How Aeronaut Brewing Plans to Change Craft Beer Forever

BY AIVI NGUYEN • APRIL 11, 2014

Ask any modern day craft brewer and he or she will tell you that true craft brewing involves using fresh locally sourced ingredients. In fact, craft brewers are among the strongest proponents of the farm-to-table movement, emphasizing the importance of supporting community farms while forgoing ingredients mass-produced in far off lands.

It is not just using local ingredients to create the beer, though. The trend among craft breweries is to incorporate as much of the community flavor as possible into how you experience the beer. This is where the taproom comes in. All over New England, taprooms are thriving. A taproom is essentially a bar that is run by the brewery where you can drink all the beers offered by the brewery, as opposed to going to a regular bar where the brewery may have only one beer featured on tap.

Some taprooms take the beer experience to a whole new level. Take Aeronaut Brewing in Somerville, Massachusetts for example. Aeronaut is run out of a huge 12,000 square-foot warehouse, the former Ames Safety Envelope Company. However, Aeronaut's brewing operation only takes up a portion of that space. The rest of the space, called the "Food Hub," is subleased to local start-up companies that share Aeronaut's mission of cultivating relationships with local farms and growers. Currently, Aeronaut shares the space with an in-house chocolatier, a coffee roaster and a farm-to-table delivery service. Aeronaut has plans to construct an urban greenhouse and a 20-seat tasting restaurant. Aeronaut has successfully created a mini-community, an ecosystem, where you do not just enjoy the beer, but you appreciate where the beer comes from.

While this type of taproom is innovative and progressive, if you are considering pursuing a similar shared-space model, consult with your legal counsel. There are a number of legal issues that should be carefully worked out beforehand, things like: Is the space zoned for the activities you want to conduct? What are the contract terms you should include in each separate leasing agreement? Who is liable for any injury that may occur at the premises? As long as you have all the legal issues ironed out, your taproom can succeed like Aeronaut's.

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B&D's Craft Brewery group has decades of experience in all issues that a burgeoning taproom can and will face.

Read more about Aeronaut Brewery's plans for their taproom in the Boston Magazine article "How Aeronaut Brewery Plans to Change Craft Beer Forever."

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