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Which States Had Most Craft Brewery Growth? Not The Ones You'd Expect



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You may never guess which states had the largest growth of craft breweries during the past four years. It's not likely candidates such as beer-producing giants California and Colorado.

A new study by Chicago-based [C+R Research](#) reveals that the largest brewery growth occurred in New Jersey, Kentucky, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Virginia and New Hampshire.

New Jersey and Kentucky experienced 43% growth in the number of breweries since 2015, followed by Oklahoma (39%), North Carolina (37%), Virginia (36%) and New Hampshire (33%). C+R Research calculated statistics in its study from data of the [Brewers Association](#) trade group.

“What surprised us most was which states have grown the most since 2015,” says Matt Zajechowski, a content strategist for Digital Third Coast which worked on the study with C+R Research. “When you think about which states have emerging craft beer scenes, you tend to think of states like Colorado, Oregon, Vermont and Illinois.”



Fireworks light up the sky during a Madness Days celebration last July at Melvin Brewing in Alpine,...
[+] MELVIN BREWING

Zajechowski says he has lived most of his life in Michigan — a state with hundreds of breweries — and Chicago, “home of the most breweries in the U.S.,” so he was “very surprised to see other areas of the country seeing even more growth than what I’ve experienced firsthand.”

C+R Research anoints Vermont “the craft beer capital of the United States,” because it has the most breweries per number of residents.

Vermont is home to 11.5 breweries per 100,000 residents at least 21 years of age, followed by Montana and Maine, each with 9.6 breweries. Some states with high per-capita numbers that may be surprising are Alaska, 6.8; Wyoming, 5.7; Idaho, 4.5, and New Mexico, 4.4.

There are more than 7,000 craft breweries in the U.S., and every state has at least one, according to Brewers Association data. Mississippi ranks last, C+R Research says, with 0.6 breweries per 100,000 residents. Other states with low numbers are Georgia and Alabama, each with 0.9; Oklahoma and

Louisiana, 1; Texas and New Jersey, 1.3; Utah, 1.5, and Kentucky, Arkansas, Maryland and South Carolina, 1.6.

The following percentages, compiled by C+R Research, show which states have had the largest growth in the number of craft breweries during the past four years. The second number after each state's percentage indicates the number of breweries per 100,000 residents at least 21 years old.

1. New Jersey 44%, 1.3
2. Kentucky 43%, 1.6
3. Oklahoma 39%, 1
4. North Carolina 37%, 3.4
5. Virginia 36%, 3
6. New Hampshire 33%, 5.6
7. Minnesota 31%, 3.9
8. Connecticut 31%, 2.2
9. Texas 31%, 1.3
10. Florida 30%, 1.5
11. Louisiana 30%, 1
12. Michigan 29%, 4.5
13. Massachusetts 29%, 2.5
14. West Virginia 29%, 1.7
15. Pennsylvania 28%, 2.9
16. Tennessee 28%, 1.7
17. North Dakota 27%, 2.2
18. Ohio 27%, 2.6
19. Illinois 26%, 2.1
20. South Carolina 26%, 1.6
21. Delaware 25%, 2.9
22. Maine 24%, 9.6
23. Maryland 24%, 1.6
24. New Mexico 23%, 4.4
25. Arizona 23%, 1.9

26. Arkansas 23%, 1.6
27. New York 22%, 2.2
28. Hawaii 22%, 1.7
29. California 21%, 2.6
30. Alabama 21%, 0.9
31. Indiana 21%, 2.8
32. Montana 20%, 9.6
33. Georgia 20%, 0.9
34. Mississippi 20%, 0.6
35. Missouri 19%, 2
36. Alaska 18%, 6.8
37. Kansas 18%, 1.7
38. Nevada 18%, 1.8
39. Iowa 18%, 3.3
40. Wisconsin 18%, 3.7
41. Nebraska 16%, 3.6
42. Rhode Island 16%, 2.1
43. Utah 15%, 1.5
44. Colorado 14%, 8.4
45. Washington 13%, 6.7
46. Vermont 11%, 11.5
47. South Dakota 10%, 2.6
48. Idaho 8%, 4.5
49. Oregon 7%, 8.5
50. Wyoming 3%, 5.7

"It's truly an exciting time to be a fan of craft beer in America," Zajechowski says. "We've never had so many good choices from local craft breweries. The Brewers Association recently reported that 85% of adults age 21 and over live within 10 miles of a brewery. Cheers to that!"

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