

Dochter van de Korenaar La Frontière

A couple of months ago we included Dochter van de Korenaar's Sans Pardon Imperial Stout. We move to the other extreme now and have their pale ale La Frontière.

It is marketed as an American Pale Ale, but we all know that the Belgian's are generally more delicate with the hop additions than the US brewers. So I'd call class this beer more as a Belgian Pale Ale.

It's a simple little pale ale, with no tricks or additions of any sort. It pours a darkish orange colour, slightly hazy as it is not filtered. There is a fruity aroma hinting at melons, mango and orange citrus.

The flavour is an easy combination of grainy malt, a fresh fruity and grass aspect and moderate bitterness.

It really isn't an American Pale Ale, but a very well-balanced, easy-drinking first beer to kick off our monthly pack.

Style: Belgian Pale Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: De Dochter van de Korenaar

Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.2% (1.35 Std Drinks)



Partizan Pale Ale Crystal Cennntennial Rakau (CCR)

We've been talking to Andy from Partizan Brewing for a few years now. He is one of London's leading craft brewers, with a very small brewery located under a railway arch for the aboveground train line from London Bridge.

There is a great walk of about 1.25 miles from Bermondsey station back into London Bridge, following the above ground line. It takes in 5 different breweries, a fantastic bottle shop (called Bottle Shop!), and a multitude of artisan bakers, cheese makers, charcuterie shops, coffee roasters, etc.

Andy has been hesitant to send any beer to Australia, not so much because of the distance, but rather that he doesn't need to export to sell all his beer. But he liked the idea of our monthly beer club, so he agreed to send a small amount our way, just for our beer club.

It took a little more convincing him to send a pale ale, and we agreed to put it straight into our next pack. So here is the Partizan Brewing Pale.

A new pale ale first released in October 2016, this beer is crisp and dry, with just a little sweetness and a pleasant grassy, citrusy bitterness.

Style: Pale Ale

Country: England

Brewer: Partizan Brewing

Alcohol Content (ABV): 4.5% (1.2 Std Drinks)

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De Molen/Sound Ball & Chain

This beer is a collaboration brew between De Molen and Sound Brewery from Washington State in the US (just below the Canadian border on the West Coast).

So what type of beer do you brew when you bring together the best brewery in The Netherlands with a US west coast brewery? A typical German style doppelbock, using smoked Bamberg malts may not be the first style you'd think of; but that's what we have here.

From the doppelbock we can expect a big malty, reasonably sweet body. With a bit of smokiness from the Bamberg malt. And that's exactly what we get.

Crack open that cap and you get the sweet sweet aroma of bacon! It is both enticing and confusing coming from a beer if you haven't had one like this before.

The flavour is at first sweet with dark fruits combining with caramel malts. Then a dry earthy hop character joins in, as the smokiness comes to the fore. The smoke isn't over-the-top at all, and the sweetness seems to fight back as the beer finishes. A very interesting creation, and a decent take on a very German style beer.

Style: Doppelbock (Smoked)

Country: Netherlands

Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen (Collab. With Sound Brewery)

Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.1% (1.85 Std Drinks)



Leffe Royale Whitbred Golding

This is another Leffe beer from the global monster that is AB-Inbev; and even bigger following the purchase and slow merger with SAB Miller. The headquarters and main brewery in Belgium occupies an entire block in the city of Leuven. So not quite the artisanal, small producer we normally get our beers from.

But even the big guys are trying new things, and this is an example of an attempt to play in the same field as the small brewers.

The Royale is like a bigger, tastier (and classier) version of the Leffe Blond. It was the original in an ever-expanding series of Leffe Royale beers, and this one features Whitbred Golding hops which are grown in the Poperinge region of Western Flanders.

Despite the hops being featured, this is a strong blond ale. A sweet grainy malt backbone carries a little spicy bitterness. The particular hop is said to add a touch of lemon and a slight resinous note. It also plays on the yeast to exaggerate the banana and vanilla notes.

Look out for more Leffe Royale variants in the coming months.

Style: Belgian Strong Blonde Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: AB In-Bev

Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.5% (1.95 Std Drinks)



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Tsjeeses 2015

We had to have a Christmas beer in our December pack, but none of our 2016 beers arrived in time. Luckily we were able to get some more of the Struise Tsjeeses 2015.

We look forward to our Christmas beers every year, though we never get to receive them before Christmas. Luckily these beers keep really well, and probably present even better the following year.

Tsjeeses is a 10% strong blonde spiced ale, lagered for 8 months on different stone fruits. They present early, with hints of apricot, peach and plum, and a little citrus tartness. The body is rich and thick, and hides the ABV so well. It's a beer you could enjoy any time of year.

If you enjoy the Tsjeeses, take a look at our 'Extra Beers' page and you'll see the Tsjeeses Reserva's from 2013 aged in Port barrels or Bourbon barrels.

We've had these available before, and 'found' and extra carton hidden away. They were indeed a happy discovery which we'll happily share!

Style: Blond Kerstbier
Country: Belgium
Brewer: De Struise Brouwers
Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.0% (2.6 Std Drinks)



De Molen Tsarina Esra

This is one of the many beers from De Molen that rates a perfect '100' on Ratebeer, so we thought this would make a fitting finishing beer for the Christmas pack.

Described by the brewery as an Imperial Porter, it suggests that it is just a bigger bolder version of a normal porter. Or maybe a supercharged version!

So we can expect a beer which is a step up on a Baltic Porter, rich and dark, but without the bitter roasted malt character you get from a stout.

The beer glugs out of the bottle and the jet black body is very still. It is bursting with rich aromas of sweet dark fruits and lots of chocolate. Maybe even a faint hint of coffee.

It is rich and powerful, with a viscous, sticky mouthfeel. Strong sweetness of chocolate, plums and licorice. There is a slight roasted malt bitterness and the background hint of coffee, and then a whole bunch more that melds beautifully into a mouthful of indulgence.

Style: Imperial Porter
Country: Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen
Alcohol Content (ABV): 11% (2.86 Std Drinks)



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