

INDIE BEER CAN FESTIVAL RETURNS WITH COMPETITION TO FIND THE NATION'S BEST INDEPENDENT BEER - IN A CAN

The award-winning [Indie Beer Can Festival: 2016](#), the world's first UK and Eire-wide competition to crown the very best independent beer in cans is back by popular demand. Launched by the Can Makers in partnership with the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA), the event will be judged by four industry experts including rising star, Ben Hulme, Head of Beers, Wines and Spirits at Lidl UK. Independent brewers can enter the competition at www.indiebeercan.co.uk and vie for the unique opportunity to showcase their brews in a canned packaging format at the festival final.

Brewers can choose to enter one of three categories: 'Best Ale', 'Best Lager' or 'Best Other'. Finalists will automatically be eligible for an additional category: 'Best Design' and one beer will be crowned overall 'Best in Show'. There is no limit on the number of beers that each brewery can enter and applications are welcomed from beers already in a can as well as those not yet canned.

Entries close at midnight on 11 December after which a first round of judging, based on written entries, will take place. Returning to the judging panel alongside Ben Hulme is Adrian Tierney-Jones, award winning writer and journalist. They will be joined by Annabel Smith, a renowned beer Sommelier who also worked as beer taster and a training manager at Cask Marque for a decade. Completing the line-up is Chairman of the panel, Martin Constable of the Can Makers.

Ben Hulme comments: "Consumer demand for independent beer is increasing year-on-year and I'm personally excited about how this market is continuing to evolve. For the last twelve months brewers and consumers have been dipping their toes into the canned beer market; now that market is preparing to go mainstream, I can't wait to see where we are in a year's time. It's great to be involved in an event that is helping to drive this trend."

The first round of judging will be followed by a blind taste-testing semi-final in January. Twelve beers will then proceed to the final on 12 May 2016; for each finalist whose chosen beer is not yet in cans, the Can Makers will arrange production of 100ltrs of their beer to be canned for the first time. Those brewers will also have the chance to work with the Can Makers' in-house teams, and the [Can Creator app](#), to create a 360°, eye-catching designs to decorate their cans.

Adrian Tierney-Jones, who returns to the panel for a second time, comments: "I had a fantastic time last year working with the emerging canned beer market and tasting a huge range of new and

innovative brews. Some of the flavour combinations were truly remarkable. I can't wait to see what we discover this time around – the entrants have a lot to live up to."

At a final judging session, each canned beer will be scrutinised by the expert judges. Winners will be announced during the exclusive Indie Beer Can Festival that same evening. Throughout the event every finalist will have the opportunity to have their beers sampled by influential guests from the entire industry supply chain, as well as media and market influencers.

Martin Constable says: "We are delighted to be working with SIBA again to champion the canned beer movement and to present our new judging line-up. Since the last competition some of our entrants have begun canning their beers full-time, for them and others interested in canning, we have launched the [Indie Beer Can Advice](#) service. Through this site, in combination with the competition, we hope to provide a chance for brewers to explore the benefits of cans and make the most of this fast evolving market."

Mike Benner, SIBA's Managing Director, said: "It is great to see more innovative independent brewers investing in canning and supplying flavoursome beers in a can. Cans are light, portable and quick to chill and therefore offer brewers new markets to enter. Add to that the incredible opportunity they provide for designers and brand owners to communicate the beer's personality, and we can see why the can is gaining so many fans. SIBA is proud to support this fantastic event and we will be encouraging all of our craft brewing members to enter this prestigious competition."

Key information

- Closing date for entries is midnight on Friday, 13 December, 2015
- For entry forms and full competition rules visit www.indiebeercan.co.uk
- Semi-finalists will be contacted by January 2016
- The Indie Beer Can Festival will take place 12 May 2016
- All finalists will receive certificates and e-badges. Brewers, new to can, will also receive 100 samples of their canned beer for marketing purposes.

- Ends -

For further information, high res images or to arrange an interview, please contact the Can Makers team canmakers@onechocolatecomms.co.uk or phone 0207 437 0227

UK Can Makers

Members of the Can Makers work together specifically to promote the benefits of the drinks can and aid communications between the industry and its customers: the brewers and soft drinks manufacturers and the retailers, as well as the packaging industry, the media and consumers.

The Can Makers Information Service acts as the reference point for data and advice on the beverage can and the can manufacturing industry. Amongst its services is the issue of a regular newsletter and the publication of special reports on research activities. Consumer opinion and industry research forms an important part of the

Can Makers programme.

The Can Makers was the first organisation in Europe formed to promote drinks cans. It is part of a European network set up under the auspices of Beverage Can Makers Europe (BCME), which includes similar country organisations across Europe.