the beer.

Blend until smooth.

Place in a 1/6 pan, cover, label and date.