

Oktoberfest: Long Island's German beer revival

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Beer gardens are sprouting on [Long Island](#), where it's the times of wurst. Get your oompah on.

Oktoberfest is under way in Bavaria. And the party continues at three new biergarten restaurants and at veterans, too.

"The appeal of beer gardens is that everybody is looking for good German tap beer and food on Long Island," said Jim McCartney, co-owner of the just-opened [Prost Grill & Garten](#) in [Garden City](#).

That's a combination in comparatively short supply in [Nassau](#) and [Suffolk](#). Only a stein-full of genuine German restaurants remains. The new beer halls amount to a local revival.

"There's a big movement by beer lovers in America. ... They want something real," said McCartney, adding that his original idea was simple: "Sausages and beer."

You'll find more than that these days at Prost and others. The settings aren't exactly like [Munich's](#) Hofbräuhaus beer garden, outdoors and shaded by chestnut trees, behind ancient walls and arches. Most so far are indoors. But the communal spirit and the type of cooking often are similar.

Traditionalists should note that the outdoor beer garden at the venerable [Plattduetsche Park](#) in [Franklin Square](#) opens one more time Sept. 28 before the eating and drinking moves indoors.

The bucolic, five-table beer garden at [Mirabelle Tavern](#), at the Three Village Inn in Stony Brook, is expected to stay open for dinner as long as weather allows, serving grilled sausages, house-made pretzels, Alsatian-style pizza and beers on tap. Zum Schneider MTK in [Montauk](#) will be open at least through Christmas, said owner Sylvester Schneider.

And **Black Forest Brew Haus** in [Farmingdale](#) plans to keep its garden going through October, pouring the brewery's own beer to complement the German specialties that are served year-round.

Here's a taste of the new beer gardens, and what to expect at some mainstays.

CROXLEY'S ALE HOUSE & BIERGARTEN, Smithtown

More than 80 lagers and ales are on draft at Croxley's Ale House & Biergarten. This restaurant is the latest Croxley's, which locally also has brew-driven establishments in Franklin Square, [Rockville Centre](#) and Farmingdale.

During a recent visit, the style indoors was more sports bar and restaurant. But co-owner Ed Davis said an adjacent outdoor beer garden is planned, pending permits. Croxley's Ale House & Biergarten is in the former location of Arthur Avenue and Union Station restaurants.

Diners and drinkers will find a spot with German specialties on a menu that also takes in sandwiches and burgers, dishes such as shepherd's pie made with beef, chicken potpie, mussel pots, fish-and-chips made with cod and [vast](#) quantities of chicken wings.

The German repertoire: sauerbraten, German meatball sliders, a German-style Reuben sandwich with knockwurst, smoked pork chops, Wiener schnitzel, bratwurst, bratwurst with cheese, knockwurst and chicken bratwurst. Davis said this Croxley's has a special affinity for German beers, which currently include Oktoberfest brews from Hacker-Pschorr and Warsteiner, served in half-liters and liters.

ZUM SCHNEIDER MTK, Montauk

In a beach town where lobster reigns, bratwurst now has its place. Zum Schneider MTK is the offspring of Zum Schneider, the indoor biergarten in Manhattan. Owner Sylvester Schneider said, "It's a good thing for Montauk. It's completely different." Schneider has had a home in Montauk for seven years. The East Ender arrived this summer at the former address of Oyster Pond.

The light blue and white of the Bavarian flag color the airy Zum Schneider MTK. Long, communal tables contribute to the beer-hall image and brews from Hofbräuhaus Traunstein provide the right flavor.

On the menu: wurst platters, roasted pork shoulder in dark-beer gravy, sliced white radish with cheese and pickles, sauerbraten, smoked pork chops, Wiener schnitzel, herring in yogurt-cream sauce and the obligatory soft pretzel with butter and mustard.

PROST GRILL & GARTEN, Garden City

Garden City's new Garten pours its brews near the [Long Island Rail Road](#) tracks. Prost's patio with three picnic tables is part of the new restaurant's sudsy appeal.

Inside, the main dining area sports flat-screen TVs, tables made from old bowling-alley wood, the German eagle flag, the blue-and-white banner of Bavaria and a hearty, Teutonic-themed menu to go with the foamy brews.

The concept has expanded from the original sausages-and-beer approach to bring in a larger selection of wines as well as different appetizers and main dishes to broaden Prost's basic appeal. The Bavarian pretzel, with mustard, is obligatory. Staples include smoked pork chops, sauerbraten and wursts (bock-, brat- and knock-), plus merguez lamb sausage. The platter of charcuterie and cheeses could be shared as an appetizer. Likewise, potato-and-sauerkraut croquettes. Beerwise: Spaten Oktoberfest and Hofbräu Dunkel are among the standouts, along with domestic [Samuel Adams](#) Oktoberfest and Brooklyn IPA.

PLATTDUETSCHER PARK RESTAURANT, Franklin Square

Plattduetsche Park salutes Oktoberfest in its outdoor beer garden Sept. 28 from 6 to 11 p.m. Brews from Paulaner, Hacker-Pschorr and Krombacher are available on tap. Families gather at picnic tables, as they have for many years.

The beer garden menu, served under the linden trees, includes grilled bratwurst and krainerwurst, frankfurters, sliced Leberkäse on a pretzel roll, pork schnitzel sandwiches, Bavarian pretzels, burgers, house-made German potato salad, cabbage salad with bacon, apple strudel and Black Forest cake.

A buffet of German dishes, plus unlimited beer, will be part of the festivities on Oct. 5 and Oct. 12, from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Live music both nights. Admission is \$45 a person.

Plattduetsche hosts a daytime Oktoberfest on Oct. 11. The sit-down meal selections include bratwurst, roast loin of pork, apple strudel and unlimited German beer. The cost is \$30 a person. All the October events are held indoors.

BLACK FOREST BREW HAUS, Farmingdale

German food is part of the menu all year at Black Forest Brew Haus, which will be 'festing through Oct. 13. The fare during the restaurant's 14th annual Oktoberfest includes sauerbraten; smoked pork chops with sauerkraut and mashed potatoes; Wiener schnitzel; wursts braised in Black Forest's lager; and tafelspitz, or marinated beef served with horseradish sauce, red cabbage and dumplings. In addition to its own Oktoberfest brew, Black Forest makes pilsner, amber and wheat beers, plus oatmeal stout, and schwarzbier, or "black beer," with dark malts.

MIRABELLE TAVERN, Stony Brook

German wheat beers are among the brews available at Mirabelle Tavern's courtyard biergarten, which opened in summer and is expected to continue serving lunch and dinner every day, weather permitting. It seats about 15. The courses include flammkuchen, a thin-crust pizza with bacon, onion and sour cream; braised pork belly with corn-and-chanterelle mushroom ragout; and pickled herring with purple-potato salad. Mirabelle Tavern also hosts its Secret Beer Society, in association with other restaurants, with beer gatherings for paying members.