

Duvel Groen

I'm sure most of you have had the chance to sample the famous Belgian strong blonde ale – Duvel, over the years (as well as some of the triple hopped versions).

Well, let me introduce you to the Devils little brother – Duvel Groen.

Originally brewed for a festival in Ghent and intended to be a more sessionable counterpart to the 8.5% Duvel. (If you can call 7% sessionable! – though it is in a smaller bottle.)

The Groen in fact has the same recipe of pilsner malts, Belgian yeast and noble hops as the classic Duvel. The big difference being the Groen does not go through a secondary bottle fermentation.

Pouring a translucent pale straw colour and quite effervescent, there is moderate sweetness up front with a surprisingly strong lingering bitterness. Lots of spicy Belgian yeast character with lemon citrus, grassy hops and a dry finish.

Duvel Groen is only found in bottles and is rarely available outside of Belgium. We got lucky!



Style: Belgian Strong Blond Ale
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brouwerij Duvel-Moortgat
Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.0% (1.38 Std Drinks)

Vichtenaar

Sour beer alert!!

Vichtenaar is an Oud Bruin style ale that is brewed by the same Flemish family brewery that produces the somewhat more well-known Duchesse de Bourgogne.

One of the last old-Flemish sour red/brown ales matured in oak casks (for a least 8 months), Vichtenaar has been in production for many decades while the Duchesse has only been brewed since the 1990's. Vichtenaar is an unblended cask aged beer, whereas Duchesse is 2+ year old barrels blended with 8 month old barrels.

Vichtenaar pours a deep rich ruby red bordering on bronze. It has a strong oak and red wine vinegar nose. Medium bodied and quite acidic, there is some sweetness up front, vanilla, oak, balsamic vinegar and sour cherries; it has a nice tart finish.

An excellent example of a rare yet increasingly popular style of beer, this little beauty is sure to be very popular with our fans of sour beer!

Style: Flanders Oud Bruin
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brouwerij Verhaeghe
Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.1% (1.33 Std Drinks)



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Leffe Royale (Mapuche)

This beer completes the trio of Leffe Royale beers, bringing the total number of different Leffe beers to eleven.

For a brewery known for producing abbey type ales, it was an interesting decision to introduce a more hop-forward series. Originally, the first beer (Leffe Royale Whitbread Golding) was to be called 'Leffe IPA'. There exists promotional materials showing images with this label, but they obviously thought better of that decision. But we'll still classify it as a Belgian IPA.

The Mapuche people are indigenous inhabitants of parts of Chile and Argentina, including parts of Patagonia. The hop is named after these people, and is grown on the plains of Patagonia. Leffe claim that the hops are grown exclusively for them. I'd never heard of this hop before, so this may well be the case.

The Mapuche hops are said to have a 'bouquet of blueberry, red fruits, peach and apricot'. There is definitely a fruity aroma, with some tropical fruit flavours in the taste. The beer is a golden copper colour with a sweet caramel malt body, and a sustained bitterness.



Style: Belgian IPA
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Abbaye De Leffe (AB-InBev)
Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.5% (1.95 Std Drinks)



Brew By Numbers 03/05 Porter

Brew By Numbers is one of London's early wave of craft breweries. Established in December 2012, they took up residence in a railway arch under the above ground train line between London Bridge and Bermondsey. They are one of the original breweries in the famed Bermondsey Beer Mile.

The beers have a rather unique naming convention. The first number represents the style of the beer while the second number indicates the version of that beer style. So our Porter here is the third distinct style of beer the boys brewed, and this particular recipe is the fifth different version of a porter they've done.

This beer is an American style porter featuring Willamette and Centennial hops. It has the classic porter characteristics of dry roasted malt with hints of chocolate smoothing the mouthfeel, coupled with a definite hop character of fruity, grassy bitterness leaving the beer to finish quite dry with a lingering bite.

Style: Porter
Country: England
Brewer: Brew By Numbers
Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.4% (1.67 Std Drinks)

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Kees 1750 Export Porter

As we've said before, Kees Bubberman is a creative. So sometimes you have to delve a little deeper than what's written on the label to know what you are about to drink.

This beer is based on an original English recipe from 1750 for a Russian Imperial Stout – the the famed style favoured by Catherine the Great around that time.

The one obvious claim on the label is that this beer is 'black and sticky'.

In truth this beer blurs the lines between what we would now classify as an Imperial Porter and a Russian Imperial Stout. It is pitch black with a heavy roasted malt body. Loads of bitter chocolate with some coffee and a hint of wood smoke.

Low carbonation adds to the silky smooth mouthfeel. As the beer dries out the roasty malt is joined by a spicy bitterness for a satisfying aftertaste which lingers for ages.

Style: Russian Imperial Stout
Country: The Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij Kees
Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.5% (2.73 Std Drinks)



Alvinne Pays d'Erpigny



More known for their sour beers, Alvinne also produces a few beer they list simply under 'ales'. Although I don't know that you can categorise a three-grain two-hop 12% monster like this as a simple ale.

Often Alvinne's purpose of these simple ales is to act as a base for adding fruit or barrel aging. Or more often than not both! Let's call the Pays d'Erpigny a cross between a barley wine and an ABT. It pours pretty still without any agitation, though a more vigorous pour will encourage a little fluffy white head.

The body is thick and malty as you'd expect. The Morpheus yeast is there, though not so prominent thanks to the heavy caramel malt body which gives hints of sweet tropical fruits, like ripe mango.

The alcohol provides a decent kick, though as you progress the beer dries out a lot and finishes with quite a spicy bitterness to compliment the alcohol warmth.

This base beer was put into French Sauternes barrels for 8 months to create the Cuvee d'Erpigny Sauternes – a 12.2% slightly sour-but-sweet delicacy. We'll make some of these available on the 'Extra Beers' section of the website.

Style: Barley Wine
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brouwerij Alvinne
Alcohol Content (ABV): 12.0% (3.13 Std Drinks)

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