



CONCRETE BREW

By Liz Wilkins

Riverbed Concrete is not exactly the place you might think it is. Sure, it is a warehouse-like facility where concrete is manufactured into beautiful home furnishings, counter-tops, sinks and flooring. But it's the atmosphere that sets Riverbed apart from facilities like it. When you first walk in, you may be greeted by a feisty little canine with a rambunctious bark. Have no fear, the aptly named, "Brewski" is just saying hello. Then you will most likely come in contact with a tall, handsome man offering a warm smile and a friendly handshake and you will have met the owner and operator of Riverbed Concrete, David Harris. As David leads you through the showroom you may feel yourself bobbing your head to the beat of rock music playing throughout; I personally found myself singing along with The Red Hot Chili Peppers. You may then find yourself being led to the back patio, where David and his fellow executives, David Forren, Keith and Steve like to kick back as they take a well-deserved break from a hard day's work. And the best is yet to come.

If you are as lucky as I was, the guys will undoubtedly offer you a pint of their own home-brewed ale and you will find yourself once again amazed at all the creative minds in Boerne, Texas. David Harris has been blessed with creativity from the get-go. "My dad was a boat-builder," he told me "so I picked up on a lot of fiberglass and woodwork." After gaining his degree in Agriculture, David started selling hand crafted tables on Main Street. That was nearly 10 years ago, and now David operates a thriving, nationally renowned business. "The company was started with no bank loans or credit loans," David says proudly, "and we still don't have any loans today. The business was built loan free, and we only grow as we can afford to." Today, about sixty percent of the company's work is commercial, with the remainder made up of high end, luxury residences. David describes most of the designs as very "Hill Country

Contemporary". Riverbed Concrete also boasts a "Platinum" environmental rating, which is the highest green standard a company can hold.

So where does homemade beer fit into this equation? The employee's decision to brew their own ale started out as a small hobby, and quickly turned into a new passion. "To tell you the truth," David laughed, "we were spending too much time and money on cheap beer for the employees here. So we started brewing our own, which saved money and produced a much higher quality. "Once we had it down, we simply couldn't believe the quality of beer we could quickly and affordably brew." It tastes better, is more affordable, and is a healthy alternative. We are aware of, and can regulate exactly what goes into each recipe, similar to a really well prepared home-cooked meal. "We learned through trial and error, and there were definitely a few bad batches along the way."

Bad batches seem to be a thing of the past for this crew nowadays. I watched the guys start a new batch as I sipped on a slightly citrusy and delicious Indian Pale Ale, and they looked completely confident in their brewing abilities. It is very clear that to me that for these men, the best part isn't even the beer itself. The best part is having yet another creative outlet—something they can put a unique little spin on every week or so. As David sniffs a bag of hops and decides to toss a tad more into the batch, he says to me, "In a way, mixing up the ingredients for beer is a lot like mixing up the ingredients for concrete. There is an exact science to both."

Like many of the talented souls in Boerne, the team at Riverbed Concrete are artists in more ways than one. So don't be shy, stop by to see their incredible products and have a chat. If you're lucky, you may even get a drink out of it.



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