

Th: Jefferson

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TJF and Starr Hill Brewery introduce Monticello Reserve Ale

The Museum Shop was flooded with visitors during the Presidents Day launch of Monticello Reserve Ale. Assistant Curator Justin Sarafin introduced the new brew with the story of how the official beer of Monticello came to be.

"The idea for the beer really got started after the 2003 opening of Jefferson's restored beer cellar," said Sarafin. "Starr Hill Master Brewer Mark Thompson saw the beer cellar in a news article."

Thompson grew up in the Charlottesville area and was excited to learn the third president had brewed his favorite beverage. "I had never heard the story of Jefferson's beer—how he made beer, and built a brew house up at Monticello. I got very, very excited and called Justin. I said, "We need to make a historically accurate beer, because I'm the beer guy; that's what I do."

Starr Hill and Monticello curators worked together to establish the ingredients in order to create as historically accurate a beer as possible.

"Jefferson used wheat and corn in his beer because he didn't have wide access to barley, so we decided to create a unique wheat beer

fashioned with the ingredients he had available at the time," said Sarafin. "A brewing manual that Jefferson owned, Michael Combrune's 1804 *Theory and Practice of Brewing*, stood in for the lack of a specific recipe; Thompson and Starr Hill were inspired by such methods, much like Jefferson and the enslaved brewer Peter Hemings would have been historically."

Monticello Reserve Ale is an unfiltered American wheat-style beer made with wheat and corn. East Kent Golding hops add a citrus and earthy aroma. It is brewed and bottled by Starr Hill.

"This has been a labor of love. I'm thrilled to get the story of Jefferson and beer out," said Thompson. "As I jokingly say, 'We've all heard his wine story, now let's hear his beer story!'"

During the first week Monticello Reserve Ale was available to the public, the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center Museum Shop sold more than 450 bottles!

Monticello Reserve Ale is sold in 750 ml bottles (\$12.95 a bottle), at the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center Museum Shop, in area stores, and on tap at select central Virginia restaurants.

