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The United States of Beer: A Freewheeling History of the All-American Drink

Dane Huckelbridge

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Dane Huckelbridge : The United States of Beer: A Freewheeling History of the All-American Drink before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The United States of Beer: A Freewheeling History of the All-American Drink:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A good tale of beer in AmericaBy Steven PetersonThis is an enjoyable book. It is sprightly, well written, and the author does not take the subject too seriously. The book is organized around different regions of the country and their predilections and contributions to the evolution of beer. Among regions considered: New England, New York and the Mod-Atlantic, the South, the Midwest, the West, and--finally--the West Coast. Along the way, we get a history of beer, from early origins thousands of years ago. It is fascinating to see the different substances that were used to make beer.Some things that stand out: The story of Boston Beer Company (producer of Sam Adams as a counterweight to the macrobreweries with their bland product; the story of Anchor Steam in San Francisco and why normal cooling techniques were not used; the Midwest and the dominance of German brewers and their companies--Miller, Busch, Pabst, and Schlitz. And why their beers were so generic--even more so after the end of Prohibition; the decline in competition among breweries in the 20th century--and the increase in competition with microbreweries and more interesting and tasty beers.Anyhow, an easy and enjoyable read. . . .2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great summer read/Gift for any beer loverBy Bryan WolffI took this book for a week-long vacation by the lake, and it was the perfect read (with a cold one in hand.)The author did his homework (admittedly he's a lucky guy), and really brought to life a number of different beers, brewers, and brewing techniques, all steeped in the chronological history of America's founding and western advance. It made me less ashamed (proud) of our macro-brews, and gave me an understanding and appreciation of some of the stuff I've been recently been drinking (last night I ordered an Abita Purple Haze draft, for example, knowing its importance to brewers in the South.)The prose is whimsical and moves along quickly, and I'd highly recommend this to anyone with a modicum of interest in American history and/or beer.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A great history of our nation's favorite beverage.By patricktrackA thoroughly enjoyable read, best enjoyed over a cold one, or two. Packed with history in a digestible style that quenched my thirst for background on our nation's most guzzled beverage. Would highly recommend for both history buffs and beer aficionados.Ordered a second copy for my dad for Fathers Day.Cheers!

From the author of *Bourbon, the definitive history* (Sacramento Bee), comes the rollicking and revealing story of beer in America, in the spirit of *Salt or Cod*. In *The United States of Beer*, Dane Huckelbridge, the author of *Bourbon: A History of the American Spirit*; a Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance bestseller; charts the surprisingly fascinating history of Americans' relationship with their most popular alcoholic beverage. Huckelbridge shows how beer has evolved along with the country; from a local and regional product (once upon a time every American city has its own brewery and iconic beer brand) to the rise of global mega-brands like Budweiser and Miller that are synonymous with U.S. capitalism. We learn of George Washington's failed attempt to brew beer at Mount Vernon with molasses instead of barley, of the 19th century "Beer Barons" like Captain Frederick Pabst, Adolphus Busch, and Joseph Schlitz who revolutionized commercial brewing and built lucrative empires; and the American immigrant experience; and of the advances in brewing and bottling technology that allowed beer to flow in the saloons of the Wild West. Throughout, Huckelbridge draws connections between seemingly remote fragments of the American past, and shares his reports from the frontlines of today's craft-brewing revolution.

"An irreverent but informative jaunt through the history of America and beer." (Chicago Tribune) "must-read for all beer lovers." (Library Journal) "Huckelbridge shows how beer, the most popular alcoholic drink in America ... has been Americans' essential thirst-quencher throughout our history." (New York Post) "A relaxing, entertaining, and informative read." (Charlie Papazian, author of *The Complete Joy of Homebrewing*) From the Back Cover From the author of *the definitive history of bourbon* (Sacramento Bee) comes the epic true tale of how beer conquered America, from b.c. to Budweiser and beyond Equally irreverent and revealing, Dane Huckelbridge's masterful cultural history charts the wild, engrossing, and surprisingly complex story of our favorite alcoholic drink, showing how America has been under the influence of beer at almost every stage. From the earliest Native American corn brew (called chicha) to the waves of immigrants who brought with them their unique brewing traditions, to the seemingly infinite varieties of craft-brewed suds found on tap today, beer has claimed an outsized place in our culture that far transcends its few simple ingredients; water, barley, and hops. And yet despite its ubiquity; Americans consume some six billion gallons of beer each year; the story of beer in the USA is as diverse and fascinating as the country itself, overflowing with all the color and character of Americans' many peoples and regions. A brewery was among the first orders of business when the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, and George Washington tried (but mostly failed) to produce beer at Mount Vernon. Since 1776, America has operated under the principle of E Pluribus, Brewdog: out of many regional brews, one nation of beer drinkers. The first "macrobrew" revolution was in the Midwest, where an influx of German immigrants in the 1800s changed American brewing forever. Bavarian newcomers brought their now-universal lager to St. Louis, Milwaukee, and the rest of the heartland; Busch, Pabst, and Schlitz soon followed, establishing the first great beer empires and ushering in a golden age of brewing that would last into the

twentieth century. Then in 1920, Prohibition threatened the very existence of beer in America. Brewers were forced to diversify into a variety of odd products—among them malted milk, porcelain, and cement—in order to survive. When the spigot finally reopened in 1933, many breweries were tapped out. By the early 1980s, a country that once boasted more than a thousand breweries was down to a few dozen, with little to distinguish among them. But stirred by the American entrepreneurial spirit, a cadre of daring young trailblazers decided our options should not be limited to watery, flavorless macrobrews. The microbrew movement began on the West Coast, but quickly spread: today there are thousands of craft breweries, scattered across all fifty states. Drawing upon a wealth of little-known historical sources, explaining the scientific breakthroughs that have shaped beer's evolution, and mixing in more than a splash of dedicated on-the-ground research, *The United States of Beer* offers a raucous and enlightening toast to the all-American drink. About the Author Dane Huckelbridge studied history at Princeton University. His writing has appeared in *Tin House*, the *New Republic*, and *New Delta*.