

Redchurch Tartelette

This beer is part of Redchurch's 'Wild Series', an evolving range of beers brewed with wild yeasts, mixed and bacterial fermentation and wild and foraged ingredients.

It is a program we are very much looking forward to, and if you think they aren't serious consider this. They've just finished building a brand new production brewery on the outskirts of London, which will leave the original brewery in London's East End as a full experimentation brewery. That's pretty exciting news indeed.

This beer was the first in their Wild Series, and is their take on a Berliner Weisse. Traditionally a low ABV beer of about 3%, it is basically a white, lightly sour beer with its origins in Northern Germany dating back to the 16th-Century.

In a nutshell, a perfectly refreshing little beer, ideal for the warmer days, or an aperitif at night.

And that's pretty much what we've got here from Redchurch. It's a little higher in alcohol, with a definite citrus hint in the flavour. Only lightly sour, this is a perfect introduction to those not yet a fan of sours, while it holds just enough intrigue for those who are.

Style: Berliner Weisse
Country: England
Brewer: The Redchurch Brewery
Alcohol Content (ABV): 4.5%



De Molen Heinde & Verre

The name of this beer translates as 'far & wide', though the style has its origins not that far away. It is an English Strong Ale, a style we don't see that often; at least this far away from the source.

The style has been described as being 'bigger than a pale ale, smaller than a barley wine'. And we are referring to English styles here, so nothing too hoppy or bitter, the hero is the malt.

On the pour, this beer seems quite still. But a small head will gently form over the bronze coloured body. The aroma is of heavy malt giving sweet fruity notes.

The flavour follows with a big dose of caramel malt sweetness at the start. The heavy body coats the tongue with a pleasant syrupy fruitiness, with hints of orange marmalade, dried fruits, rosewater and toffee.

It stops just short of being cloying, with a hint of hop bitterness and prickle from the carbonation almost coming in as an afterthought. A beer to sip and enjoy, this would be cracking to have with Christmas cake or pudding.

Style: English Strong Ale
Country: Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen
Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.2%

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Emelisse DIPA

The DIPA is an American style Double/Imperial IPA. We often get asked what 'Imperial' means – it just means bigger than the normal version; hence the interchangeable term 'double'.

Emelisse's DIPA pours an inviting orange colour, with a thick white head. The moment the beer is poured, the fruity hop nose is jumping out of the glass. You can happily take in the beautiful aroma, building the anticipation of the palette-wakening sensation you know is on the way from an overdose of Chinook, Simcoe and Saaz hops.

The taste is a great balance of bitter and sweet. Orange citrus, grapefruit and melon present a fruity sweetness before the hops take over.

Far from a one-dimensional 'hop-bomb', there is a solid malt body behind all the hops that balances out the hop bitterness. But the hops are the hero of the beer, with a long, lingering bitter finish.

Style: Double IPA
Country: Netherlands
Brewer: Bierbrouwerij Grand Café Emelisse
Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.9%



Malheur 10

Brouwerij Malheur resides in the town of Buggenhout, just a few miles down the road from Brouwerij Bosteels; which has been in the news recently due to its sale to AB-Inbev (which is just so sad). Fortunately Malheur remains a family brewery, and long may it continue that way.

The Malheur 10 is classified as a Belgian Strong Blond Ale, though I think it shares more than a few characteristics with a Belgian Tripel.

It pours a beautiful golden colour, and the aroma is of Belgian yeast with a little tropical fruit and bready malt.

There is an initial fruit sweetness from the crisp malt, which is joined by some hop bitterness and peppery spice from the yeast. Despite the 10% alcohol, the beer is quite light-bodied, and really quite dry. An extremely easy-drinking double-digit beer; if that is possible.

Style: Belgian Strong Blonde
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brouwerij Malheur
Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.0%



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Dulle Teve

I was going to start by saying that this is one of my favourite beers from De Dolle, but a mental roll-call of the portfolio made me realise there isn't one that is not a favourite. All different, but all so good.

The name translates as 'Mad Bitch', which is quite amusing when you learn the origin of the beer. Brewer Chris proudly proclaims that this beer was made for his wife, who is represented by the caricature on the label.

Just as well then that this is a fantastic beer. A Belgian Tripel by style, but quite unique among the gaggle of tripels Belgium offers.

It has quite a heavy body for a tripel, thanks to a big pale malt bill and the addition of pale candi sugar. There is also lots of Belgian yeast character, with banana, coriander and other peppery spice notes. The sweetness comes across as caramel malt, orange peel, brown sugar and a little stewed fruit.

There is a lot going on, and this is a big beer. But it hides the ABV dangerously well. A seriously good beer, from a seriously good (not to mention brave) brewer!

Style: Tripel
Country: Belgium
Brewer: De Dolle Brouwers
Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.0%



White Pony Ankle Breaker

We've come to expect interesting, out-of-the-box beers from White Pony, and this beer is no different. They brew many of their beers in Belgium, though they don't have a monogamous relationship with any one brewery. This particular beer is brewed at the Fort Lapin brewery, just north of Brugse town centre.

The label had me intrigued from the start. Luckily Stu who works with us is a massive basketball player and fan, so he explained the meaning of the name. According to the Urban Dictionary, it is a basketball term for 'when a person crosses over or changes directions very quickly, getting another player so off balance that they fall over'. Now the label makes sense!

Barley wines are normally big, rich malt bombs, and that is the base of this beer. The use of rye adds an interesting spiciness that cuts through the sweet fruits and caramel malt. American hops add another dimension, with a nice hop bitterness coming in late.

Style: Barley Wine
Country: Italy
Brewer: White Pony Microbirrificio
Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.5%



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