

Restaurants

Michelin-starred Moody Tongue Brewery expands into New York, Florida

By Brandon Dupré

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Credit: Moody Tongue

Moody Tongue Pizza in New York

Moody Tongue Brewery — the first wholesale brewery and restaurant to earn a Michelin star — has been busy expanding, in recent months exporting its elevated beer and food concept to new states.

The hospitality group behind Moody Tongue recently announced outposts in New York and Florida as it grows its brand beyond fine-dining.

Moody Tongue Sushi opened in West Palm Beach in January, with Moody Tongue Pizza opening in New York in December. The company had opened their first restaurant outside of Chicago, called Moody Tongue Sushi & Hand Roll Bar, in New York in 2023.

At first glance the restaurants under their banner seem like disparate concepts — pizza, sushi and a fine-dining restaurant — but all are united by their quality of food and, most importantly, their beer pairings: the foundation of the [Moody Tongue](#) concept.

“Our brand focuses on the elevated beer-centric dining experience,” Jeremy Cohn, CEO and co-founder of Moody Tongue, said. “It’s about pairing our beers with food, so if we’re going to grow a new concept, it is going to be driven first and foremost by pairing food with a selection of our beers.”



Credit: Moody Tongue

Moody Tongue Sushi & Hand Roll Bar in New York

The company's focus on "elevated" beer and food pairings is one of its defining characteristics and separates it from its peers as a Michelin-starred spot. It's currently the only brewery with a Michelin star.

Cohn and his cousin, brewmaster and co-founder Jared Rouben, opened the brewery in Chicago in the Pilsen neighborhood in 2014, and a few years later opened a tasting room, where you could get oysters paired with beers or a Moody Tongue staple: the 12-layer German chocolate cake.

In order to increase production as demand grew, the company moved into its current location in the South Loop, where they now offer a Michelin-starred tasting menu at The Dining Room at Moody Tongue and a separate concept called The Bar at Moody Tongue, which offers their beers with an a la carte dinner menu.

At The Dining Room, you can have a wagyu dish paired with their cherry oud bruin, a complex beer with notes of tart cherry and rhubarb. Or an aperitif pilsner paired with fried fish in The Bar. In Florida, customers can take part in a 15-course omakase menu paired with some beers brewed exclusively for that West Palm Beach location.



Credit: Moody Tongue
The Bar at Moody Tongue

"Anything a restaurant can do to differentiate themselves is meaningful," Darren Tristano, CEO of research and consulting firm Foodservice Results, said. "The food quality and beer pairings will go a long way to attract customers and the quality of the Michelin-rated brewery will keep them coming back."

While it emphasizes its beer, made by co-founder and brewer Jared Rouben, it does not exclusively offer beer. The company also offers an array of craft cocktails and wine to be paired with its food.



The expansion of its restaurant concepts also bolsters its push into new beer markets, the other aspect of its business model. It currently has a distribution presence in 10 states, says Cohn, who added the group will continue to look at expanding into new markets.

Moody Tongue was first recognized by [Michelin in 2021](#), landing on the scene with a two-star Michelin designation, a distinction it held [until 2024 when it was awarded a single star](#).



By **Brandon Dupré**

Brandon Dupré is a reporter covering restaurants, nonprofits and higher education for Crain's Chicago Business. Prior to joining Crain's in 2022, he covered breaking news and COVID-19 at the New York Times. He was part of the Times' coronavirus-tracking project, an effort that won the Pulitzer Prize in 2021.