

## Epic Beer just got Bigger

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October sees the release of a new 500ml bottle from Epic Brewing Company. Epic Pale Ale is the first to be bottled in the new format 500ml bottle, with Epic Lager to be available in 500ml come November.

Craft brewers across the country are embracing 500ml bottles format and consumers love the ability to be able to pick n mix a range of different beer styles and breweries. Luke Nicholas, General Manager of Epic Brewing Company says {quotes}&ldquo;beer drinkers can just pick up one bottle of a beer they have never tried before and give it a go. For around \$6 or \$7 a 500ml bottle you can see if it is something you like.&rdquo;{/quotes}

Nicholas who lived in California in the mid nineties, where he got his obsession for craft beers, experienced a similar trend with the local craft breweries. &ldquo;you could go to your local bottle shop or supermarket and have a selection of dozens of beers from small craft brewers. You could try them all with out spending too much&rdquo; says Nicholas.

This single large bottle format which gives consumers the ability to trial was an initial stepping stone for the success of many small brewers in the US. {quotes}Craft beer in the US has been experiencing double digit growth for the last seven years. This has out performed all other beer segments, including premium beer growth.{/quotes}

&ldquo;US craft beer dollar sales during the first half of 2008 increased 11% compared to this same period in 2007. The Brewers Association attributes this growth to a grassroots movement toward fuller flavored, small batch beers made by independent craft brewers.&rdquo; Brewers Association, USA

&ldquo;In New Zealand it wasn&rsquo;t until recently that it made sense to enter this segment of the market because there just wasn&rsquo;t the critical mass of products that gives the consumer the diversity of breweries and beer styles to try.&rdquo;

Nicholas says &ldquo;now that Epic has the ability to be able to fill into 500ml bottles it opens the door to re-releasing previously &ldquo;tap only&rdquo; beers such as Mayhem and Armageddon IPA.&rdquo;

The release of the 500ml bottle follows just a few weeks after the recent awards success by Epic Pale Ale at the BrewNZ Beer Awards in Wellington. Epic Pale Ale won a Gold Medal and a Best in Class again this year.

For further information on Epic beer contact:

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