

## FOOD

## CRAFT BREWERIES

## Little Cottage joins growing Avondale beer scene



**Bob Townsend**  
Beer Town

Little Cottage Brewery opened in Avondale Estates in mid-May, joining a growing beer scene that includes Wild Heaven and the Lost Druid, as well as beer-oriented spots such as the Beer Growler and My Parents' Basement.

Adding to the area's allure, earlier this year Avondale Estates was named the country's best small-town beer scene by USA Today readers. What's more, across Pine Street from Little Cottage, a new food hall, Olive & Pine, is scheduled to open early next year. And the Dale Ale Trail beer festival will return on Oct. 23.

Last week, I met up with brewer Jon Shari, who owns and operates Little Cottage with his business-minded wife, Aimee, and his daughter, Tori, whose sci-fi/Goth artwork is prominently displayed on the walls of the taproom.



Tori Shari (from left), Aimee Shari and Jon Shari are the family behind Little Cottage Brewery in Avondale Estates.

BOB TOWNSEND FOR THE AJC

The name of the brewery comes from the little cottage in Sandy Springs where Shari started off with a 7-gallon homebrew rig. Later on, with a bigger system, he became known for his barrel-aged beers, including a series of sought-after imperial stouts.

"I didn't do much with competitions," Shari said, "but there were people who kept asking for my beers, so I just kept brewing them and sending them out. And, of course, peo-

ple want barrel-aged stuff even more.

"I really enjoyed the darker beers, because of the different things you could do with them. You can change the taste and complexity just by tweaking a couple of things. To me, that was very interesting, so over the years I kept creating new recipes."

Like many homebrewers, Shari dreamed about opening a brewery one day, but decided to go all-in after Geor-

gia changed its laws to allow for on-premise sales. Still, debuting during a pandemic wasn't easy.

"I was losing my job, and it was finally time to make that step or do something else," Shari said. "My plan was to have a seven-barrel brewhouse, but I started looking at how I could cut costs, and I ended up with a 3 1/2-barrel system. It is little, and sometimes I wish it was bigger, but it got me to where I am now, so honestly I would do it again."

After researching other locations around metro Atlanta, Shari settled on a small storefront in Avondale Estates, mainly because the landlord, who also is building out Olive & Pine, was completing renovating the building and providing updated power and plumbing.

"The other thing I liked about Avondale is that it just feels like a small community, where everybody kind of knows everybody," Shari said. "That's something that doesn't always happen anymore."

Business over the past four months has been up and down, Shari noted. But with such a small brewery, he's hoping to be making beer most days to keep the taps flowing.

"It's all been interesting to watch," he said. "But I think the

fall is going to be even better, after talking with some other breweries, and what kinds of things they've seen seasonally."

Right now, Little Cottage is open Thursdays through Sundays. Most days, there's a pop-up on the parking lot patio, with food vendors such as Smoke & Honey BBQ and Mas-cogo Tacos.

The day I visited, there were eight beers on tap. Beyond the Pale is a very fresh, citrusy pale ale with Centennial and Citra hops. Balthazar is a bright unfiltered Kölsch brewed with Pilsner malt and Hallertau Mittel-früh hops. LCMPB is a malty ESB that was brewed for My Parents' Basement's Sixth Anniversary. Two Little Mice is a creamy, coffee-infused, nitro milk stout that's surprisingly low in alcohol, at just 3.3%.

"I try to have something for everyone, so I do some New England or hazy IPAs, and we also try to provide a kettle sour option with fruit," Shari said. "Then I try to do two or three more classic or traditional styles. The breweries that have gone before us that I admire — like Sierra Nevada with Pale Ale, or 3 Floys with Zombie Dust — those guys are all inspirations in what I do now and try to achieve."

## QUICK FIX

## Veggie dish perfect fall dinner

By **Linda Gassenheimer**  
Tribune News Service

Colorful vegetables cook together on a sheet pan for this easy vegetarian dinner. Roasting intensifies the flavor. You can add any other vegetables to the

pan. Use the ones in the recipe as a blueprint for the amounts.

**Helpful hints**

- Look for feta cheese in one block instead of crumbled.
- If your dried oregano is over 6 months old or gray-looking, it's

time to buy a new one.

**Countdown**

- Heat oven to 450 degrees.
- Prepare ingredients.
- Microwave potatoes.
- Place ingredients on sheet pan and roast in the oven.

**ROASTED SHEET PAN VEGETABLES**

Olive oil spray

½ pound red or 1 yellow potatoes

2 medium tomatoes, sliced

1 cup red onion, sliced

¼ pound broccoli florets cut in half (about 1 ½ cups)

1 cup sliced feta cheese from a block of cheese (¼- to ½-inch slices)

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

2 teaspoons dried oregano

1 teaspoon minced garlic

¼ cup cilantro leaves on top

Heat oven to 450 degrees. Line a large baking sheet with foil and spray with olive oil spray. Wash and do not

peel potatoes. Cut potatoes into slices and then cut the slices into quarters. Place in a bowl and microwave on high for one minute. Place potatoes on the sheet pan. Place the tomatoes, onion, broccoli and feta cheese slices on the sheet pan in rows. Spray with olive oil spray. Mix olive oil, balsamic vinegar, oregano and garlic together. Spoon sauce over the vegetables and cheese. Place sheet pan in the oven for 15 minutes. Divide between two dinner plates and serve.

Yields 2 servings.

**Per serving:** 511 calories (57% from fat), 32.3 g fat (13.4 g saturated, 11.4 g monounsaturated), 67 mg cholesterol, 17.2 g protein, 43.2 g carbohydrates, 5.3 g fiber, 720 mg sodium.

Recipe by Linda Gassenheimer

## AJC BOOKS FOR HOME COOKS

## Sweet home (and kitchen) Alabama

By **Susan Puckett**  
For the AJC

"A lot of things shock you when you move from the South to the North, or vice versa," writes Kelsey Barnard Clark. "Up North, people talk funny, move faster, and don't wave to strangers on the street."

After earning her Culinary Institute of America degree, the budding chef from Dothan, Alabama, was quick to adapt, landing gigs in the kitchens of Cafe Boulud and other top-tier Manhattan restaurants. Those experiences prepared her well when she returned to the slower pace of her hometown to start a home, raise a family, and start a catering business and eatery, KBC. She honed a modernized approach to Southern food that eventually made her a winner on "Top Chef."

"Southern Grit: 100+ Down-Home Recipes for the Modern Cook" (Chronicle, \$29.95) showcases those dishes in the idyllic-looking setting of a home with



"Southern Grit: 100+ Down-Home Recipes for the Modern Cook" by Kelsey Barnard Clark (Chronicle, \$29.95).

a white picket fence, gleaming kitchen, and backyard with a lush garden and henhouse.

Baptisms, bridal showers, family holiday celebrations, and "girls' group" get-togethers fuel creations such as Black-Eyed Pea Hummus,

Bourbon Cider Mimosas, Cornmeal Catfish with Green Goddess Dressing, and sheet pan-roasted Supper Club "Smoked" Wings tempered with Alabama White Barbecue Sauce.

A bread and dessert chapter with nostalgic favorites such as Corn-Mold Skillet Cornbread and Beeb's Blackberry Cobbler ends with a recipe for Stairway Red Velvet Cake and the story behind it.

Feeling burned out from New York and "the Michelin kitchen lifestyle," she writes, she returned home to Dothan one holiday season to make some extra money catering. In two days, with help from family and friends, she baked 60 red velvet cakes and lined them all the way up her parents' staircase.

Looking back, she views those stacked white boxes as a sweet metaphor for "the steps of my future in Dothan."

Susan Puckett is a cookbook author and former food editor of The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Follow her at [susanpuckett.com](https://susanpuckett.com).

## STOCK UP

## Try peanuts 3 ways, sweet or savory

By **C.W. Cameron**  
For the AJC

We're lucky that there are no peanut allergies in our household. If that's also the case for you, we've got three ways for you to enjoy this favorite legume.

**Souvenir packets of Georgia peanuts**

The Georgia Peanut Commission is celebrating 60 years of supporting Georgia's \$2 billion peanut-growing industry. Its website has information for growers and for the rest of us, including recipes using peanuts, ranging from oatmeal with peanut butter and PB&J candied bacon, to the desserts you're probably expecting. As we were doing a little research on peanuts, we discovered that the commission also has a shop with a select offering of Georgia peanut products. You can find chef-favorite Oliver Farms green peanut oil, cans of honey-roasted Georgia peanuts and our new go-to snack, three-quarter-ounce packets of roasted and salted Georgia peanuts. The packets come packed in bags of 25, or a case of 300, and are perfect for putting out in a big bowl, so everyone can enjoy a handful of peanuts while watching the game.

\$3.50 per bag of 25 three-quarter-ounce packets, \$40 per case of 300 packets. Available at [gapeanuts.com](https://gapeanuts.com).

**Peanut brittle**

Bobby and Jean Salter founded Plain Peanuts in 1988. They started small, in Billy Carter's old service station in Plains, but business soon grew to the point where they moved to the old Carter's peanut warehouse office on Plains' Main Street, and that's where you can find them to this day. When you visit Plains, dropping by the shop is a must, so you can enjoy a cone of peanut butter ice cream while touring the other sites in former President Jimmy Carter's hometown. If you're not going to be in Plains, you can't order the ice cream, but you can mail-order boiled peanuts, fried peanuts, peanut clusters and, our favorite, peanut brittle. It's a classic American candy, but some brittles are so hard that you run the risk of breaking a tooth while eating a



Souvenir packets of Georgia peanuts. COURTESY OF JOY CROSBY/ GEORGIA PEANUT COMMISSION

piece. The Plain Peanuts brittle is light and crunchy, so your teeth aren't at risk, only your waistline.

\$3.49 per 6.5-ounce bag. Available at [plainpeanuts.com/#/](https://plainpeanuts.com/#/).

**Sea salt and black pepper peanuts**

Georgia is not the only state that grows a bounty of peanuts. One of our neighbors to the north also grows its share of delicious peanuts, and we haven't felt a bit disloyal while enjoying our container from Bertie County Peanuts in Windsor, North Carolina. The company has been in business since 1915, and it claims it grows the best peanuts in the country on its farms. You can decide for yourself when you sample the company's raw peanuts, blister-fried peanuts, spicy peanuts, and seasoned and salted peanuts, including the salt and black pepper ones we've been enjoying. These peanuts are perfectly roasted, and the black pepper is there, but in no way overwhelms — just a nice peppery bite at the end. There are lots of flavors, including dill pickle, smoky, wasabi and soy, as well as the ones we think must appeal to a very specialized audience: chocolate-covered Weeping Mary's ghost pepper peanuts.

\$14.20 per 10-ounce jar of sea salt and black pepper peanuts; \$22.55 for a two-pack. Available at [pnuts.net](https://pnuts.net).

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Peanut brittle from Plain Peanuts. COURTESY OF ALISON DANIEL