



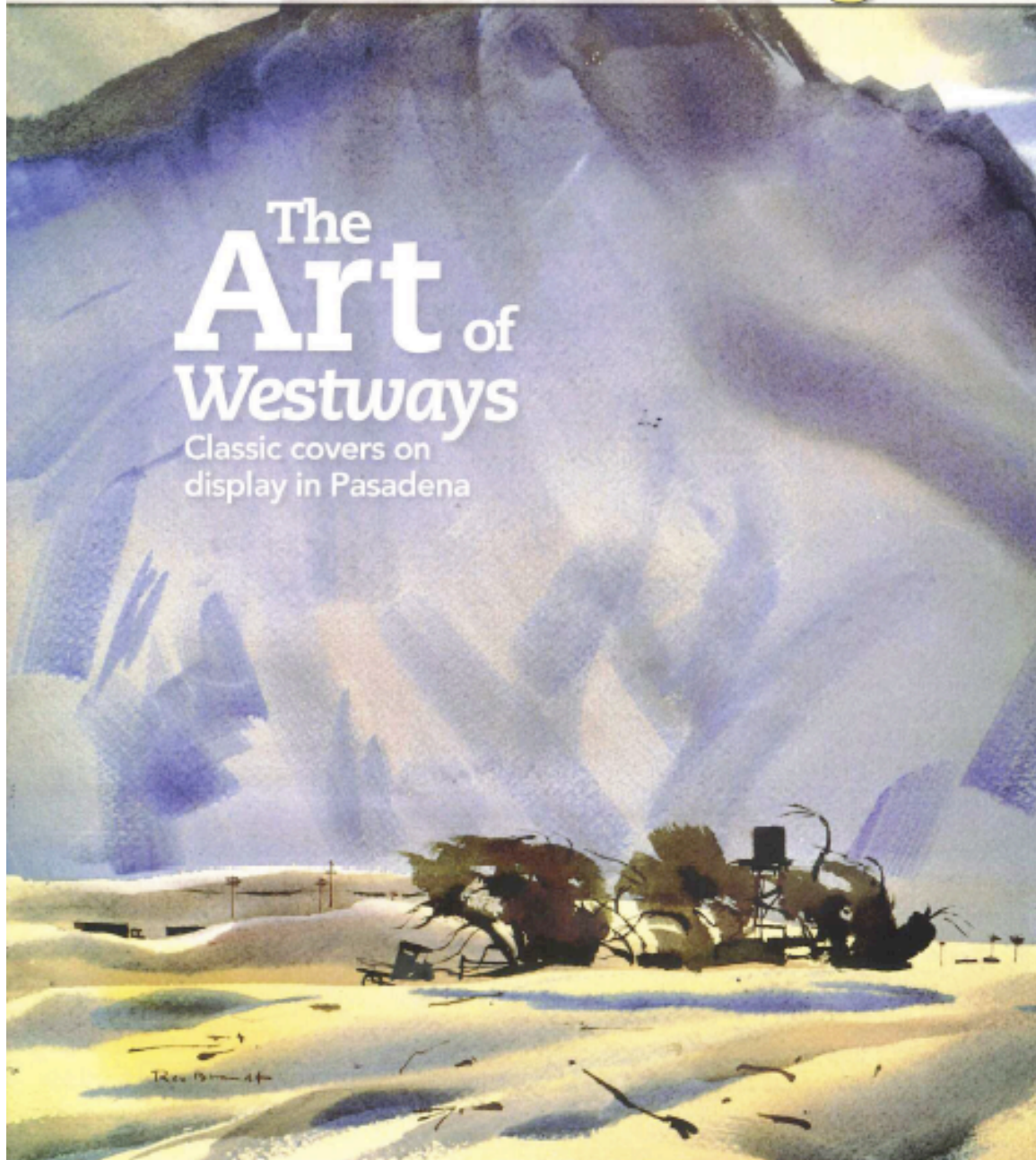
San Diego Westways

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THE MAGAZINE FOR AUTO CLUB MEMBERS

The Art of Westways

Classic covers on
display in Pasadena



SAN DIEGO'S CRAFT-BEER SCENE



When you think about high-quality beer, England, Germany, and Belgium come to mind. Add San Diego to that list. For several years, a craft-beer renaissance has been brewing in a series of nondescript office parks around the county. Available styles range from refreshing wheat beers to winelike ales aged for years in wood barrels.

At the 2010 World Beer Cup in Chicago, San Diego County brewers earned 22 medals, more than any other country, including best small brewer for Ballast Point Brewing Company.

What's going on down in San Diego? "We view what we do as a collaboration, not a competition," says Colby Chandler, general manager of Home Brew Mart, a store selling beer- and wine-making materials in Linda Vista. It shows: Stone Brewing Co. of Escondido, the county's largest brewer, distributes several other local craft beers.

The focus is quality over quantity. The small brewing-company category is limited to 15,000 barrels, and most local brewers produce less than that. During a tour of his brewery, Stone's Ken Wright said his company makes more beer in two weeks than his friends at AleSmith do in a year. Even so, Stone's estimated 2010 production of 120,000 barrels would be a drop in Anheuser-Busch's bucket.

Many of the professional brewers started at home, and that tradition continues. "We're very fortunate that we can combine our passion with our talent," Chandler says. "The weather and the lifestyle don't hurt, either." —Al Bonowitz



TOURS

San Diego's brewers welcome visitors, and they're just as concerned about DUI as AAA and MADD are. There are several ways to visit and sample beers without using a car. (As always, if you choose to drive, designate a driver.)

Brew Hop San Diego gives customized tours that pick up and drop off guests at their home or hotel. Brewery visits include a short tour, followed by a Q&A session with the brewmaster and a tasting. Rates begin at \$75 per person, depending on the group size and the tour route. (858) 361-8457; brewhop.com.

On its website, the **San Diego Brewers Guild** offers self-guided Downtown, Central San Diego, and North County itineraries that utilize the San Diego Trolley and Coaster commuter train. sandiegbrewersguild.org.

BREW PUBS

Pacific Beach Alehouse, located just south of the Crystal Pier, brews seven beers and incorporates them in many of its menu items. 721 Grand Avenue, Pacific Beach. (858) 581-2337; pbalehouse.com.

The chefs at **Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens** are as fastidious about their ingredients as the brewers with whom they share a building. Stone's iconoclastic beers are available to accompany meals, but so are many mellower varieties from other brewers. 1999 Citracado Parkway, Escondido. (760) 294-7866; stonebrew.com, stoneworldbistro.com.

CULINARY SCENE

San Diego beers can be found in the area's best restaurants. Several are located in North Park along 30th Street, which *Men's Journal* magazine called "the nation's best beer boulevard." Take MTS bus route No. 2 or No. 7 from downtown. sdcommute.com.

The Linkery bakes its own bread, cures its own meat, and makes its own sausages (which isn't to say that vegans won't do well here). It relies on dozens of mostly local farmers and artisans for the rest of its "made by hand" menu. 3794 30th Street, San Diego. (619) 255-8778; thelinkery.com.

The Ritual Tavern creates its own condiments in-house for fare that honors British, German, and New Orleans traditions. Those who think beer and chocolate don't mix should try the chocolate cheesecake made with brews such as imperial Russian stout. 4095 30th Street, San Diego. (619) 283-1720; ritualtavern.com.

New American comfort food is the specialty at **Urban Solace**, which offers, among other things, meat loaf made with ground lamb and two types of macaroni and cheese. 3823 30th Street, San Diego. (619) 295-6464; urbansolace.net.