

Millevertus Pot'ame

'The Gaume' is a beautiful area in the south east corner of Belgium, down near the border with Luxembourg. It is home to 5 of Belgium's small, very traditional breweries.

Orval is the jewel in the crown that also includes La Rulles, Saint-Helene, the very small Brasserie Gengoulf and of course Brasserie Millevertus. If ever you find yourself in this region of Belgium you are spoilt for choice on quality breweries to visit.

Nearly half of Millevertus' production is exported, and it is a foreign customer that we get to sample this beer. This is a hoppy Belgian Pale Ale featuring Chinook hops.

It's such a well balanced beer, a light malt body with an inviting grapefruit aroma, a subtle Belgian yeast character and mildly fruity taste giving way to a pleasant hop bitterness the carried through to a moreish lingering aftertaste.

More known for their use of unusual ingredients, this beer is very simple and straight forward for this brewery. A very easy drinking beer – you'll probably wish you had more than one!



Style: Belgian Pale Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brasserie Artisanale Millevertus

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

La Debauche Double Belge

Strangely (considering we are a Belgian specialist importer!) Dubbels always seem a bit of an overlooked style. I can rattle off a string of Dubbels I really enjoy, and will certainly order when in Belgium. But this style of beer just doesn't seem to attract the attention of the Aussie beer market, so we don't bring a lot of them in.

So its about time we had another Dubbel in the packs, even if it is from a French brewery! 'The Debauchery' Brewery brew a full range of styles, including a handful having a Belgian influence.

Dubbels typically have a rich malty body with aroma and flavour of dark fruits, caramel malts, a little earthy minerality, low to medium bitterness with a good carbonation and fairly crisp mouthfeel.

I reckon this beer is a pretty good representation of the style. The aroma is deep and inviting, even if it isn't packed full of Belgian yeast character. The flavour is rich without really being sweet, and the hop bitterness is probably at the top end of a low level. The aftertaste has a certain spicy prickle rather than a lingering hop bitterness.

I hope you enjoy your La Debauche Double Belge as much as I did!



Style: Belgian Dubbel

Country: France

Brewer: Brouwerij De Brabandere

Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.0% (1.82 Std Drinks)

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Brouwers Verzet Golden Tricky

We welcome Brouwers Verzet to our beer club. I first had this beer several years ago, sitting in the summer sun at the Moeder Lambic bar in Brussels. It was something very different for a Belgian brewery and one that stuck in my head...until now.

The brewery was started by three students who were in the final year of the biochemistry degree. There was an offer to the students to study brewing science, and only three students accepted. They went on to found Brouwers Verzet together.

With brewing pedigrees including De Proef and Omer in Belgium, and New Belgium Brewery in the US, the guys have experience brewing across a broad range of styles, and atypical for Belgium.

Golden Tricky is a tribute to their local priest Patrick, whose nickname is 'Tricky', when he was heading off to India for volunteer work in India, where mangos are the national fruit.

It's a crisp, light bodied beer with a refreshing bitterness and subtle Belgian yeast character. Ella hops from Australia provide the tropical mango character. (No mangoes were harmed in the production of this beer!)



Style: Belgian India Pale Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwers Verzet

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

Kaapse James

We'll start this with one of the great beer questions. No – not 'what is craft!' The question I'm referring to: 'Is there a difference between a Farmhouse Ale and a Saison?'

I get asked this question quite a lot, and for me personally there is a slight difference. Although that is not coming from any technical knowledge base – more from memory of drinking different beers and what they were called!

For me, a Saison is classic Belgian, though the style range is broad. But it must be funky. Farmhouse has a more French connection – think Biere de Garde's. They are less funky, more earthy and mineral. But the lines are always blurred.

Our Double Farmhouse has a decent dose of funk on the nose, with slightly less in the flavour. There is a little too much sweetness to the body and this probably suppresses some of the funky flavours. There is some orange citrus, light spices with a slight pepper prickle and a grassy note. An interesting beer with a lot in the flavour to explore.

Style: Farmhouse Ale

Country: The Netherlands

Brewer: Kaapse Brouwers

Alcohol Content (ABV): 8.3% (2.16 Std Drinks)



KAAPSE BROUWERS
JAMES
DOUBLE FARMHOUSE ALE

CATS ALC 8.3% VOL 330ml
UNPASTEURIZED 15.3° PLATO EBC7 18 EBU

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Paprikator

De Molen aim to release a collaborative brew once every 4 weeks, and they do a pretty good job of fulfilling this intention. For this collab they ventured a little further afield (metaphorically speaking) for a brewing partner and found Reketeye Brewery from Hungary.

It must always be an interesting discussion between the brewers when they discuss the joint project and settle on a beer style. No prizes for guessing the smoked malt was De Molen's choice, and the smoked paprika powder chosen by the Hungarian brewers.

And it is a pretty interesting ingredient to include in a beer. I don't honestly think I've ever had another paprika beer before. I mean, who would do that?

As always, the smoked beer will probably be either a love or hate job. The smoked malts add a real bacon aroma to the beer. IN the flavour it comes through more as smoked darker meat. The doppelbock has that lovely sweet malt body, with just a little hint of hop bitterness and spice. The paprika takes a back seat, and I doubt I'd pick it as such without knowing it is in the beer.

And in true German style, the doppelbock name must end in 'ator'!

Style: Doppelbock (Smoked and with Paprika)
Country: The Netherlands/Hungary
Brewer: De Molen collab. with Reketeye (HUN)
Alcohol Content (ABV): 8.0% (2.08 Std Drinks)



Emelisse White Label Barley Wine Bourbon Blend BA

I don't know about you, but I've been enjoying these White Label barrel aged offerings from the (new) Emelisse brewery. So we'd best feature another from their initial White Label range which consisted of four different beers.

This is the only Barley Wine, but it isn't their core range barley wine, which is a bigger, heavier and higher in alcohol. This one comes in at 10%, which does have a slightly light mouthfeel for the style.

The bourbon barrels are still quite evident, despite the fact this beer has been in bottle for nearly 12 months now. The aged has softened out the flavour well, integrating the bourbon character with dried dark fruits, caramel malts, brown sugar and woody notes.

The alcohol is covered really well, with just a pleasant warmth giving away the size of this beer. The aftertaste is long and smooth.

There were only 2000 of these beers bottled from the bourbon barrel blends. I think this is my favourite of the four new White Label beers, though I am a sucker for a barley wine.

Style: Barley Wine
Country: Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij Emelisse (Slot-Oostende)
Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.0% (2.60 Std Drinks)

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