

## Emelisse English Bitter

This is one of the newest beers produced by Emelisse. Following the departure of Kees Bubberman to establish his own brewery, assistant brewer John stepped up to the head brewer role.

An English Bitter is the quintessential session beer, though normally associated with cask conditioned ales. Typically low ABV, with a dominant malt and slightly fruity body and medium level of bitterness, they are the staple beers for most English beer drinkers.

Emelisse's take on this is pretty true to style. A nice bitter sweet caramel malt body, a little fruity with a stronger hop bitterness than normal.

As intended, this is a very easy drinking beer. Flavoursome enough to keep the tastebuds interested, but gentle and sessionable.

Admirers of the Emelisse beers will notice the label for this beer is a break from their normal style. The brewery recently underwent a rebranding process, so look out for the first of the new labels on bottles in the coming months.

**Style:** English Bitter  
**Country:** Netherlands  
**Brewer:** Bierbrouwerij Grand Café Emelisse  
**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 4.5%



## Alvinne Ich Bin Ein Berliner Ryesse



This beer was first brewed as a collaboration between Alvinne and Laugar Brewery from Spain. Alvinne has retained the recipe as a regular in their lineup.

'Ich Bin Ein Berliner' – famous words spoken by President John F Kennedy to convey America's support of West Germany against the Communists states. It translates to something like 'I am a Berliner (in spirit)'.

The meaning when related to this beer is much simpler. It is a Berliner – that is a Berliner Weisse. The further play on words is that this beer is brewed using 20% wheat, 30% rye and the remaining 50% barley. And it of course it contains Alvinne's famous house yeast Morpheus.

It is a delightfully simple sour beer. Without being too sour, it can still draw an eye scrunch at the bottom of the glass.

The wheat adds a little something texturally, while the rye imparts an extra peppery prickle. The beer is crisp and tart, very refreshing with a dry finish.

**Style:** Berliner Weisse  
**Country:** Belgium  
**Brewer:** Brouwerij Alvinne  
**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 4.5%

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## Drake's 1500 Pale Ale

This is the second beer from Drakes Brewing that we sourced – a tasty American style pale ale.

As often happens, this beer was a special brew to celebrate the 1500<sup>th</sup> batch brewed at the San Leandro brewery. The intention as stated by the brewer was 'to make a pale ale with a clean stripped down malt bill and plenty of late addition hops, without overwhelming the beer with bitterness'.

Seems people enjoyed this new creation, and it became a regular on the roster. It has evolved into one of the breweries flagship beers, and been recognised a few times in beer awards.

Drakes is quite open about the ingredients of their beers, so any home brewers wondering can reference their website.

Needless to say this beer has a pretty clear, golden body with those wonderful fruity aromas from the dry-hopping with Simcoe and Amarillo.

The flavour is an easy balance of citrus and grassy hops, with an undercurrent of sweet malt backbone. The beer is crisp and quite dry, and very easy to drink. Guess that means the brewers achieved what they set out to do!

**Style: Pale Ale**  
**Country: United States**  
**Brewer: Drake's Brewing Company**  
**Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.5%**



## Straffe Hendrik Tripel

This is a beer with an interesting history. It was first brewed in 1981 by the Halve Maan Brewery, however the label was lost to Brouwerij Riva in 1988. It was then acquired by Liefmans, until that brewery's bankruptcy in 2007, when the business was bought by Duvel-Moortgat.

De Halve Maan saw an opportunity to re-acquire its old label, and in 2008 a deal was done to purchase the brand from Duvel. So after bouncing around the Belgian countryside, the label is finally back where it began.

'Strong Henry' was the name given to this beer, which is a mix of six specialty malts along with Styrian Golding and Saaz hops.

The result is a deep golden beer with a strong Belgian yeast aroma of banana and clove. The flavour has an inviting fruity malt sweetness of honey, banana and doughy malt, which is balanced by a little peppery spice and a fairly dry finish.

**Style: Belgian Tripel**  
**Country: Belgium**  
**Brewer: Brouwerij De Halve Maan**  
**Alcohol Content (ABV): 9.0%**



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## Duvel Tripel Hop 2016 (HBC 291)

This is a beer we look forward to every year, though each variation is effectively a one-off.

Back in 2007, the brewers at Duvel wanted to do something a little different, so they decided to add an extra hop to dry-hop their world famous Duvel beer. The first hop chosen was Amarillo.

This beer was repeated again in 2010, and from 2012 the beer was brewed once a year, with a different hop. Past editions have featured Citra (my personal favourite), Sorachi Ace, Mosaic and Equinox.

The 2016 version features an experimental hop from the Yakima Valley in Washington State; an area that accounts for 75% of the US's hop production. This hop doesn't yet have a name, so goes by the identifier HBC 291.

It adds a real fruity citrus punch to the beer, and a little peppery spice. A definite change up on the original beer, and at 9.5% alcohol it is a very easy drinking beer.

If you like this beer, or any of the past Duvel Tripel Hops, check out our 'Specials' page for the Duvel Tripel Hop Tasting Boxes.



**Style:** Belgian IPA  
**Country:** Belgium  
**Brewer:** Brouwerij Duvel Moortgat  
**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 9.5%

## De Molen Rook & Vuur

A couple of the things De Molen are renowned for are big dark beers, and the use of smoked malts. And this beer combines both of those attributes, as well as an interesting third feature.

In the words of the brewer: 'No smoke without a fire, goes an old saying. But although we had many smoke in several of our beers, there wasn't a fire. That's why we decided to do something about it. The result is this perfectly balanced beer with hints of smoke and an small fire on you tongue'.

Smokey beers are often quite divisive; its often a case of love them or hate them. And chilli beers are very much the same. So it was an interesting decision to mix these two, but an experiment that really works.

The 'Smoke and Fire' has an invitingly sweet chocolate body early, before the slightly peaty smoke checks in. A subtle chilli kick is in the background, but as the beer progresses, the chilli builds slowly to provide a pleasant warmth in the rich, balanced aftertaste.

**Style:** Imperial Stout  
**Country:** Netherlands  
**Brewer:** Brouwerij De Molen  
**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 8.2%



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