

WASHINGTON | OREGON

IDAHO | MONTANA | ALASKA | BRITISH COLUMBIA

northwest

TRAVEL & LIFE

THE NATURE ISSUE

Display until June 30, 2019



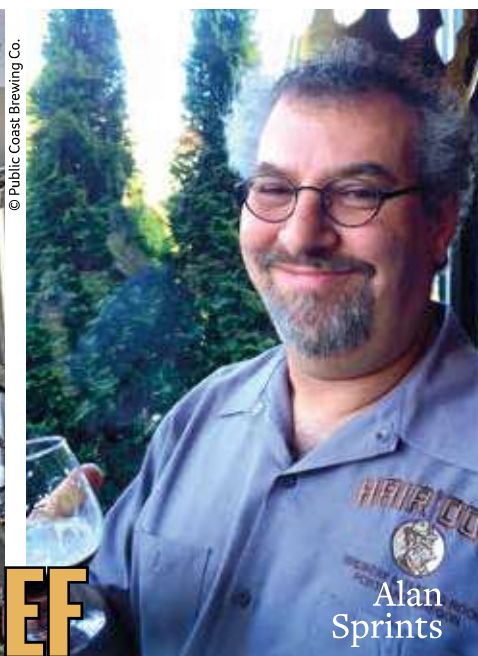
NWTRAVELMAG.COM



Whitney Burnside



Will Leroux



Alan Sprints

FROM CHEF TO BREWMASTER

BY ADAM SAWYER

WHETHER IT'S COOKING, BAKING, BREWING, winemaking or distilling, when stripped down to their basic elements, all facets of fine food and drink are built upon a foundation of science and artistry. In addition, an individual's understanding of flavor profiles and recipe development, overlaid with varying degrees of intuition, hard work and natural talent, result in end products that can range from substandard to sublime.

There are those who have excelled in one category of the culinary arts that have chosen to see how well their talents translate into another. It makes sense on paper, but how often do those brave souls pull it off? One shift that has produced real success stories is that from chef to brewmaster. Here's a short list of notable Northwesterners that have traded in salt and pepper for malt and hops—and flourished in the process.

Alan Sprints, Hair of the Dog Brewing Co. (*hairofthedog.com*): Sprints moved to Portland in 1988 to go to culinary school. He graduated from Le Cordon Bleu with honors, but at the same time he was being lured by the siren song of the region's craft beer culture. He entered the scene by joining the Oregon Brew Crew (a homebrew club) and meeting several craft-beer pioneers. Following his heart, he opened the Hair of the Dog Brewing Company in 1993. Driven by creativity, Sprints became one of the first brewers in America to specialize in bottle-conditioned and barrel-aged beers. The brewpub also benefits from Sprints's culinary background. The food menu incorporates local produce and proteins with their own house-made pickles, baked goods and cured meats.

Will Leroux, Public Coast Brewing Co. (*publiccoastbrewing.com*): Leroux spent many hours by his mother's side in the kitchen. His love for food and everything it could do for the soul

eventually led him to the New England Culinary Institute and a three-decade-long career as a chef. Leroux was serving as the Culinary Director for the Martin Hospitality Group, which includes such Cannon Beach cornerstones as Stephanie Inn and Wayfarer Restaurant, when the group opened Public Coast Brewing. Having been a home-brewer for several years, Leroux wanted to give it a go on a larger scale, and after taking a month to train at Big Dogs Brewing in Las Vegas, he returned to take over the brewmaster role at Public Coast. It didn't take Leroux long to get his beer chops—he recently earned two gold medals for his '67 Blonde Ale, one at the Oregon Beer Awards and one at the World Beer Cup.

Whitney Burnside, 10 Barrel Brewing (*10barrel.com/portland*): Burnside grew up in Issaquah, Washington, and after attending the Johnson & Wales Culinary School in Denver, she returned to the Northwest to serve an internship at the legendary Herbfarm in Woodinville. She was eventually tasked with taking over the cheese-making program and fell instantly in love with the fermentation process. She started homebrewing as a means of exploring fermentation further. After that, she was off to the races with a fast and furious ascension through the brewing ranks. Burnside first took an internship at Portland's Laurelwood Brewpub followed by an assistant brewer position at Upright Brewing. She then moved north to brew for Elysian Brewing in Seattle before coming back down to Oregon to work for Pelican Brewing where she earned a bronze medal at the 2014 Great American Beer Festival for Poire, a Belgian-style fruit beer. And since 2014, she has been the head brewer at 10 Barrel Brewing's Portland location. 🍷