

[Bastrop is Brewing](#)

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As I mentioned in a previous blog entry, a new brewpub opened up about a block from me. Bastrop Brewhouse has been open for a couple months now, serving guest beers from Austin brewers (including Live Oak, (512), Circle and Independence). But now they are on the cusp of serving their own creations.

Last week, they brewed their first beer on their 3.5-barrel system. Getting there took awhile. Originally, the burners the brewer (Ed Peters) ordered didn't seem like they were doing the job. He was worried that they didn't have enough gas pressure to generate a sufficient amount of heat to boil the wort. As it turns out, the company had sent the wrong burners and once that error got straightened out, he had plenty of BTUs. Also, the glycol system (that circulates around the fermenters and cools them) was leaky and Ed had to charge the system with water and track and down all the leaks before they could start brewing.

Now, however, everything is up and running. They brewed a pale ale on their first brew day. Their brewhouse is 3.5 barrels, but they have 7-barrel fermenters, so the next day they brewed the same beer and filled the first fermenter. (The practice of brewing two or more batches of wort to fill a fermenter is common in commercial breweries.) Since then, they've brewed their brown ale and Kölsch and in the next few days Ed and Kevin (Glenn, the other brewer) is brewing a special beer to be unveiled December 21, 2012, the supposed end of the world predicted by the Mayans.

A neat thing for any homebrewers visiting their brewery is that everything is easy to figure out. It's a lot like a "regular," three-vessel, all-grain home brewery expanded to 3.5 barrels. The main brewhouse consists of a hot liquor tank, a combination mash/lauter vessel and a kettle. (They also have a 3.5-barrel fermenter that they are currently using as a cold liquor tank.) At some breweries, the collection of vessels is different. The mash vessel is separate from the lauter vessel in some cases, and there might be a separate whirlpool tank as well. In other cases, there might be a mash tun and, instead of a lauter tun, a mash filter.

One interesting aspect of Bastrop Brewhouses plans is that the brewery is in a building adjoining the restaurant and bar. The bright tanks -- the vessels that that finished beer gets served from, are in the brewery, not in the restaurant. The plan is to install underground beer lines running from the bright tanks in the brewery to the taps at the bar. The lines will be glycol chilled.

Here's a picture of Ed (right) and Kevin (bathed in sunlight) on their first brew day:



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