

## Blanche De Namur

From a Wallonian brewery which has been independent and family owned for more than 150 years, this classic Belgian witbier is a multi-award winner in its style.

It is a typical cloudy, straw yellow, with a huge snow white head. It smells inviting - lots of orange zest and coriander, along with the yeast.

The beer virtually explodes in the mouth, the carbonation making it seem as though the yeast is fermenting on the spot. Citrus flavours are mixed with the gentle spices, as well as light malt.

This is a mellow, smooth and refreshing beer. And it is one we are happy to advise serving cold!

**Awards for the beer:** This clever little beer has been awarded 'World's Best Wheat Beer' at the 2009 World Beer Awards, as well as 'Europe's Best Belgian Style Witbier' in 2012. Most recently, the beer received the 'Europe Silver' award at the 2013 World Beer Awards.



**Style:** Belgian Witbier  
**Country:** Belgium  
**Brewer:** Brasserie Du Bocq  
**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 4.5%

## Abbaye Des Rocs La Nounnette

Brasserie des Rocs (formerly Abbaye des Rocs) is considered to be Belgium's first microbrewery, established in 1979. It is located in the Hainaut province, down near the French border, in the beautiful little village of Montignies sur Roc.

When the brewery started production, the local council limited production to just 50 litres every two weeks. Thankfully, that production has increased over the years and they now produce seven different beer styles.

La Nounnette - marketed as Abbaye des Rocs Blond in the US - is nominally classed as a Tripel. I think it sits stylistically somewhere between a Belgian Blond and Tripel.

It pours a cloudy orange amber, with a sweet aroma of citrus, malt and Belgian yeast.

The flavour is of sweetish malts, orange citrus, banana and a little spice. The beer finishes fairly dry, with a little lingering hop bitterness.

**Style:** Tripel  
**Country:** Belgium  
**Brewer:** Brasserie Des Rocs  
**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 7.5%



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## Troubadour Magma

Belgian IPA's are generally not as aggressively hopped as US IPA's, but Magma is a bit of an exception for Belgium. An amber coloured beer with the bitterness of an American Imperial IPA, balanced with the fruitiness and body of a Belgian tripel.

Czech hops for bittering and dry-hopping with Simcoe provides a wonderfully punchy tropical fruit and citrus nose. The flavour has the sweetness of fresh summer fruits - pineapple, mango, apricot - with sweet biscuit maltiness against the strong background of IPA bitterness.

The harmonious marriage of two beer styles makes this an incredibly unique and enjoyable beer. The beer has been described as the best of old-world tradition, with the best of the new world innovation.

**Beer Fact 1:** *Troubadour Magma was included in US Draft Magazine's 'Top 25 Beers of the Year' in 2011, describing the beer as 'an exceptional riff on a hallmark American style'.*

**Beer Fact 2:** *once a year, at the end of summer, the boys at the Troubadour brewery make a special version of their Magma; changing one element of the original beer. The first few years simply saw a different dry-hopping - 2011 was Cascade, 2012 was Sorachi Ace, 2013 was Galaxy. 2014 saw the beer fermented with three different yeast strains. The yeast experimentation continues in 2015 with 'Tripel Spiked Brett'.*



**Style:** Belgian Tripel IPA

**Country:** Belgium

**Brewer:** Brouwerij de Musketiers

**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 9.0%

## Troubadour Magma 2015 Special Edition: Triple Spiked Brett

Once a year, the Troubadour boys make a single batch special edition of their flagship [Troubadour Magma](#). The first three years saw a simple change in the dry-hop, until yeast experimentation began with the 2014 special edition.

2015 sees the yeast focus continue. At each of the three fermentation stages - main fermentation, lagering and bottle fermentation - a *Brettanomyces* yeast strain is added.

The result is a beer which is unrecognisable from the original. We've included fresh Magma in this pack for the interesting comparison. It just goes to show the significant role yeast plays in a beer!

The aroma is very fruity with grapefruit, mandarin and peach notes, and the Brett funk laying over it all. This follows through in the flavour which is more tart than sour. Lots of crisp, sharp citric flavours, a little more sweetness of tropical fruit and of course the musty, funky *Brettanomyces* character presenting right through. The beer is really quite refreshing, and not something non-sour drinkers should be fearful of.

Overall I think it is an interesting, complex creation. It takes a little getting used to, but when your palette has done its best of reconciling what is going on with this beer, it is beautifully refreshing. And way too easy to drink for 9.8%!

**Style:** American Wild/Sour Ale

**Country:** Belgium

**Brewer:** Brouwerij de Musketiers

**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 9.8%



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## Het Kapittel Prior 9

Its been a while since we've had a beer from Brewery Van Eecke. Located in the 'Brewer's Town' of Watou, just over the French border, it is in the midst of one of the oldest hop growing regions of Poperinge.

The family run brewery dates back to 1862, and is being run by the 7th generation of this family of brewers. Most of their beers are under the 'Kapittel' label, which means 'chapter' - a nod to the monastic links of these abbey breweries.

A Prior is the senior figure of a small monastic community, so it is a fitting name for the strongest of Van Eecke's dark beers.

The beer is a smooth and rich mouthful of roasted malts, dark fruit and candi sweetness. Caramel, raisins, figs plums with hints of toffee.

Having the hops produced nearby, the Van Eecke beers all have generous hop additions. This helps cut through the body, to give the beer a lovely balance of sweet vs bitterness.

**Style: Strong Dark Ale**  
**Country: Belgium**  
**Brewer: Brouwerij Van Eecke**  
**Alcohol Content (ABV): 9.0%**



## Malheur 12

Malheur is made by Brewery Malheur (formerly Brewery De Landtsheer), a small family brewery operating in the small town of Buggenhout. (Keen Belgian beer fans will know this is also the home town of Brewery Bosteels - famous for Tripel Karmeliet, Kwak and Deus Brut des Flanders)

As with many Belgian brewing families, they have a long brewing history which dates back as far as 1773. But this current brewery was reopened in 1997. So something of a (relatively) new enterprise in a way.

The Malheur 12 is the jewel in the brewery crown. A magnificent quadrupel of 12% ABV, which opens with a sweet and spicy body. Plums, raisins, caramel, burnt sugar and chocolate combine with an interesting spice mix of nutmeg and clove.

It then adds an earthy, spicy yeast flavour cut through with a much more bitter hop presence than normal quads. As is so often said of seriously good strong beers, this is dangerously drinkable for the alcohol content.

The beer was awarded 'World's Best Dark Beer' at the World Beer Awards in 2013 and again in 2014. Fair recognition for this delicious beer.

**About the brewery:** *The word Malheur translates to 'misfortune', which is hardly a word I'd use to describe any of their beers. They are one of only two breweries (the other being Bosteels, just a couple of miles up the road) to make true champagne-style beers!*

**Style: Quadrupel**  
**Country: Belgium**  
**Brewer: Brouwerij Malheur**  
**Alcohol Content (ABV): 12.0%**



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