

The Modesto Bee

Turlock's Dust Bowl Brewing readies its first Bay Area site



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Dust Bowl Brewing Company co-owner Brett Honoré, right, visits with Karen Tate, whose husband is co-owner Brett Tate, and brothers Lars and Colin Russell, all of Hilmar, in a room at Old Town Tap House on Dec. 18, 2021, in Elk Grove.

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Turlock craft beer powerhouse Dust Bowl Brewing Company is expanding once again, this time with a new high-profile location in Livermore.

The brewery, which has taprooms in Turlock, Monterey and Elk Grove, is adding to its Northern California reach with the new site that sits across from the always bustling [San Francisco Premium Outlets](#). The move further cements the company as the Valley's premier craft beer maker, as well as one of the top independent breweries in the state.

Dust Bowl founder Brett Tate, who co-owns the company with Brett Honoré, said they targeted the East Bay site because of its popularity with locals and travelers alike. Opened in 2012 as Livermore Premium Outlets, the massive shopping center draws 8 million to 10 million visitors annually.

"I think there has always been a barrier between the Valley and East Bay or Bay Area in general. So we are now getting over the hump, so to speak. We are breaking that barrier down with this taproom location," Tate said in a phone interview.

The company is shooting for an early summer opening of the new Livermore taproom.

Founded in 2009, Dust Bowl began in a small, unmarked industrial space in west Turlock. The company has grown steadily over the years, opening a downtown Turlock taproom in 2011 and then [opening its signature brewery headquarters and taproom](#) on Fulkerth Road in 2016. The downtown site was [closed due to the pandemic](#) in 2020.

The brewing company opened its [first satellite taproom in Monterey](#) in 2019, followed by [another satellite in Elk Grove](#) in 2021. Now, two years later, their next taproom is underway and will be its

first not in a historic building like its other Northern California satellites.

The planned East Bay location will be an anchor tenant in the Shops at Livermore, a retail center just south of the outlets on West Jack London Boulevard. The taproom will be built inside a new, vacant 3,500-square-foot end corner space with an additional 6,500 square feet of outdoor space that will be converted into a beer garden.

“This will be a fantastic addition, given Livermore’s long history of successful breweries, wineries and food,” said Shops at Livermore owner Robert Himsl in a written statement. “Dust Bowl Brewing is a destination to gather, celebrate the past, look forward to the future and connect with friends and family. We are thrilled to partner with a great brand that values family and forming connections the way we do.”

The Livermore site will have 30 taps of Dust Bowl beers and seltzers, along with an indoor/outdoor bar. As with its other satellite sites in Monterey and Elk Grove, food will be provided by Wedo’s Tacos. Tate said partnering with the food provider at their satellites allows them to focus entirely on their beer. Dust Bowl does operate its own 300-seat restaurant at its Turlock brewery.

The latest expansion continues Dust Bowl’s rise amid the craft brew ranks. In 2020, the beer brand achieved regional brewery status from the national [Brewers Association](#), after producing a then-record 16,500 barrels of beer. In 2022, the brewery pumped out 22,000 barrels of beer. That production puts Dust Bowl in the top 2% of breweries in the state. The company also was named [Brewery of the Year](#) at the California State Fair last year.

And it’s not done growing, either. Tate said the brewery will continue to expand its production and distribution and isn’t done searching for new satellite sites. He said they’ll likely look next toward the South Bay.

“It is a test in patience to grow at a nice pace that doesn’t overburden the company. And I just think that’s a powerful way to grow,” Tate said. “But we’re poised to grow. We have to take the opportunities as they come and go out and search for them.”

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