

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

A tour of the taps

April 5, 2008

As a worldwide hops shortage threatens to raise the price of beer, Victoria may be a little more anxious than the rest of the country. The city has four brewpubs for just 80,000 quaffers, which makes it a premium malt destination. At least, for now

SPINNAKERS GASTRO

BREW PUB AND GUEST HOUSES

The brewpub Sure, this 25-year-old bar is Canada's oldest brewpub. It has an original grist mill to go with its computerized fermentation vessels. But the real bonus: Should you overindulge, the property includes a boutique hotel.

The brews there are more than 10 options on tap here. Highlights include honey pale ale made with real unpasteurized local honey. There's also Unsinkable Molly Brown Ale, which has a sweet caramel biscuit smell. Or try the Fog Fighter: It's made with mineral water pumped from an aquifer about 70 metres below the floor.

The dish Why should oenophiles have all the fun? The kitchen here (which concentrates on local and organic ingredients) pays attention to beer pairings. One must: A glass of India Pale Ale and the red miso broth with mussels, line-caught sablefish, fingerling potatoes and pork belly.

The details 308 Catherine St.; 877-838-2739; www.spinnakers.com.