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TRENDS

BREW YOUR OWN BEER FOR THE HOLIDAYS

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The winter holidays are a magical time — festive decorations go up in homes and businesses and on streets, loved ones reunite and reconnect and, most importantly, some great food and drinks are enjoyed.

In many circles, beer is a universal crowd-pleaser, offering party guests a tasty, tipsy compliment to their hors d'oeuvres and entrees. If I told you there were an easy, fun way to use this favorite beverage to create personalized, awesome holiday gifts, would you believe me?

It's alright if you said no — I have proof of my claim, in the form of American breweries that offer guests a brew-your-own beer experience. Cheers, and happy holidays!

Vine Park Brewing, Minnesota

Touted as "Minnesota's most unique brewery and winery," Vine Park offers guests the chance to concoct their own brews in house, with professional equipment and assistance. First, customers are asked to make a reservation by calling the brewery. Next, you will choose the perfect recipe from more than 50 options and stop in to add each ingredient to your own brew kettle.

For the two weeks following your visit, Vine Park employees will monitor your masterpiece as it ages. Finally, bottling day will arrive, where — you guessed it — you will be able to fill and cap your beer in 22-ounce bottles. Your brew will be ready to enjoy on the day you take it home, so give your bottles as personalized gifts or pass them around at your holiday party.

Eudora Brewing Co., Ohio

Eudora also offers a brew-your-own experience, with professional staff on hand to supervise you as you concoct your beverage creation and help you, as needed. Brewing takes two to four weeks, so plan ahead in order to have your brew ready for the holidays.

The brewery offers different recipes for standard, premium and signature series bottles, and sells them in five-gallon (two cases of 12-ounce bottles) and 10-gallon (four cases of 12-ounce bottles) batches.

IncrediBREW, New Hampshire

New Englanders, too, can brew their own beer for the holidays with the help of professionals and the use of professional facilities at IncrediBREW. Budding brewmasters can choose from more than 80 recipes for any style of beer to suit all tastes, such as Pilsners, classic pale ales, dark stouts and IPAs.

The brewing process takes two weeks here, so give them a call and get brewing — your family and friends won't forget your unique and tasty gift.

