

WARMING UP TO WINTER

Hearty stouts and porters make great cold-weather brews, serving up essence of coffee, chocolate, caramel and other unexpected flavors.

EVEN THE LABEL ART for Cabin Fever, a toasty brown ale from New Holland Brewing Company, is as inviting as a crackling fire.

Cup A Joe — a coffee crème stout from Shorts Brewing Company in Bellaire — is dubbed the “perfect morning night capper” with aromas of malt, sweet espresso and roasted cocoa to awaken your senses.

Settle in with a pint of Winter Block from Detroit-based Atwater Block Brewery: This malty, sweet, dark amber beer is uncommonly smooth.

Or, try the Winter Wonderland Warmer from Liberty Street Brewing Company in Plymouth, brewed with local ingredients, mulled with a spice blend and served hot.

Imagine a liquid Thin Mint cookie and you have the Mocha Mint Porter from Walldorff Brewing in Hastings. This brown porter is steeped with a heavy amount of chocolate coffee and fresh mint.

Michigan serves up brews crafted just for the holidays, too.

Jul Ol (pronounced Yule Ole) is a Norwegian-style, spiced Christmas ale from Dragonmead in Warren. Spiced with cinnamon and nutmeg, this dark ale is available in December and January only.

The deep mahogany color and malty fruit-spice flavors of Noel de Calabaza from Jolly Pumpkin (Dexter, Ann Arbor and Traverse City) make this an ideal holiday entertaining beer.

Bell's Christmas Ale was crafted in Galesburg, using 100 percent Michigan-grown malt, which gives it a dry, toasted toffee flavor without the addition of any other spices.

Drawing from his jovial nature, Chas Thompson — brewer at Schmohz Brewing in Grand Rapids — proudly delivers his Miracle Off 28th Street each Christmas season. Savor this “olde ale” by the hearth.

Learn more at www.MichiganBrewersGuild.org.

— Tai Alexander

