

## NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

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**DISH**

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### **To the Pint: Drinking Canada**

**What's the most Canadian Beer?**

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#### **Cannery Maple Stout**

*Cannery Brewing Company, Penticton, BC*  
*\$5.99 for 650 ml bottle*

A few weeks ago, at a Canada Day party, an acquaintance challenged me to name the quintessential Canadian beer—what beer would serve as a Canada Day accompaniment? It couldn't be just any

Canadian beer, nor could it be a beer you can get in any country in the world. Canada doesn't actually have its own homebred beer style. We have our own take on different beer styles, but all beer styles were born elsewhere and imported here.

The question got me thinking. Lots came to mind right away, but none quite worked. Molson Canadian is both too obvious and too corporate. Robert Simpson's Confederation Ale, or something from Upper Canada Brewing would work, but neither are available in Alberta. There is Tree's Thirsty Beaver, which has potential, but is done in by its obvious double entendre.

I was about to give up on the project when I stumbled across a new arrival from Penticton, BC's Cannery Brewing Company. This relatively young brewery has just added a Maple Stout to its regular lineup. Adding maple syrup to a beer seems like the quintessential Canadian brewing creation.

Many brewers have tried experimenting with maple in beer, mostly with lacklustre success in my experience. The beers either end up too sugary sweet or the maple quality disappears. Often, I feel, the beer behind the maple just isn't strong enough to create balance. However adding maple to a robust beer like stout has potential. So I



gave it a try.

It is a deep black beer that teases with an optical illusion of caramel highlights when held to the light. It offers a loose, mocha-coloured head. The maple becomes instantly obvious. The aroma has big maple notes, but not syrupy—more of a woody maple quality. The maple overpowers most everything else in the aroma, except for some light chocolaty sweetness. I detect no roast stout aromas.

The stout aspects come through in the flavour. This beer has a fascinating, intense interplay of maple and burnt dark-chocolate roast with a little charred oak. Light sweetness plays in the background. The maple stands up for itself against the roast. The finish leaves a noticeable, lingering burnt across the roof of the mouth.

This is a take-no-prisoners beer that finds the right mix between maple and roast flavours. However, it may be too focused on these qualities, as it is not as complex as I would like from a stout. If Cannery toned down the maple and roast just a touch it would allow other flavours, like chocolate, cherry and caramel, to come through and make a more well-rounded beer. All in all, I feel it is a worthy, impressive experiment with maple.

Stout may not be the ideal summer beer, but you can drink it and wave your little paper Canada flag in patriotic celebration, on Canada Day or any other day. Who will stop you? You will be doing the classic Canadian thing—drinking beer and reflecting on Canada.

Cannery Maple Stout is available in a few stores around town. The best way to find it is to go to [alberta-liquor-guide.com](http://alberta-liquor-guide.com) and use the online search feature. **V**

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