

Festive fermentation: A quick guide to some of the best local, holiday craft beers

By NEIL STREBIG

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A section of Virginia holiday beers available this season. (Provided by The Virginia Beer Company)

The holidays are a welcomed time for craft beer enthusiasts who are looking for stocking stuffers or an at-home happy hour. This year, beer aficionados will notice the return of a few seasonal staples along with limited runs and taproom-only seasonals from the region's craft breweries:

Virginia Beer Company, Williamsburg

Beers: Evil Santa

Evil Santa is back. In its sixth year, the spiced milk stout series returns with several variants, according to co-founder Robert Willey.

Fans can find a double chocolate espresso brewed with cacao nibs and espresso, a vanilla and latte, and a peppermint hot chocolate to go along with the traditional spiced milk stout.

On Black Friday every year, VBC releases Double Evil Santa, an 11.3% ABV imperial aged in bourbon barrels. This year, it developed a limited Double Evil Santa aged in apple brandy barrels. Willey said the brewery has released 11 Evil Santa variants since 2016.

Willey's team has really leaned into the seasonal over the years creating Evil Santa scented candles, ornaments, glassware and even an "Evil SantaCon" on Dec. 18.

Where to find: Local distributors; Virginia Beer Company, 401 Second St.; virginiabeerco.com