

One of America's Top Breweries Has a Big Year Planned with Tavour

January 14, 2021 - [Side Project Brewing](#) owner Cory King counts his business as “one of the lucky ones.”

That isn't a big group in the brewing industry, with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Widespread bar closures caused sharp sales declines and huge amounts of spoiled beer kegs last spring. Many breweries continue to struggle with reaching customers, amidst strict social distancing rules. Some craft beer fans have seen their favorite local breweries shutter their doors for good.

But, thanks to some quick thinking and a relationship with the beer retail app [Tavour](#), Missouri's Side Project now has high hopes for 2021.

“We had a lot of changes very quickly back in March,” King says, noting that state regulations shifted rapidly from limited taproom capacity to curbside pickup-only. “We had to pivot like four times within 48 hours.”

Things looked grim until Missouri relaxed restrictions on to-go alcohol sales in April 2020. King and his team abruptly decided to move all of their sales online, and they were blown away by the demand for their beer.

“Fortunately, we have so many thousands of fans all over the world,” says King. “People just started ordering from all over!”

Indeed, Side Project Brewing has reached a level of recognition many can only dream of. Since opening their taproom in 2014, they've steadily built a massive following and have earned hefty praise from the nation's beer critics. In 2017, they nabbed a medal at the highly competitive Great American Beer Festival.

So, in order to keep up with their fans' demand (and not have to deal with restrictive state laws preventing breweries from shipping directly to consumers), Side Project turned to their [Tavour](#) connection. The Seattle-based retailer works with over 600 independent breweries to bring hard-to-find brews to craft beer fans all around the U.S. Side Project started sending beer occasionally to Tavour in 2017, but at the end of 2020, the brewery decided to scale things up. They shared five different beer selections with the Tavour community in December alone (the most since August 2019), and the brewers began working more closely with the app's team to plan special projects for 2021.

“We used to sell a lot of our beer through tasting room sales... Our whole business was established on sitting down at the brewery and talking about the beer.” King explains. “Tavour has been so beneficial to breweries like ourselves.”

Later this year, Side Project will release two special oak-aged Stouts exclusively for Tavour and the brewery's bottle club members.

King is excited about the endeavor, having already retro-fitted an oak foeder and added in a new bottling line just for the project. “We're weirdly optimistic in a very rough world,” he notes.

In the meantime, King suspects that his brewery's online sales and relationship with Tavour will continue indefinitely, long after the pandemic ends.

"We physically can't handle the volumes that Tavour can," King says. "We only work with Tavour. We don't work with anybody else."