

Freshness of beer impacts its taste

By Blair Anthony Robertson, Sacramento Bee

The folks at highly regarded Russian River Brewing stress one thing that may surprise you: freshness. It's practically a mantra for this famed Santa Rosa brewery.

They want you to enjoy their Pliny the Elder, a world-class double India Pale Ale, as soon as possible. It's not something to stock up on for the big barbecue in six months. It's definitely not something to collect and break out in a few years for a special occasion.

"Beer is a perishable product. The way we make our IPAs, they're not meant to age," said Russian River co-owner Natalie Cilurzo. "The fresher they are, the better they are."

The emphasis on due dates and spoilage isn't necessarily new, but not a lot of beer aficionados paid much attention to fading flavor profiles and staleness when it came to Budweiser and its "Born on" campaign.

The renewed emphasis on drinking sooner than later tends to highlight the quality-driven appeal of craft beer.

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