

Emelisse American Pale Ale

This was the first new beer to be introduced since Brewmaster Kees Bubberman passed the duties on to John De Vries.

Driven by the desires of the export market, this low-ABV 'session ale' is now a permanent member of the Emelisse product range.

At 3.5%, it falls into our 'mid strength' category; a style that is attracting increasingly more focus from craft brewers. For many years in Australia, XXXX Gold has dominated this market segment. But now there are options – with flavour.

From the brewery notes, this beer is 'brewed with pale malt, rye and oats, and hopped with Chinook, Cascade and Columbus.

As you'd expect for a mid-strength beer, the body is fairly light. Fruity hop bitterness dominates, with hints of grapefruit and lemon citrus, peach and a floral character. There is a light marmalade sweetness in the body, and a dry lingering bitterness.



Style: American Pale Ale
Country: The Netherlands
Brewer: Bierbrouwerij Grand Café Emelisse
Alcohol Content (ABV): 3.5%

De Molen Lentehop

The name translates as 'Spring Hop', so it is no surprise that this beer is was originally brewed as a seasonal offering in the spring time.

An interesting fact about this beer is that it is made with a bottom fermenting yeast (as opposed to a top fermenting yeast for ales). So in reality this beer is an India Pale Lager.

The aroma is a mix of soft fruit notes and sweet malt. This carries through into the flavour with orange citrus, apricot, faint pine and a little hint of darker stone fruit. The light caramel malt backbone provides enough sweetness to balance the hop bitterness and create a really smooth, easy sipping beer.

Brewery fact: in 2011, De Molen was ranked 5th in the Ratebeer worlds best breweries list. And it also rated 1st in the Ratebeer worlds best brew pub rankings.



Style: India Pale Ale
Country: The Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen
Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.2%

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Westmalle Dubbel

The classic Trappist Dubbel, and a benchmark of the style.

This slightly cloudy dark brown nectar is an inviting blend of caramelised sugar, dark stone fruits, light roasted malt and of course Belgian yeast characters; including a hint of banana.

The mouthfeel is very smooth, and surprisingly dry. The lovely balance of flavours persist with a fruity but dry and slightly bitter aftertaste.

The Westmalle Trappist Abbey has a brewing history dating back to 1 August 1836. In 1856, the Monks produced the first strong dark beer, and this beer is considered to be the first beer brewed in the Belgian Dubbel style.

***Did you know:** Westmalle Dubbel is the only dark Belgian Trappist ale to be available on draught. It is generally acknowledged that the draught version is less fruity and sweet than the bottled version, smoother, richer and maltier. Officially available at around 300 select outlets, we've managed to source a keg a couple of times to bring over to Oz!*



Style: Dubbel

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij der Trappisten van Westmalle

Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.0%



Kees East India Porter

Formerly the brewmaster as Emelisse, Kees Bubberman is now brewing under his own label. First to try is the East India Porter.

It is an uncommon style name for the beer, though one that was very common in the 19th Century. In fact it was Porter, more than Pale Ale, that was more commonly exported to India during that period. This despite the great stories around Pale Ale and the evolution of today's IPA's.

So in true, historical style this beer is a hoppy porter.

There is strong dark roasted malt aroma, with hints of coffee and chocolate.

The chocolate is less pronounced in the flavour, with the dark malt and coffee notes dominating. The hop bitterness is light and subtle, and adds a delicate spice character to the lingering roasted bitter finish.

Style: Porter

Country: The Netherlands

Brewer: Brouwerij Kees

Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.5%

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Extase

Dochter van de Korenaar choose names for their beers that are reflective of their nature. So we were more than intrigued to try this beer.

Extase was introduced at the 2013 Zythos Festival. It was chosen as the 'Consumer's Choice' beer of the festival. It is a Belgian double IPA, brewed with 14 different hops. Hops are continually added during the brewing process, and the beer is also dry-hopped.

It has a delicious aroma, but good luck with sniffing out the various hops!

My first taste delivered a surprising sweetness from the solid malt backbone. As with all Belgian IPA's, the hop character is more subdued with an earthy character. It took a couple of sips to get my head away from an American style DIPA, and focus on the more subtle flavour profile of this beer.

The brewer notes that it is a beer with stratification, because of all the hops. So there is flavour evolution and change, as the beer warms and develops.

Style: Double IPA

Country: Belgium

Brewer: De Dochter van de Korenaar

Alcohol Content (ABV): 8.5%



Zwet.be

Drie Fonteynen is known for the amazing Lambic beers they produce. But those beers take time, so it makes sense that the lambic brewers supplement their sour stocks with some more traditional beer.

And a sour porter is about as traditional as it gets for Armand at the 3F brewery. (Well that's not quite true, as he makes a blond and also a lager too.)

A normal porter is made, using the yeast from the Beersel Blond beer. It is then refermented in the bottle using a lambic yeast which includes a Brettanomyces strain.

The result is a dark beer with an inviting smell of roasted malt, chocolate, dark stone fruits and yeast. The flavour combines these attributes so that the beer is very porterish, with just the subtle character of the lambic yeast.

Style: Sour Porter

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Drie Fonteynen

Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.0%

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