# Scotland permits guest beers in 700 pubs, enhancing consumer choice



The Drinks Business reports that approximately 700 pubs across Scotland will be permitted to showcase a "guest beer" starting this week, following recent updates to Scotland's Pubs Code. This new right is significant because it does not currently exist within the Pubs Code governing England and Wales, positioning Scotland as a pioneer in enhancing consumer choice and supporting local breweries throughout the UK.

Under the revised Pubs Code, publicans can select and sell at least one guest beer of their choosing without price restrictions, and they may change this offering as frequently as desired. This move will allow tenants to purchase beer directly from brewers, further enriching the options available to customers.

Jamie Delap, SIBA’s Scotland regional director and managing director of Fyne Ales, commented, “Currently, only a small proportion of all dispense lines in Scotland are open to commercial offers from independent brewers, while we know that there is a lot of unfulfilled demand from consumers for indie beer and that many venues can benefit from adding an independent beer into their line-up.” He acknowledged that pub landlords have faced challenges in providing local beer options requested by patrons. Yet, the new guest beer agreement offers an opportunity for tenants to enhance their offerings and potentially increase sales and profitability by incorporating distinctive local brews.

The regulation stipulates that chosen guest beers must meet a production scale of no more than 5,000 hectolitres, equating to about 880,000 pints. Major global beer brands are likely to be excluded from participating, while numerous smaller breweries will fall within this limit and therefore be eligible to have their products featured.

Moreover, the Society of Independent Brewers has indicated that the guest beers can be offered in various formats, including keg and cask draught, alongside bottles and cans.

The impact of this initiative has been welcomed by industry leaders, with CAMRA Scotland director Stuart McMahon stating, “Pubgoers are welcoming the news.” McMahon highlighted that the new arrangements will empower tied pub tenants to offer guest beers free from any contractual limitations, thereby broadening customer choices at the bar and promoting products from Scotland's independent breweries. Additionally, he remarked that the updated Pubs Code aims to ensure fair treatment for tied tenants, providing them with enhanced opportunities for sustainability and financial viability.

Pubs across Scotland interested in integrating guest beers into their offerings are now encouraged to engage with their pub companies to facilitate requests under this new scheme. This development stands to reshape the landscape of the Scottish pub industry while simultaneously supporting local craft beer producers and enriching the drinking experience for consumers.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2025/04/scotland-just-got-tastier-for-beer-fans/> - This article by The Drinks Business supports the claim that approximately 700 Scottish pubs will be allowed to stock guest beers following updates to Scotland's Pubs Code, positioning Scotland as a leader in enhancing consumer choice and supporting local breweries. It also highlights that publicans can select and sell guest beers without price restrictions.
* <https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2025/04/scotland-just-got-tastier-for-beer-fans/> - The article further explains the guest beer agreement, including the production limit of 5,000 hectolitres and the variety of formats available, such as keg, cask, bottles, and cans.
* <https://www.siba.co.uk/2025/03/28/new-portal-launched-to-help-scottish-pub-tenants-check-guest-beers/> - This article discusses the launch of a portal by SIBA to assist Scottish pub tenants in navigating the new guest beer provisions under Scotland's Pubs Code, ensuring that selected beers meet the production criteria.
* <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-pubs-code-adjudicator-stakeholder-engagement-group-minutes-january-2025/> - These minutes provide insights into discussions around the implementation of Scotland's Pubs Code, including the guest beer agreement and the new portal launched by SIBA to facilitate the selection of eligible beers.
* <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-pubs-code-adjudicator-stakeholder-engagement-group-minutes-january-2025/> - The document also covers discussion points around affordability, access, and the operation of the guest beer agreement within the context of the broader Pubs Code implementation.
* <https://www.noahwire.com/> - This source is mentioned as the origin of the news but does not directly provide online content that can be used to support the specific claims made about Scotland's Pubs Code and guest beer agreements.
* <https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2025/04/scotland-just-got-tastier-for-beer-fans/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data