



Beer of the Month Club

This Month's Featured Brews

BEER
on the wall

Snowshoe Brewing Company, Arnold & Sonora, California

In June of 1994, longtime friends and business associates Jeff Yarnell and Al O'Brien began discussing the possibility of opening a brewery. Al's experience as owner of a local pizza parlor, and Jeff's long history in restaurant management, as owner of the Meadowmont Inn restaurant, proved to be the perfect background necessary for opening a brewpub.

Al and Jeff searched for many months trying to find the perfect location to make their dream a reality, but the answer was there the whole time...The Meadowmont! It was the perfect site, with easy access to the highway, plenty of space for a brewery, and a large dining area overlooking the golf course. In 1995, Snowshoe Brewing Company was founded, and their first brewpub/restaurant opened in Arnold, CA.

In 1997, they opened their second brewpub in the small historic mill town of Standard, just outside Sonora. The restaurant is located in an old lumber company office building. The building was designed by the same architect who designed Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco. High ceilings and big windows give the restaurant and pub an airy feel. If you visit, check out the large door of the storage area behind the bar. It's the original safe used during the Roaring '20s by the first inhabitants of the building!

Both restaurants feature diverse menus at affordable prices. They offer everything from "Nachos to Prime Rib". They have a wonderful burger and sandwich selection, and also have a vegetarian and low-fat menu. The Big Trees Burger is highly recommended! For those who like takeout, they also have Take-N-Bake pizza!

During the Spring, the restaurants are open from 11:30-8, and the brewpub is open 'til what they like to call "Whenever."

Brew master Mike Hastings has created award-winning beers that have ale lovers throughout Central California and the Sierras wanting more, and we agree!

The bottling and much of the beer is brewed in Arnold using a 15-barrel brew house, three 15-

barrel fermenters and three 30-barrel fermenters.

The Sonora location has its own 15-barrel system in which the beers sold at its restaurant are brewed. The Sonora site has an annual brewing capacity of 1,200 barrels (37,200 gallons). Some of their specialty beers include Apricot Wheat (our favorite), Double Mash Cutthroat Strong Ale, Oktoberfest, Midnight Moon Oatmeal Stout and Pitch Black Porter to name a few! On our last trip, a few of us enjoyed the Apricot Wheat a little too much!

They even brew a beer that is only sold in Yosemite National Park. Doesn't that make you want to come out to California?

And now, here are our featured beers, (the only 3 that Snowshoe bottles), for your drinking pleasure! We know you will find them as tasty as we do.

Snoweizen is an American style wheat beer made with 60% wheat malt. It is orange-gold in color with a small white foamy head. This is a very smooth beer with a slight citrus aftertaste, and is served at their brewpubs with a slice of lemon. We would recommend first trying it without the lemon and then adding a squirt to see which you prefer.

Thompson Pale Ale is an excellent pale ale that can be enjoyed by a very wide range of beer drinkers. It doesn't have the dry, bitter aftertaste associated with classic pale ale styles, but it has enough complexity to keep the most seasoned beer drinkers interested. This beer honors John "Snowshoe" Thompson, a mail carrier during the Gold Rush era, who wore homemade cross country skis, called "snowshoes" at that time.

Grizzly Brown Ale is brewed with five different malts giving it a rich roasted flavor and a smooth chocolate finish. This beer is the darkest available at the brewery, and is definitely the locals favorite. It is also one of the best Brown ales we have ever tasted. Every time we visit the brewery it seems the bar tenders are busier filling growlers than pouring pints. Grrrr!