Beyond the Pale: The Story of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.

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Beyond the Pale

The Story of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.

by President and Owner of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., Ken Grossman

Ken Grossman's passion for brewing began when a friend showed him the basics of home brewing. Using homemade equipment, he began brewing five-gallon batches of beer on his own, and soon became a proficient homebrewer. In 1976, Ken opened his own store, The Homebrew Shop and soon after, began building a small brewery in the town of Chico, California. His goal: to brew exceptional ales and lagers.


"Building and running a brewery is all-consuming," said Grossman. "After decades of keeping my nose to the grindstone, this book was a refreshing chance to reflect on the journey I've taken alongside patient family and friends, loyal employees, and driven industry peers. We've all helped make craft beer something that's both exciting and enduring."

Ken Grossman couldn't have known that his early fascination with taking apart household appliances would eventually lead to welding together Sierra Nevada's first malt mill and customizing its bottling equipment. Although obstacles obscured his path, Grossman's determination to brew the kind of beer he liked to drink and be his own boss led to the success of one of America's best-loved craft breweries that now produces more than 800,000 barrels of beer annually.

Grossman recalls the role models and life experiences that fed his curiosity and drive—from a neighbor's obsession with science and gadgets to the friends who drew him to hiking, and, finally, to the brewing community that provided both support and friendly competition.

It shares the business decisions that nearly broke him, yet eventually drove him to success. The sum total of his life provides the foundation of the "Sierra Nevada way," a company philosophy that emphasizes sustainability, nonconformity, following one's passion, and doing things the right way.

Since Grossman founded Sierra Nevada in 1980, part of a growing beer revolution in America, critics have proclaimed his beer to be "among the best brewed anywhere in the world." Beyond the Pale describes Grossman's unique approach, focusing on people, the planet, and the product. His story shows how, with hard work, dedication, and integrity, you can be successful in following your dream.

About the Author:

KEN GROSSMAN is the founder of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., established in 1980. Ken's passion for good beer began when a friend showed him the basics of homebrewing. He began brewing five-gallon batches of beer on his own and soon became a proficient homebrewer. In 1976, Ken opened his own store, The Homebrew Shop, and, soon after, began building a small brewery in the town of Chico, California. His goal: to brew exceptional ales and lagers.

An avid backpacker, Ken named the new company for his favorite hiking grounds—the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Finally, on November 15, 1980, the Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. brewed the first batch of what would soon become a landmark in American craft brewing: Sierra Nevada Pale Ale. Today, the Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. is considered one of the premier craft breweries in the United States.

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Beyond the Pale: The Story of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.

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