



48 Hours in Indianapolis

Drinking at the Crossroads of America

Forget pork tenderloins, the Indy 500, Bobby Knight and everything else Indiana is known for. The Hoosier State is staking a new claim as a beer powerhouse, and nowhere is that more apparent than in Indianapolis. Although the state boasts almost 90 breweries, roughly 25 of them reside either downtown or on the outskirts of the city. That number is sure to rise, making it impossible to visit all of them in one trip.

Yet it's not just the powerful brewery scene that makes the Hoosier capital a hot spot for a weekend getaway. The city is on the cusp of a massive distillery rollout. Pair that with an exciting food scene, and you'll wonder why it took you so long to get to the Crossroads of America.

Friday

Kick off your journey with a stop at **Triton Brewery** (5764 Wheeler Road, tritonbrewing.com). Although it's about 20 minutes from downtown (you'll do best

having a car in Indy, as public transport isn't widely available), it's worth the visit, especially if the Hatchblower Pepper IPA is on tap. Don't let the name scare you—the hops blend nicely with the pepper (a combo of green pepper, chipotles and jalapeños), putting heat on your lips, not in your sips. Year-round favorites include the Rail Splitter IPA and Fieldhouse Wheat.

As you make your way back into the heart of The Circle City, stop at **Flat 12 Bierwerks** (414 N. Dorman St., flat12.me). This dog-friendly brewery is always hopping, whether in its tasting room or patio, where you might find people hanging around the fire pit or playing cornhole. Samples are free, and you can taste as many as you'd like. There is a beer for every palate from the brewery's flagship Half Cycle IPA to seasonal favorites like the Cucumber Kölsch.

Friday happy hour is a big event at **Tomlinson Tap Room** (222 E. Market St.,

tomlinsonataproom.com). Located on the second floor of the Historic Market House at the Indianapolis City Market, the bar features 16 rotating taps of Indiana ales and lagers. The beer alone is worth the stop, but the energy from beer-loving peers celebrating the start of the weekend makes this an ever-bigger must-do.

You have a plethora of incredible restaurants to choose from in downtown Indy, but veer toward Massachusetts Avenue (or, simply, Mass Ave), where you'll find the newly opened **Union 50** (620 N. East St., union-50.com), which serves Prohibition-style cocktails, regional beers and a creative menu that changes seasonally. Still thirsty? Venture across the street to **Ralston's Draffthouse** (635 Massachusetts Ave., ralstonsdraffthouse.com) for a selection of 40 draft beers.

Saturday

Fuel up for the day's adventures at **Café Patachou** (225 W. Washington St.,

cafepatachou.com), a long-standing favorite that focuses on local, sustainable foods, like creative omelettes made with Indiana free-range eggs and seasonal ingredients and the vegan Cuban breakfast, featuring seasoned black beans, tofu crumbles and avocado.

From there, walk to **White River State Park** (inwhiteriver.com), a 250-acre urban park where you can wander along a 1.5-mile canal and rent a bike or Segway. After, stop at the NCAA Hall of Champions or the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art. Make your way back to Mass Ave, where you can pop into the unusual shops. As you hit the end of Mass Ave, stop at **Yats** (885 Massachusetts Ave., yatscajuncreole.com) for lunch. This local joint is revered for its deliciously underpriced Creole food. The menu, which features seven to 10 items, changes daily.

While you could easily spend your whole trip in the Mass Ave area, other great locations await. Your next destination is **Chilly Water Brewing Co.** (719 Virginia Ave., chillywaterbrewing.com) in the Fletcher Place neighborhood. This is one of the newcomers to Indy's beer scene, having opened in 2014. Its beers, while not terribly bold, are easy to sip and sport interesting names like Coffee in Bed Java Stout and Built to Last Pilsner.

Across the street is **Hotel Tango** (702 Virginia Ave., hoteltangowhiskey.com), an artisan distillery. Even if you don't enjoy spirits like vodka or rum, the cozy tasting room alone warrants a visit. (If you do sample one of its creative cocktails, order the Rum Diablo, a refreshing concoction of Hotel Tango's Romeo Rum, raspberry, ginger and fresh lime.)

You can't do an Indy beer tour without visiting **Sun King Brewing** (135 N. College Ave., sunkingbrewing.com), Indiana's second-largest brewery, which has picked up medals at the Great American Beer Festival and World Beer Cup competitions. Expect to find crowds; Sun King offers some of the best prices on growler and bullet fills.

Sun King staples include the easy-sipping Sunlight Cream Ale, Wee Mac Scottish-Style Ale with its toffee undertones and the perfectly hopped Osiris Pale Ale.

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You're now on your way to Broad Ripple, one of Indy's most beloved areas, where you'll find eclectic shops, art galleries, a vibrant bar scene and the Monon Trail, a 15-mile rails-to-trails corridor. Stop at **Brugge Brasserie** (2011 E. Westfield Blvd., bruggebrasserie.com), a Belgian-themed brewery known for its *moules* and *frites* and Tripel de Ripple, a blond tripel. If it's available, try Bad Kitty, a Leipziger-style gose with a lemonlike sour finish.

Broad Ripple is also home of **Thr3e Wise Men Brewing** (1021 Broad Ripple Ave., thr3ewisemen.com) where you'll find seven of the brewery's beers plus dozens of guest taps. One of its lightest is the Snow Bunny Blonde. Bolder flavors are found in Rocky Ripple Pale Ale (brewed with a mix of Cascade, Crystal and Glacier hops) and the Centennial Martyr Double IPA (which uses clover honey from an Indiana farm).

Book a table for dinner at **St. Elmo Steak House** (127 S. Illinois St., stelmos.com). Sit in either the more casual 1933 Lounge or the elegant, upscale restaurant, but do get St. Elmo's renowned shrimp cocktail. The sauce packs a punch you'll remember for a long time.

Sunday

Start your day at **Tow Yard Brewing Co.** (501 Madison Ave., towyardbrewing.com), another newcomer as of 2014. Head brewer Bradley Zimmerman worked for several years in Seattle, and he's now infusing the Pacific Northwest into his Midwestern beers.

Its house beer is the Horse Power Double Pale Ale but if it's a warm day, try the Hook Up, a blend of its Goldie Hops, an American-style golden ale, and citrus-forward soda. Order lunch off a deli menu that includes interesting creations like the Gator Done with fried alligator meat and buffalo sauce or the Deli Lama with falafel, smoky yogurt sauce, Sriracha fried onions and garlic naan. It's also a great place to watch a game on one of the many TVs. Bonus? Free parking.

From there, drive to **Indiana City Brewing** (24 Shelby St., indianacitybeer.com) where the tasting room is so simple that it borders on elegant. Try Shadow Boxer, a year-round oatmeal stout with a hoppier finish than most; Yacht Rock, a Belgian-style wheat ale; or Double Tribute Pale Ale (or its slightly less hopped relative, Tribute).

Indiana City runs specials on growler and bullet fills on Sundays, so stock up.

Your last stop is in the historic Irvington neighborhood, where you'll find **Black Acre Brewing Co.** (5632 E. Washington St., blackacrebrewing.com), a nanobrewery that opened in 2011 with the intent of making seasonal and specialty beers. It's so small that you can buy its beers only at the brewery.

Black Acre actually has over 100 recipes in its toolbox, but try the Saucy Intruder, a rye IPA and the brewery's signature.

—Karen Asp

