

De Molen Summer of '17

We are loving that De Molen is putting some of their beers into cans, and even more so that this one is a lighter option. We don't have many cans in the portfolio, (and glass bottles aren't allowed onto the playing fields), but a can of Rasputin isn't always what you are looking for after a game of football!

So hooray for this little Hoppy Wheat Ale which the De Molen crew brewed to farewell their European summer.

The aroma is a pleasant mix of tropical fruits and sweet grainy malt. As you'd expect, the beer is light and crisp. A pretty high level of carbonation aids the prickly sensation on the tongue.

Hints of grapefruit and other citrus, and a nice grassy and slightly piney hop character lead into what is a pretty good level of bitterness, which makes this beer very moreish and thirst quenching.

Perfect time for us to enjoy De Molen's new summertime beer.



Style: Hoppy Wheat Ale
Country: Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen
Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.4% (1.41 Std Drinks)

White Pony Sun's Architect



This beer is from our only (nominally) Italian brewer, Rob at White Pony. If you haven't had his beers before, he is a young Italian brewer, with many ties in Belgium. As such, he brews most of his beer at some of Belgium's smaller breweries.

This particular beer was brewed out of Het Nest, in the town famous for being the playing cards. You may have had a few Het Nest beers before, such as Hertenheer and Klevere Tien, and more recently the SchuppenBoer Tripel Grand Cru Cognac BA.

Rob is most known for his big, dark and mostly very strong offerings, so this is something of an oddity. It is a mere 6% saison, though a hoppy one brewed with Pacific hops – Summer from Australia and Wakatu from New Zealand.

To me it is a bit of a cross between a Belgian Blond and a Saison. The body is a little heavy and chewy for a traditional saison, but there is enough of the farmhouse yeast character punching through. The hops also feature well with a nice tropical fruit and citrus note.

The bitterness comes through in the finish, drying the beer out. Overall a nice summer thirst quencher.

Style: Saison
Country: Belgo-Italian
Brewer: White Pony Microbirrificio
Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.0% (1.56 Std Drinks)

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Postel Dubbel

Putting this months packs together, I had the thought that we don't really include that many Dubbels. The style is a staple in most Belgian brewery portfolios, and there is always at least one Dubbel on tap in your average Belgian bar. So regretting not having sourced more Dubbels, I'm please to include Postel's in this months pack.

Postel was an abbey beer label, produced in its own right from 1953 to 1988, at which time it was bought by the Alken-Maes brewing company. The Affligem Brewery then continued to produce this Postel beers, and was itself acquired by Heineken in 2000, with the beers still produced to this day.

Potentially good news in a topical conversation with a couple of recent acquisitions of Aussie breweries by the big players!

This is your classic Belgian dubbel, with a big dark fruit and yeasty aroma, and that beautiful brown body with a thick white foam. Lots of dark, ripe stone fruits like raisins and prunes, caramel, lightly toasted malts, a moderate hop bitterness with a herbal, spicy aftertaste.



Style: Belgian Dubbel
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brouwerij Affligem (Heineken)
Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.0% (1.82 Std Drinks)

Kees West Coast IPA



By number of beer styles, Kees is third on our list of brewers featured in our monthly beer packs, behind only De Molen and Emelisse. Although let's not forget that Kees was himself responsible for many of those Emelisse beers before moving on to his own brewery.

So another month, another new beer from one of our most creative brewers. The beer is a tip of the hat to the fruity and bitter IPA's from America's west coast. Although I think this is a lot more balanced – with less hop aromatic – than a true US west coast style.

Thanks to the generous use of American hops – Citra, Mosaic and Simcoe – the aroma is full of tropical fruits like orange, grapefruit and pineapple with hints of pine and grass.

There is a good hit of sweet malt, which balances out the quite high level of bitterness as well as providing a weight to the body of the beer. On the finish, fruit characters fight back with the aid of good carbonation, to leave a pleasant lingering bitterness.

Not quite a true west coast IPA in my opinion, but a delicious beer nonetheless, which somewhat belies the substantial alcohol level. Watch out!

Style: IPA (West Coast US-style)
Country: Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij Kees
Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.2% (1.87 Std Drinks)

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St Feuillien Grand Cru

St Feuillien is one of the many Belgian 'Abbey' Beer labels, which simply means there is (or was) a connection between the brewery and particular religious order. As of 2011, there were 18 officially recognised 'Abbey' breweries.

'Grand Cru' was a term originally borrowed from the wine industry, and has come to signify the best beer, or the one the brewery is the most proud of for some reason of distinction. So most beers that are labeled 'Grand Cru' will be very decent.

And this beer is no exception. It pours wonderfully light, even for a Belgian blonde ale, with the bubbles working the liquid hard to create a highly carbonated mouthfeel, almost like champagne.

The body is crisp, with just enough sweetness to hint at lemon, peach and green apple, with the noble hops providing a floral, grassy bitterness to the moreish dry finish.

It goes alright, as evidenced at the 2012 World Beer Cup where this beer won 'Europe's Best Belgian Style Strong Pale'.



Style: Belgian Strong Blonde Ale
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brasserie St Feuillien
Alcohol Content (ABV): 9.5% (2.47 Std Drinks)

Delirium Christmas

Lovers of big, dark Christmas beers rejoice, we have the offering from Delirium to whet your appetite for the festive season ahead.

Each year we only manage to get our Christmas beers in February. The timing just doesn't work being so far away, but they find their way into bars and bottleshops through the year. We needed to hide these away in a dark corner of the cool room to save them for this time of year.

It pours a lovely rich dark amber, with a dirty white foam through which to take in the Belgian yeast aromas, dark stone fruits, banana and gentle spice.

Invitingly sweet at the front of the tongue, the flavours unwrap to reveal toasted malts, Belgian candi, raisins and plums and just lights hints of Christmas pudding spice and nuts without overdoing things. As all good beers do, it dries out nicely for a slightly bitter, satisfyingly rich aftertaste.

Having spent a lot of time in Belgium, this beer is quintessentially Belgian Christmas. And what could say 'European Christmas more than a faux-ceramic bottle, with a pink elephant guiding a toboggan down the slopes?!!



Style: Kerstbier (Christmas Beer)
Country: Belgium
Brewer: Brouwerij Huyghe
Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.0% (2.60 Std Drinks)

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