

The New York Times

OFF THE MENU | FLORENCE FABRICANT

HEADLINER Brooklyn Cider House

Peter Yi, who founded PJ Wine in Inwood, has moved on to hard cider. He already makes five styles in the Hudson Valley (some from apples grown in his orchards). But now he is increasing his production, adding this spacious new cider house, bar and restaurant, with fermenting containers and aging barrels and tanks, in Bushwick, Brooklyn. Inspired by cider traditions in the Basque Country, he will tap some of the ciders being served directly from the barrels and tanks, as they do in Spain. The menu will have a Basque influence, with chorizo simmered in cider, an omelet with salted cod, Spanish cheeses and cured meats, and slabs of beef. "I want to make cider that will change people's assumption that wine goes best with food," he said. "Just like what happened to me." His partners include his sister, Susan Yi. The industrial space, warmed with plenty of wood, has three dining areas and communal tables. The ciders will also be sold for takeout. (Opens Thursday): 1100 Flushing Avenue (Varick Avenue), Bushwick, Brooklyn, 347-295-0308, brooklynciderhouse.com.



VICTOR J. BLUE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Brooklyn Cider House Is the Basque Cider America Needs



Photo: @ciderhouse

(Even if it's not yet what it wants.)

NEW FORWARD May 16, 2019

Though cider often gets lumped in with beer, thanks to the beverage's similar alcohol levels and penchant for being yellow and fizzy, [good cider](#) is actually far more like wine.

This idea isn't a matter of taste: It comes down to production. Both wine and cider are a fermented fruit juice: wine, grapes; cider, apples. With wine, however, consumers have come to appreciate things like varieties and appellation. Sadly, despite becoming a bit more common, you're far less likely to see indications like *Northern Spy* apples and *Finger Lakes, New York*, on a bottle of cider.

Part of what makes this lack of appreciation of cider's origins so frustrating is that, much like visiting a winery, visiting an artisan cidery — seeing the trees and terroir — can be a wonderfully authentic experience. One region where this is especially true is in Asturias, an epicenter for Basque-style "sidra." In this part of Spain, [cider has its own culture](#): Cider houses known as "sagarategiak" all serve very similar house-produced sidras with extremely similar food in very similar atmospheres — and yet, despite all these similarities, almost all of them are enjoyable in their own special way. (It's a bit like how red sauce Italian joint can be both identical yet individual.)

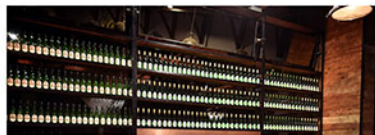
Even more incredible is that, outside of this one small region, sagarategi culture is found almost nowhere else in the world. Sure, some of the area's deliciously tart, acidic and funky cider brands are imported into the United States — [Petrege](#) and [Zapata](#) are two relatively easy to find and delicious standards — but as for places that serve an authentic Basque cider house meal with, more importantly, the "txistu," a way of serving cider directly from the barrel, you're unlikely to find it anywhere in America... except for Brooklyn, New York, of course.

[Brooklyn Cider House](#) — which opened late last year in the neighborhood of Bushwick after [years of planning](#) — does an amazing job of bringing the Basque cider house experience to the U.S. in a complete package. After you push through the large American-style bar and seating area at the entrance, you thankfully arrive at an [opening where you're past impersonal, drab-looking signs](#), you see the massive wooden barrels on your right, and if the doors happened to be pulled back, on your left, you'll see an equally impressive room full of large silver fermenting tanks. Often times, Basque cideries will serve cider from both barrel and tank, and Brooklyn Cider House is conveniently set up to do the same. The actual dining area is all natural wooden tables, just like Spain, and includes enough large communal tables to hammer home the group appeal of a traditional Basque cider house.



the menus or authenticity versus a more typical American menu, they eventually decided to stick with all the things that intrigued them about Basque cider houses to begin with.

"A traditional restaurant offering may have broader appeal, but we wanted our concept to have a razor sharp focus," she told me. "The simplicity of the menu and ingredients help to showcase the versatility of our raw ciders. This simplicity is consistent with our cider brand, which is about highlighting the quality of the raw ingredients, the pureness in flavor, and simple processes."



Using cider goes to wash down a drink, in Basque Country, the taste is more or less a free-for-all: Go grab your cider whenever you please. Brooklyn Cider House tries to control this process a bit more — in part, they say, because of more stringent U.S. liquor laws — with servers leading you to and from the barrels and a Cider House employee talking you through the actual taste process. For seasoned "taste-ers," this can be a bit frustrating, but Yi explained that very few people who come in are sagarategi veterans, so, in turn, all the hand-holding actually makes people feel more comfortable with the experience.

As for the cider itself, unfortunately, none of the three iterations I tried from the barrel offered the acetic, funky delights of the Basque cider on the other side of the Atlantic. This isn't to say the ciders were bad; all of them were drinkable, and importantly, weren't just your standard Strongbow style stuff. But they just weren't quite revelatory.

But again, Yi openly admitted that Brooklyn Cider House, as a cider brand, was still learning. They only started out four years ago. Meanwhile, the aforementioned Petrege cider house traces its history back to the 16th century.

"I don't doubt that we will come out with a batch of cider that more closely resembles some of my favorite Basque ciders, but I don't think that that is our goal," Yi explained. "We're more interested in discovering the flavors of our fruit and the nuances our native yeasts and microbes impart and working hard to bring out the best of what raw materials we have. I don't doubt that, with more experience, with more active yeasts and bacteria in our cidery, and with our farm in full production (in a few years) our ciders will improve. We're new to this game and eager to continue learning and gaining influences and inspiration in all walks of our lives. For now, I'm really excited and proud of what we've created so far, which is a really interesting raw, natural ciders, heavily influenced by the Spanish cider tradition."



So eddy enough, along those same lines, Brooklyn Cider House's shortcomings are just as much part of the reason I suggest you go as are its successes. Attempting to put a true Basque-style cider house in the urban landscape of Bushwick, Brooklyn, was a wild risk that took an insane amount of vision, dedication and heart. The founders behind it had to have known it might not work with an American audience, and after visiting, I'm still not sure if it will or not. But what worries me is that they'll choose to give up on what works — things like the delicious traditional menu — before the things that don't quite work, like the still maturing cider program, bring everything together. A couple years down the road, I can imagine Brooklyn Cider House being a Spanish bastion in the middle of New York City; and that might come down to whether they get the support they need.

So, my suggestion: Go to Brooklyn Cider House as soon as possible to take in this authentic experience because it's being done right, and also if you want to lend your support to their vision for the future, which could be even better.

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Photo: @ciderhouse



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It's apple season, which is as good a reason as any to drink some cider. (Credit: Jillian Jorgensen)



EAT AND DRINK

New York ciders: Blackduck, Awestruck and other local cideries to try

By Jillian Jorgensen jillian.jorgensen@amny.com October 26, 2016

The crunching leaves, the chilly wind, it can only mean one thing: Rosé season is over and cider season has arrived.

While this year's expanded Cider Week NYC is focusing on reminding people that cider is a year-round drink, there's something especially nice about enjoying it during the season when New Yorkers flock to pick-your-own orchards to take apples home fresh from the farm.

And many of the New York apples that don't wind up plucked by orchard-goers are used in locally made hard ciders. The vast majority of the more than 20 ciders available at Monday night's Cider Revival, hosted at the Bowery Hotel as part of Cider Week, were made in the state.

If you're looking for a new way to enjoy cider, consider pairing it with cheese as you would wine. These ciders -- many of which are dry and much less sweet than the uninitiated might assume -- were served alongside fondue and other snacks from Murray's Cheese Bar Monday night, and they stood up to the savoriness.

Here are eight ciders made in the state -- and even in the city -- worth seeking out this season.

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Brooklyn Cider House's Kinda Dry Hard Cider



"Ugly apples taste better" is the motto at Brooklyn Cider House, where cider is made with apples from an orchard in New Paltz. Brooklyn Cider House also has plans to open a production facility and tasting room in Brooklyn. The company has a cider for every palate: Kinda Dry, Bone Dry, Half Sour, and the most unusual, Still Bone Dry - which has no carbonation and no sugar. (Brooklyn Cider House, New Paltz, brooklynciderhouse.com) (Credit: Jillian Jorgensen)

The New York Times

One-Stop Shopping for the Hard-Cider Lover

A destination in Bardonia for pressing, tasting and sipping.

By David Shields

For his big idea about how to go to Heaven, the CEO of the new Bardonia center of hard cider, who will operate a restaurant, bar, tasting room and cidery in a formerly empty 1,000-square-foot warehouse in Bardonia, Bardonia.

Mr. V, who is now trying to speed the arrival of his Bardonia-style cider, a dry, still, slightly fizzy but sometimes stronger than is brewed for wine, has brewed like beer. Hard ciders have been catching fire in New York, especially in Bardonia on the Lower East Side, a district that also supports other local cider projects like South Hill, Bardonia and Bardonia, which has the most "single-use" ciders.

Mr. V already makes three hard ciders, ranging from soft to bone-dry and from

50 percent to 7 percent alcohol, as an effort to target the Bardonia Valley (the heaviest for an additional, still "under 50%") apple-based for the stressed market, and has a hard cider in the works. These Bardonia-style ciders — hard, not too sweet — are needed for a drink that is balanced and crisp, with the refreshing kick of a brewer that has produced for him.

Mr. V has not yet decided what the barrel will be to brew his ciders, as ingredients, barrels and barrels are made. The only that he has made, cidermakers are to also have profiles based on the fruit and style of Bardonia-style, organic, barrel, barrel, barrel and other traditional varieties have to follow. The apples of the Two-Line Orchard (in a barrel) are in-organic, as mentioned that barrel and so on.

Mr. V plans to press cider at the Bardonia, which also follows, it will be fermented, then aged, then aged, in wood barrel and stainless steel.



Some will be served from the barrel, as in a Bardonia-style barrel of superstrong, along with local like others, which is in the 100% drink, egg, sorbitol and liquid.

Others, both and used barrels. It will be made cider that will change people's perceptions that wine goes best with food. In fact, "that's the idea," he said.

Bardonia Cider House (199)
1000 Bardonia Street,
Bardonia, Bardonia, Bardonia,
Bar in Bardonia



food + drink • drink

How Do You Like Them Apples? A Guide to Brooklyn's Best Fruit-Based Beverages

BY SARAH ZORN

9.30.16, 10:56am

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Forget about that pumpkin-based beverage that must not be named: there are much better ways to get your seasonal drank on. Especially since—in case you've missed all those photos of your friends blissfully frolicking amidst the U-Pick orchards upstate—fall is actually all about apples, making it an especially opportune time to indulge in the following fruit-forward sips.

Apple Cider from Brooklyn Cider House: It will be a while still before Bushwick's very own Basque-style cider house, restaurant and tasting room officially opens its doors. But until then, you can procure a glass at local spots like Covenhoven or The Sampler, and a bottle at suppliers such as Prospect Heights Beer Works, Hops & Hocks, the Flatbush Food Co-op or Greenwood Grape & Still. Made from sustainably grown, crushed and fermented fruit sourced from the company's very own New Paltz orchard, varieties include the easy drinking "Kinda Dry," the traditional Bone Dry" (made with a higher concentration of heirloom and bitter cider apples, and aged for 10-12 months), the "Still Bone Dry" (possessing zero carbonation or sugar) and the "Half Sour," with hints of wildflowers, honey and pickled pear.

www.brooklynciderhouse.com



2016 GIFT GUIDE

The 2016 Holiday Gift Guide for New York City

Gifts for the food-obsessed New Yorker

by Emily Orr | Nov 18, 2016, 11:42am EST
Photos by Alex Ulirsch

TWEET SHARE PIN

The holiday season is just around the corner, and the daunting search for the perfect gift is underway. Luckily, Eater NY's holiday gift guide is here to help you shop for the food enthusiasts in your life. From a mighty Kickstarter-funded knife to sneakers inspired by a seafood restaurant, here are 2016's best New York-based gifts for food obsessives.

If this list doesn't get the job done, check out [Eater's national guide](#) for more ideas.

Beer Making Kit



The team at Brooklyn Brew Shop is on a mission to prove that making simple, crushable beer can be easy and fun. Easy-to-use brew kits are available in options like citrus wheat, chestnut brown ale (shown), a chocolate maple porter, and a citrusy, everyday IPA. Each kit comes with all the tools one will need to make a delicious, one-gallon batch of beer. Stovetop not included.

Brooklyn Brew Shop // \$40

Misen Knife



A Kickstarter-funded knife that stands up to the classic you've always coveted? **Yup.** The team at Misen (the name's derived from *mise en place*) has crafted a high quality chef's knife that sells for just \$65. The sleek carbon steel knife looks and feels good, and it'll slice through just about anything your recipe calls for. Bonus: The company plans to offer free lifetime sharpening, starting soon.

Misen // \$65

Empire Estate Riesling

Thomas Pastuszak's (The NoMad) riesling collaboration with Red Newt Cellars winemaker Kelby Russell is celebrating its second bottling this holiday season. The 2015 vintage of Empire Estate's dry Riesling is intensely acidic before making way for a salty finish that packs flavors of ginger, stone fruit, and lime. The more citrus-forward 2014 vintage is available, too.



Wine Library // \$14.95

Brooklyn Cider



Brooklyn Cider House's owner Peter Yi grows the apples for his ciders near New Paltz, under the belief that the uglier the apple, the better the cider. Yi's lineup includes Kinda Dry, a tart start with a dry finish; Hall Sour, aromatic, citrus fruit-forward, and food-friendly; Still Bone Dry, mega dry and high-acid; and Bone Dry, crisp and clean, a classic cider.

PJ Wine // \$10

The 11 Best Hard Cider Bars & Restaurants In NYC

BY [GEORGIA KRAL](#) IN [FOOD](#) ON OCT 5, 2016 1:36 PM

The local food movement has a new headliner: craft cider. The fermented, alcoholic beverage has become something of an "it" drink in New York City in the past few years. The reason is two-fold: producers are creating more complex ciders for an audience that craves it, and [production is way up](#) in New York state. It's a perfect storm of supply and demand.

New York boasts more cideries than other state in the country. From 2011 - 2015, according to data released by the organizers of [Cider Week NYC](#) (the Sixth Annual festival runs October 21-31), the number of producers jumped from five to 65, with production volume up 750%. And so, a beverage once relegated to those seeking sweet and carbonated drinks is now more seriously considered.

"What we're really seeing is people interested in the fine quality, well-made product," said Dan Pucci, Cider Director at Wassail on the Lower East Side. "With an interesting style, [there is] a lot of growth happening."

Experience the booming cider business yourself at one of these NYC restaurants and bars who take the fizzy stuff very seriously:

Coming soon: BROOKLYN CIDER HOUSE: Peter Yi was a wine buyer but became a cider producer because cider is "more food friendly than wine," he explained. And to prove, or at least attempt to prove, that rather bold statement, Yi is converting a warehouse in Bushwick into a temple devoted to cider. The Brooklyn Cider House is set to open in December.

"I always thought that there should be a place to showcase the cider, someplace to let people know how to drink the cider," he said. "Educating people is a very important part of the concept."

The goal of the cider house, Yi said, is to show people that cider should be evaluated on the same level as wine. The menu will include ciders from all over the world, and the food will be seasonal.

Yi's cidery in New Paltz, also called Brooklyn Cider House, makes cider that is "challenging" and meant to be paired with food.

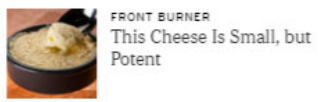
"It's important for people to understand how it should be enjoyed," he said. "I truly believe that cider pairs better with food than any other alcoholic beverage. Once you're there and you're having it under the right light, with the right food, you'll see."

1100 Flushing Ave., Bushwick; brooklynciderhouse.com

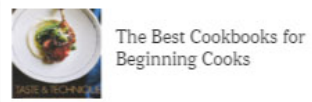
Georgia Kral covers (mostly) food and lifestyle topics and has been published in amNewYork, WNET's MetroFocus, WNYC, The New York Times and Brooklyn Based. She likes Chinese food, cats, straight-up cocktails and ankle boots paired with skinny jeans. Follow her on social @georgiakral.



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FOOD

Hard Ciders With New York Attitude

Front Burner

By FLORENCE FABRICANT OCT. 24, 2016



From left, Kinda Dry, Still Bone Dry and Half Sour ciders from Brooklyn Cider House. Pablo Enriquez for The New York Times

These rather elegant hard ciders, ideal to grace an autumn table or to be served year round, are the first releases from the [Brooklyn Cider House](#), a cider-making facility and restaurant in Bushwick, Brooklyn, which has pushed back its opening until early next year. The ciders are made in upstate New York from Northern Spy, Rhode Island Greening, Goldrush, Spitzenburg and Ellis Bitter apples grown near New Paltz by the owner Peter Yi, the founder of P J Wines in Inwood. The choices are: Kinda Dry, winey with a dry finish; Half Sour, pale, tart and food-friendly; Still Bone Dry, austere, with slight carbonation; and Bone Dry, also austere with more vigorous spritz: *Brooklyn Cider House ciders, in 750-milliliter bottles for around \$10, and 12-ounce bottles for about \$3 at stores in the Hudson Valley and New York City, with information at brooklynciderhouse.com.*

Hudson Valley

F & D SMALL BITES



Confused
about your
food and drink
pairings? Don't
be! Start with
styles you like.

Wines to Dine With

Local experts share their selections for worry-free wine options this Thanksgiving. **BY LAUREN NARU**

With so many tastes making their appearance on your Thanksgiving table, choosing the wine to complement your menu may seem like a challenge. But we'll let you in on a secret: There are no rules when it comes to picking the right one. "If you like it, buy it," says Tim Gonzales, co-director of the tasting room at Millbrook Vineyards and Winery. "Start with the styles of wine you like, and build from there."

You can, however, select wines that will enhance the feast. Here's what the experts are suggesting this November:

Begin with a sparkler. "I love a sparkling wine for Thanksgiving," says Bob Barrow, winemaker at Brotherhood Winery in Washingtonville. "It is always refreshing and palate cleansing, leaving you ready for more food." Debbie Gioquindo, CSW, aka "The Hudson Valley Wine Goddess," says your sparkler doesn't have to be expensive. She recommends a Spanish Cava, Prosecco or Grower Champagne.

Experts also recommend a rosé for the table. Though typically thought of as a summer wine, it's a versatile year-round option that complements the diverse flavors of a Thanksgiving meal, and is eye-appealing in the glass. But if you are looking for a red, Ben and Kimberly Peacock of Tousey Winery

in Germantown think Pinot Noir is your perfect pour. The medium-bodied fruit and bright acidity makes it easy to pair with many different dishes, while the earthiness brings out the best of the gravy, stuffing, and turkey.

"Another favorite is a sparkling Lambrusco from the Emilia-Romagna region in Italy," says Yi. "The red sparkling wine is medium-bodied, smooth, and fruity. It can stand up to most flavors with a smile, plus it's inexpensive and super easy to drink. Try producers such as Lini, Cleto Chiari or Cavicchioli."

And after dinner? Try a late harvest Riesling. "A dessert wine should be as sweet, or sweeter than dessert, so it isn't overpowered by the food," says Gonzales.

PUMPKIN PICKS

Area eateries making the most of our favorite fall flavor

While gnarled and funky pumpkins make festive centerpieces, our favorite thing to do with this fall fruit (that's right, they're fruit) is eat it! Here are our go-to picks when it comes to getting our seasonal flavor fix:

Fresh Cornwall, Cornwall

Just for fall, this farm-to-table eatery offers a vegetarian take on its famous Hudson Valley Harvest lunch panini. Instead of turkey, they'll pair roasted pumpkin with Brie, apple pear chutney, and cranberry mayonnaise — all pressed together on a ciabatta club. 255 Main St; 845.534.2558 www.freshcornwall.com

Cheesecake Heaven, Poughquag

Here you'll find a dreamy, creamy pumpkin dessert available both by the slice and whole at farmers' markets and fairs listed on the company's website calendar. Alternatively, pre-order a whole cake for your fall get-togethers. 12 Gardner Hollow Rd; 845.453.8973 www.cheesecakeheaven.com

The New York Restaurant, Catskill

Owner Natasha Witka goes all out for her favorite fall comfort food: Pumpkin pierogies with a savory whipped cream make the menu, while Sunday brunch features pumpkin pancakes with local cinnamon syrup and homemade apple butter. Barflies swear by the Pumpkin Pie-tini, a cocktail made with organic pumpkin liqueur and a dash of homemade orange simple syrup. 353 Main St; 518.943.5500 www.nyrestaurantcatskill.com

Zoe's Ice Cream Barn, Lagrangeville

This area newcomer pays tribute to the season with a luscious pumpkin-pecan concoction made with Hudson Valley Fresh milk and local patch picks. Have a scoop or two in a waffle cone while you're sitting on the big old tractor out front. 1181 Rt 55; 845.454.7108 www.zoesicecreambarn.com — MF

Pumped about having your own pumpkin feast? Head to hvmag.com/pumpedforpumpkin for a few of our favorite fall recipes from the Hudson Valley.



Serving Wine 101

Tips from "The Hudson Valley Wine Goddess," Debbie Gioquindo, CSW

- The worst thing you can do is run out. Plan one bottle per two drinkers. Extras can be sent home with the leftovers or enjoyed later during the holidays.
- Prep your pours appropriately. Remove white wine from the refrigerator about 15 minutes before dinner is served. You won't get the full effect of the taste and aroma of

the wine if it's too cold. Around the same time, pop the cork on the red wine so it breathes a little before you sit down to eat.

- Place the bottles on the table so guests can try what they want.
- Use smaller glasses for dessert wines, which are more concentrated and tend to be higher in alcohol content.



REVIEW Brooklyn Cider House

by [The Food Network](#)

8.0

There are a lot of different ways to spend three hours. You could visit the Statue of Liberty and get some of the best views of New York City from the crown or at the top of the Empire State Building. Or you could spend the first few pages of a classic novel, read a few chapters of a new one, and then read the rest.

You could also have dinner at Brooklyn Cider House. Most restaurants where a meal costs less than \$20 are not considered "fine dining" and are usually not the best places to go for a special occasion. But Brooklyn Cider House is the opposite: a fun place to spend a few hours drinking and eating with a group.



Brooklyn Cider House is a fun, trendy, and great restaurant in a converted warehouse in Brooklyn. The bar is huge, the industrial design is at its best, and the atmosphere is what you need. It's a place where you can enjoy a great meal and a great drink.

If you're only interested in the cider, Brooklyn Cider House is a great place to go. If you're only interested in the food, Brooklyn Cider House is a great place to go. If you're only interested in the atmosphere, Brooklyn Cider House is a great place to go.



This place has a big group, so you might expect the food to be an afterthought. But the food is so good, you'll forget that you're in a group. The drinks are all served really fast, and the service is so good, you'll forget that you're in a group. The food is so good, you'll forget that you're in a group.

Some of the best food at Brooklyn Cider House is the cider. The cider is so good, you'll forget that you're in a group. The food is so good, you'll forget that you're in a group. The cider is so good, you'll forget that you're in a group.

FOOD RUNDOWN

Grilled Vegetables And Chorizo

Like all the dishes here, this is a big portion. We like the charred vegetables, especially the mushrooms, but don't fully understand the chorizo or the top.



Tostita De Becan

This is a traditional Beigan dish that's basically a cold sandwich. If you usually like your eggs somewhere between medium and well, then this will probably be too hot for you.



Sorok

This is a perfectly good dish. They have each person get about nine ounces of this, some in bread, and it's so good, you'll forget that you're in a group. It's more like a sandwich, but not a sandwich.



Cheese Plate

We only had a problem eating our meal with a cheese plate, but this is our best favorite thing here. It's a big piece of cheese with some sauce, and it's so good, you'll forget that you're in a group.



Korean Chicken Wings

If you don't want to eat the three-hour grilling in the dining room, you can go to the bar and order a plate of it. It's so good, you'll forget that you're in a group.



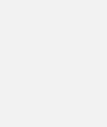
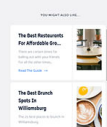
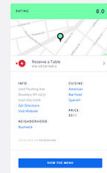
Burger

Another opportunity on the bar menu. The ribs are fantastic, but this is a solid burger with some country items on a very good brioche bun.



Apple Fritter

You may not be hungry after your three-hour meal, and you also may not be eager to consume anything more than apples. Try the apple fritter, which is a solid fritter with some country items on a very good brioche bun.





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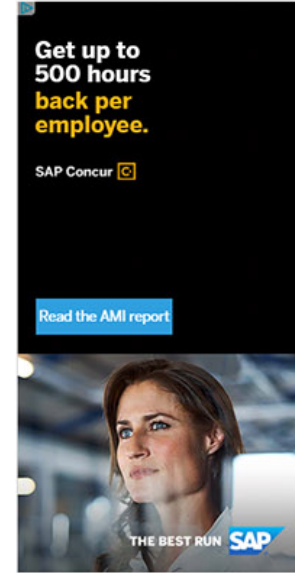
FOOD & DRINK

10 Great Hard Ciders You'll Definitely Want to Drink This Fall



Brooklyn Cider House: Raw/Courtesy of Brooklyn Cider House

8 / 10



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by Joshua Bernstein



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Brooklyn Cider House: Raw

Inspired by rustic, bracingly sharp Basque cider, Brooklyn Cider House's Raw undergoes fermentation with both wine and wild yeasts to develop an earthy, lemony acidity that would hack clean through a plate of rich cheese and charcuterie.

[brooklynciderhouse.com]

BACK TO TOP



Courtesy of Austin Eastcider

9 / 10

Austin Eastciders: Spiced Cider

The fall release is made by blending the Texans' base cider with a tea made with an infusion of seven spices, counting cloves, ginger, and cinnamon. Pair it with pumpkin pies and roaring bonfires.

[austineastciders.com]



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FALL PREVIEW

August 22–September 4, 2016

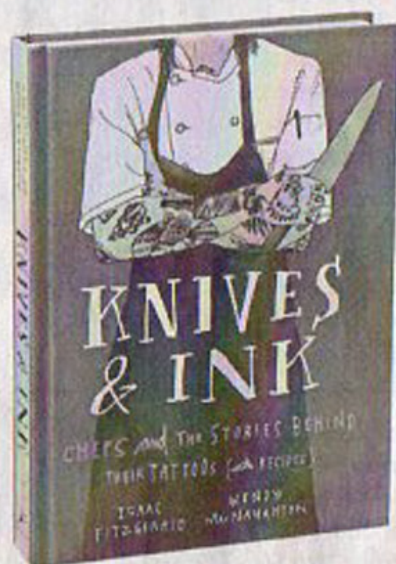


Brooklyn Cider House

Call it a midlife cider crisis: A passion for Basque ciders led Peter Yi to sell his acclaimed PJ wine shop, buy a New Paltz apple orchard, launch a cider line, and build this restaurant, bar, and cidery in a Bushwick warehouse. He'll pair his own bottlings with foods like cider-cooked chorizo, bacalao, and fried codfish head (*1100 Flushing Ave.*).

The New York Times

parts covered in elaborate tattoos. Chefs of André Soltner's generation did not covet them, but for younger cooks, the tattoo seems to have supplanted the toque as part of the uniform. They've been documented in a book with a sampling of ink adorning the bodies of dozens of chefs, male



and female, precisely drawn by Wendy MacNaughton. Pigs are very popular; John Prescott of Eden East in Austin, Tex., has one on his head. Some, like the bee behind the left ear of Angie Mar, the chef and an owner of the Beatrice Inn in Manhattan (re-

Hard Ciders With a New York Edge

▼ These rather elegant hard ciders, ideal to grace an autumn table or to be served year round, are the first releases from the Brooklyn Cider House, a cider-making facility and restaurant in Bushwick, Brooklyn, which has pushed back its opening until early next year. The ciders are made in upstate New York from Northern Spy, Rhode Island Greening, Goldrush, Spitzenburg and Ellis Bitter apples grown near New Paltz by the owner Peter Yi, the founder of P J Wines in Inwood. The choices are: Kinda Dry, winery with a dry finish; Half Sour, pale, tart and food-friendly; Still Bone Dry, austere, with slight carbonation; and Bone Dry, also austere with more vigorous spritz: *Brooklyn Cider House ciders, in 750-milliliter bottles for around \$10, and 12-ounce bottles for about \$3 at stores in the Hudson Valley and New York City, with information at brooklynciderhouse.com.*

BENJAMIN NORMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES (PICKLES, HALTER); EVAN SUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES (WINE); TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES (CHEESE); TINA FINEBERG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES (TRUFFLES); PATRICIA WALL/THE NEW YORK TIMES (BOOK); PABLO ENRIQUEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES (CIDER)



You are here: [Home](#) / [Agriculture](#) / [Featured](#) / [Food & Beverage](#) / [Hudson Valley](#) / [Latest News](#) / ['Ugly' New Paltz apples produce growing Brooklyn cider brand](#)

'Ugly' New Paltz apples produce growing Brooklyn cider brand

By Ryan Deffenbaugh

October 20, 2016 No Comment



Peter Yi displays a hard cider produced at his Brooklyn Cider House in New Paltz. Photo by Bob Rozycki.

After decades traveling Europe and the rest of the world tasting top-tier wines, Peter Yi came across a beverage so good he decided to change careers to produce his own back home in New York.

That beverage wasn't wine, it was Spanish hard cider, from the country's Basque region. The cider started an obsession for Yi that continued back home to New York, where he took his inspiration from the ciders of that region and France to launch Brooklyn Cider House.

In just two years, Yi has grown the company from rented space at a winery in the Finger Lakes to a 200-acre orchard and production facility in New Paltz and, soon, a production and tasting facility in Brooklyn.

Yi's previous work as a wine buyer sent him on the road to taste wines from the top 20 percent of producers in the world. Cider, he said, never interested him much in that time.

But then he tasted a Spanish cider he described as "bone dry." It was naturally made, no sugar or any other additives, and versatile enough to pair with everything from flaky fish to red meats. He decided he had to make his own.

"I don't know how the world is going to accept it," Yi said, "but I've tasted four or five thousand wines a year for 25 years and this just captured me."

In 2014, Yi rented space at Ravines Wine Cellar, a winery in Geneva on the west side of Seneca Lake in the Finger Lakes region upstate. With an eye toward where he wanted the cidery to ultimately end up, he started producing his cider under the name Brooklyn Cider House.

Yi then began searching for an orchard where he could grow apples and produce the cider, preferably close to Brooklyn. He landed at Twin Star Farms, a 200-acre commercial apple orchard about a 7-minute drive from Main Street in New Paltz. Yi closed on the property in June 2015, renaming it Twin Star Orchards.

He now produces 5,000 cases of Brooklyn Cider per year at the site from apples grown on the property, where he has planted an additional 8,000 heirloom apple trees.

Brooklyn Cider House offers a line of five ciders, ranging from "Kinda Dry" to "Bone Dry." Yi said what separates his ciders is that the flavor comes only from the apples. He doesn't add sugar, hops or any other fruits. That approach comes in part from his experience in the wine industry.

"You would never make a Burgundy or Pinot Noir and then add blackberries or hops or honey," Yi said. "But in the cider industry, people do that. But if you grow the best types of apples, apples that are bitter, tart and sweet and in season, all the flavor can come from the apples."

To produce Brooklyn Cider House cider, Yi and his staff of between 10 and 20 full- and part-time employees pick apples as soon as they are ripe, usually between September and early November. The apples are instantly pressed, fermented and then aged between six and 18 months, depending on the variety of cider.

The apples are "dry farmed," not irrigated, which makes them smaller but packed with more flavor, Yi said. That's where the company's slogan, "Ugly Apples Taste Better," painted on a red barn at the orchard facing Ohioville Road in New Paltz, comes from. While grocery stores are often more concerned with appearance and size, Brooklyn Cider House embraces even the ugliest and slightest of apples.

"We don't care about size; we don't care about appearance. Zero interest," Yi said. "We just want flavor."

That flavor comes from apples such as Northern Spy, Kingston Black and other traditional varieties. Of the site's 200 acres, 100 are dedicated to apples for cider production, the other 100 for the more traditional U-Pick table varieties.

The orchard offers U-Pick throughout the fall, and has a 3,000-square-foot storeroom that offers cider tastings, wine and nonalcoholic cider, along with other New York-made products. Yi also added a pavilion with an imported Italian woodfire brick oven for pizza and burgers.

While his product is currently sold in Brooklyn bars and liquor stores, as well as in Westchester and the Hudson Valley, Yi will add a physical presence behind the Brooklyn Cider House name later this fall when he launches a restaurant, tasting room and production facility in the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn.

Yi will truck apples down from the New Paltz orchard to 15,000-square-foot former warehouse, where it will be pressed and aged in the same process as at Twin Star Orchard.

"There isn't a cidery in Brooklyn right now, so I think we are going to have an advantage there, since for people in Brooklyn, local is huge," Yi said. The restaurants and tasting room has already drawn attention. It's been featured in The New York Times, New York magazine and Brooklyn magazine as a fall restaurant opening to look for.

Yi said the biggest difficulty with his type of cider is a lack of familiarity, both among potential customers and sommeliers and bartenders.

"Most people think of it as this sweet apple-flavored carbonated beverage," Yi said. "So to get them to taste our product, which is a completely different beverage, it is challenging."

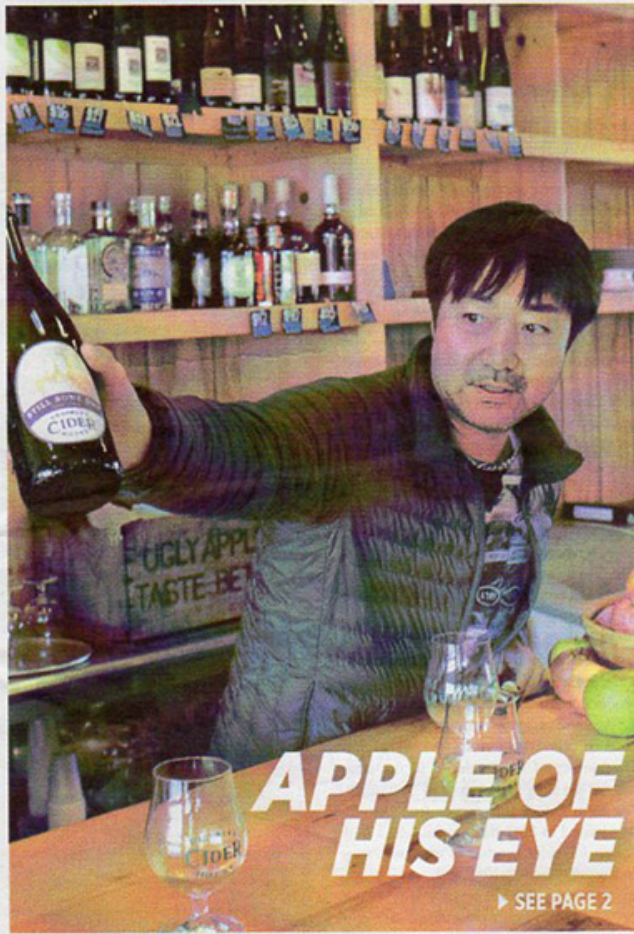
But as the industry grows and more producers make this style of cider, the misconception will fade, Yi said. And cider production in the state is definitely growing.

A press release from Gov. Andrew Cuomo's office this month announced that the number of farm ciders in the state had tripled since 2014, up to 24 from eight. The farm cidery title comes from legislation passed in 2013 that established a new license for cider producers who use crops exclusively grown in New York.

From Oct. 21 through Oct. 30, New York City will hold Cider Week, an annual event that promotes cider products at bars and events throughout the city. The Hudson Valley hosted a Cider Week of its own in June.

Yi said he is just hoping to spread knowledge of the style of cider he fell in love with, "one bottle at a time."

"I truly believe in this," he said. "This is not following any trend. For someone who was so in love with wine, I want to show the world the cider that inspired me to go into this business."



APPLE OF HIS EYE

▶ SEE PAGE 2

Peter Yi displays a hard cider produced at his Brooklyn Cider House in New Paltz. Photo by Bob Rozycki.



Apple orchard takes a hard turn

PETER YI EXPANDS HIS BROOKLYN CIDER BUSINESS FROM THE FINGER LAKES TO NEW PALTZ TO BROOKLYN

BY RYAN DEFFENBAUGH
 rdeffenbaugh@westfairinc.com

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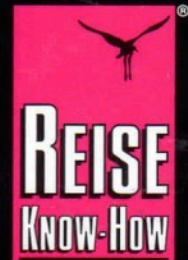
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