

DERBY - GREAT PLACE, GREAT BASE

Classification: Non Derby City Council document

Being ale-and-'earty at CAMRA's 2016 National Winter Ales Festival

Derby will be hosting CAMRA's 2016 National Winter Ales Festival from February 17 to 20.

This is the third consecutive CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival to be staged in Derby, since it moved from Manchester in 2014.

The 2016 Festival will once again be pulling the pints in one of Derby's iconic railway buildings - the world's oldest Roundhouse, which was built in 1839 and reopened in 2009. One of the most historically significant buildings in The Midlands, the Roundhouse has been returned to its former glory following a £48 million renovation.

Originally developed in 1839 by four rival rail companies, including North Midland Railway, for whom George Stephenson and his son Robert were engineers, the Grade II listed circular property, capable of hosting up to 2,500 real ale fans at any given time, lends itself perfectly to the annual celebration of real ales, lagers and ciders. A second stillage area - known as The Carriage Shop Theatre - meanwhile, will feature the Champion Winter Beer of Britain beers to be judged in a variety of categories.

A range of live bands will be added to the atmosphere over the four-day festival; and tutored beer tastings will also be available (<http://nwaf.org.uk/tutored-tastings>).

Derby itself has been dubbed a "Real Ale Capital" of Britain; and, as well as being able to sample the very best real ales from around the UK in the Roundhouse, visitors can take a gentle stroll, or a crawl, around the city's 120-plus real ale pubs.

While British pubs are currently said to be closing at the rate of around 29 per week, Derby appears to be at the forefront of a real ale revival - and can boast the largest number of real ales per head of population, several micro-breweries, two annual CAMRA Beer Festivals in 2016, Britain's first and only Beer King, and an accolade from *Lonely Planet* magazine, describing the city as the "best place to drink real ale in the world".

The Brunswick Inn (the first railwaymen's hostelry in the world) and Ye Olde Dolphin (dating back to 1530) are just two of the historic pubs in the city worth including on any real ale pub crawl of Derby. Elsewhere, The Exeter Arms (www.exeterarms.co.uk) - owned by former AntiPasti punk rock band member Martin Roper - is arguably the first pub to offer its guests a full "British Tapas" alongside its carefully kept rack of real ales. Roper also runs Derby's Silk Mill Ale & Cider House.

For further information, visit <http://www.visitderby.co.uk/whats-on/national-winter-ales-festival/>.

And, for accommodation in the city, as well as any current special offers, visit <http://www.visitderby.co.uk/stay/>.

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