

Pile O' Bones Brewing Company

Saskatchewan's Source for the Best Brews Infused with Prairie Pride

By Meghan Haukaas, Benchmark Public Relations



Since 2016, the Pile O Bones Brewing Company has been producing and distributing some of the most popular beers in the province. Backed by a strong sense of integrity that is rooted in shared company values, the business (and the beer) has made itself a household name on the prairies and across the country.

Josh Morrison, one of the founders of Pile O Bones, said the business came together when four members of the Ale and Lager Enthusiasts of Saskatchewan (ALES) club decided to try their luck at professional brewing.

"We had learned to work together, run events, and do competitions, so when we got an opportunity to lease a brewery that had been mothballed, we said 'Hey! Let's go pro!' and we were off to the races," he said.

With plenty of experience experimenting and creating new flavours, POB was bursting with potential from the very beginning. "The four guys that started POB were all award-winning, home brewers back in our day, so we all

have our own recipe books and trade recipes to figure out what we might like to try and brew next," Morrison said.

With the combined talents of Morrison, Glenn Valgardson, Brent Babyak and Nathan Kary – the team had a recipe for success. Now all they needed was a title.

The name itself has drawn significant attention through Regina's unofficial nickname "Pile of Bones," which is based on the Anglicization of the original Cree name for the city – *oskana ka-asastēki*, often shortened to Wascana or Oskana. Morrison said he chose the name to remind people that Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota, Lakota, Dakota, and Métis people were the original inhabitants of this land.

Morrison, a citizen of the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan was instrumental in coming up with the name because he felt it was important to recognize the unique history of the city, while acknowledging the Indigenous perspective. Pile O' Bones is the only verified Saskatchewan Metis Business in the province.

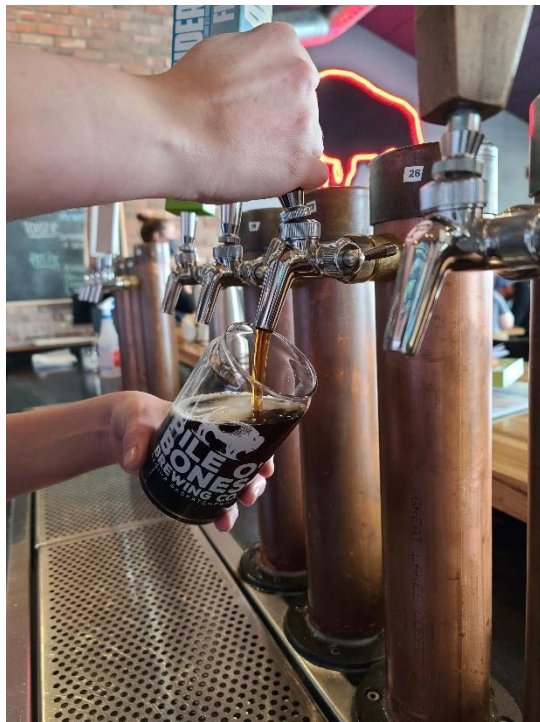
“We could have named our brewery the ‘Queen City Brewing Company’ and everyone would know we were local, but that would ignore thousands of years of history,” Morrison said. The Pile O Bones (POB) logo even depicts a Plains Bison, symbolizing the animal that supported life on the prairies for thousands of years before Canada ever existed.

These values have certainly contributed to the business’ consumer experience – complete with a neon buffalo sign on the wall surrounded by arts produced predominantly by Indigenous artists. After six years of success, the startup has officially grown too big and now a much-needed facility expansion is well-underway.

“The current Expansion is primarily to increase our production because we have just not been able to keep up with demand over the last 12 months,” said Morrison. “Having too many orders is a good problem to have, but it’s still a problem – so this expansion was necessary to allow us to meet current demand and hopefully grow for another couple of years before we have to invest in production again.”

He added that, “we’ve poured the foundation, built the walls and just installed the roof back in January so we are on track to start production there sometime in April.” Morrison said that it’s an interesting build, extending the existing facility by 22 feet with the new roof towering over that of the original building – measuring a whopping 28 feet high.

Morrison said this will enable them to triple their capacity. “The existing brewhouse is still going to be used; we are just going to be able to brew a lot more.”



POB typically keeps anywhere from 13-14 different beers available in the tap room, with multiple tanks dedicated to their best-selling White IPA. The new addition will allow them to designate a few large tanks for their go-to brew while freeing up space to experiment with new flavors.

Over the next few months they will be featuring their Scotch Ale which is described as full-bodied, robust and packed with notes of caramel. Morrison also mentioned their new Buds and Spuds Potato Pilsner, which was the result of a collaboration with the Medicine Hat Brewing Company. Mitch Dalrymple, who previously served as the head brewer at the Bushwakker Brewpub in Regina, helped perfect the recipe.

“As the name describes, it is literally brewed with potatoes,” Morrison said. “It’s going to be a Pilsner beer with a nice mineral character with some spicy kind of noble hops.” Finally, POB’s Cucumber Kveik should be

hitting the taps as we approach the warmer months.

Morrison said Pile O’ Bones is always on the lookout for community collaboration opportunities.

“Coming up later this spring, we will be featuring an art exhibit by Nakota artist Torrie Ironstar, who is a deaf two-spirited Indigenous painter.”

He added that Ironstar is one of the most talented artists he has come across in recent years and is considered a rising star in the Indigenous community. “His art will fill the taproom with bright, bold colours and very bright patterns, and we hope this will make the taproom feel like spring, and shine on all through the summer.” www.pileobonesbrewing.com

With no shortage of new and exciting flavour profiles to try, Pile O Bones is the ultimate taste-testing tourism experience. Head to 1808 Cameron Street in Regina to try a flight of beer, or visit their Facebook page to stay up to date on the newest brews and upcoming events <https://www.facebook.com/PileOBonesBrews/>.