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Better brewing: UGArden teams up with Creature Comforts for a new beer

Lindsay Richman | Contributor Oct 10, 2019 Updated Oct 12, 2019

Creature Comforts released Tulsi, a saison brewed with tulsi and hibiscus. The brewing company partnered with UGArden and used two varieties of the tulsi grown there in its brew, based on the knowledge of Noelle Fuller, herb program manager at UGArden. (Photo/Gabriella Audi, www.gabbyaudi10.wixsite.com/mysite-1)

Gabriella Audi

Tulsi, also known as holy basil, is best known for its use in tea blends. While the medicinal plant has been used for thousands of years, beer drinkers can now find the herb in Creature Comforts Brewing Company's newest saison, Tulsi, thanks to a collaborative project with UGArden — a community garden located in Athens and operated by the University of Georgia.

UGArden's herb program manager, Noelle Fuller, worked side-by-side with Creature Comforts to create Tulsi. The collaboration with UGArden began last winter when Fuller said Creature Comforts visited the farm with an interest in exploring ingredients to add to their beers.

When the brewery's representatives came to the garden, UGArden was sold out of many of its medicinal herbs due to its annual Holiday Market sale — except tulsi. UGArden creates its own line of teas and many of them are structured around tulsi, thus the abundance.



“I think they have a really strong initiative for supporting local and promoting local,” Fuller said. “I think that was part of it — they’re wanting to support farmers to grow things that want to grow in our area.”

Fuller, who studied tulsi during her master’s degree research at UGA, suggested using the herb because it’s a medicinal herb that grows well in Georgia and is UGArden’s “signature plant.”

Tulsi was originally found in Southeast Asia and is commonly used in India. Each piece of the plant has its own purpose — the flowers are best for treatment of bronchitis, the seeds are best for malaria and the whole plant can treat nausea or vomiting. The plant can also help with mental health such as stress and anxiety.

This is not Fuller’s first herb-to-product creation. As the overseer of a student-run herbal products business, the UGArden Herb Program, she helps grow and dry medicinal herbs to sell to the community in the form of teas and other body products.

UGArden hosts events like the Medicinal Herb Holiday Market where it sells products such as soaps, salves, lip balms, elderberries and new seasoning blends.

The UGArden-inspired saison — known as a carbonated, fruity and sometimes spicy pale ale — launched on Sept. 28. It’s available on draft and in bottles for \$14.99 per bottle at Creature Comforts.

The brewery has been known for its collaborations from hip-hop duo Run the Jewels to a brewery in Athens, Ohio.



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