

BOULEVARD • BREWING COMPANY •

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Dear Friends,

Holy cow, did we ever misjudge your feelings towards chocolate in beer. Before the Chocolate Ale storm hit, it was to us just another in a series of Smokestack seasonal and limited release offerings, a fun collaboration with local chocolatier Christopher Elbow. We packaged the same amount of Chocolate Ale as we had those previous Smokestack releases, roughly 19,200 bottles and 350 1/6 barrel (5.2 gallon) kegs.

You might say that the response to the beer took us by surprise, but that wouldn't do it justice. No, we were blown away by the overwhelming reaction to Chocolate Ale, especially in Kansas City. We're still not entirely sure how or why it happened. Maybe it was just a bunch of things coming together: a tasty and intriguing beer; a strong local connection; a gradual but steadily building buzz as we waited (and waited, and waited some more) for Federal label approval; the just-before-Valentine's Day release, when we finally got the go-ahead from the government; and finally, the impact of social networks fueling demand in real time.

However or why-ever it happened, it was a tempest that left most everyone — from brewery staff, to distributors, to retailers, to you, our loyal customers — confused and frustrated. It's probably not much consolation, but the brewery's 90+ employees encountered the same challenges trying to find Chocolate Ale, since we don't hold back any limited release beers. Most were, like so many of our customers, unsuccessful. We will learn from this experience and, we hope, better anticipate demand of future releases.

To those of you who searched in vain and were unable to find a bottle or pour, please accept our sincere apologies.

Chocolate Ale was going to be just a one-time, one-off release. But due to the overwhelming feedback we've received, and after much internal discussion and debate, we're pleased to announce that it will be back for next Valentine's Day.

We appreciate your understanding, and thank you for your continued support.

Your Friends at Boulevard Brewing Company