

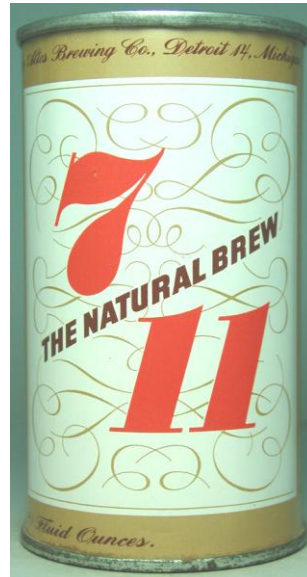
MICHIGAN “DID YOU KNOW” – ALTES 7-11 VARIATIONS

By Randy Karasek

Have you ever noticed the two similar looking Altes 7-11 beer cans from Detroit, USBC 132-28 and USBC 132-29? At first glance it appears they are the same design with some minor color differences. However, look closer at the text inside the gold bands:



USBC 132-28



USBC 132-29

Both cans have the identical text “A True Lager BEER Brewed And Packaged by Altes Brewing Co., Detroit 14, Michigan.” in the top gold band. However, USBC 132-28 has the text “Brewery also at San Diego, Calif. Contents Twelve (12) Fluid Ounces” in the bottom gold band, while USBC 132-29 has just the text “Contents Twelve (12) Fluid Ounces” in its bottom gold band.

Altes was formally the Tivoli brewery (1897-1948), changing names to match its flagship brand in 1948. On March 1, 1949 Altes reopened the recently acquired Aztec brewery in San Diego, managing that west coast venture until March 19, 1953. This dates the San Diego USBC 132-28 variation to within a four year period, sometime between March 1950 (remember both cans are non-IRTP) and 1953. Since there is an Altes San Diego “7-11” non-IRTP cone top, most likely this flat top produced closer to 1952-1953.

In 1954, Altes itself was purchased by the National Brewing Company of Baltimore, ending its Detroit reign. This limits USBC 132-29 production to no more than a year, mid-1953 to 1954, which explains why this second variation is much tougher to find.

Though a much tougher variation, at the Pittsburgh convention I actually picked up the above pictured USBC 132-29 three or four times from Tommy Leo’s tote. Very fair price, but it was basically the same condition as my shelfer USBC 132-28. I hadn’t noticed the variation! It wasn’t until sometime afternoon the next day another collecting friend pointed out the difference in the 7-11 can he had just purchased from Tommy!!!