

De Molen Achtung Berry

It seems that Berliner Weisse and Gose are going to be Australia's beers of this coming summer. So not wanting to be left behind, we've organized a few from our European brewers.

The first is Achtung Berry from De Molen. It is a Berliner Weisse with hibiscus flowers and blueberries.

It pours the most beautiful deep crimson colour, looking for all money like a nice rose in the glass. The berries and flowers make for a lovely aroma, with the background hint of funk and sour.

For our non-sour-loving members, this is your sour warning (albeit a little imbedded in the narrative!) There is early sweetness from the berries, coming through almost like the slight tartness of slightly under-ripe cherries. The hibiscus flowers add a rose wine note as well.

The lactobacillus does kick in, though (to me at least) very gently at first. It slowly grips the outside, back of the tongue and works it way around the gums for a pleasant lingering bite that encourages another taste of this beer.



Style: Berliner Weisse
Country: Netherlands
Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen
Alcohol Content (ABV): 4.5% (1.17 Std Drinks)

La Debauche Lindy Hop

Here we have a French brewery presenting their interpretation of a largely US beer style, which itself is an Americanised version of a cross between a Belgian and a German beer style. Sounds quite confusing!

La Debauche's Lindy Hop is based on an American Wheat Ale. And this style is probably best described as being something between a Belgian Witbier and a German Hefeweizen.

It has the crisp wheat body of the Belgian Wit, but is a little darker in colour, slightly heavier in mouthfeel and with an ABV more akin to the German wheat beer. The yeast character has a more subdued citrus and peppery nature with none of the bubblegum, banana or coriander signatures of the Belgian or German varieties.

And to make it more Americanised there is more hopping with the US fruity and aromatic hop varieties Cascade, Amarillo, Columbus and Summit.

It all comes together as an easy-drinking, refreshing summer beer style. A little fruity sweetness early, lemon citrus being prominent. Then a solid hop bitterness with a slightly spicy, peppery note and a lingering bitter finish.



Style: Hoppy Wheat Ale
Country: France
Brewer: Brasserie La Debauche
Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.5% (1.43 Std Drinks)

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Kees Hazy Sunrise

Our mate Kees Bubberman has just started packaging all his beers into cans, and the Hazy Sunrise is one of the first we've received. (You might be getting another style in your December packs!)

The beer is labelled as a 'New England IPA', though I'd be much happier in calling it a 'hazy IPA'. But what's a bandwagon for if not jumping on at the first chance?

It is mildly hazy, with a big foamy white head through which the lovely tropical aromas of the Citra, Mosaic and Loral hops filter through. The early fruit sweetness is quickly balanced and then overtaken with a solid hop bitterness. Held against some of the North American NEIPA's I've had the good fortune to taste, I couldn't call this 'tropical juice' though.

It is the sustained level of bitterness that really makes me not want to call this beer a NEIPA. Much like many of the Australian versions, the perceived bitterness is too forward. That said, it is a lovely beer to drink in its own right.

And most importantly, (some Australian breweries please take note) no bags of flour were drowned in the making of this NEIPA!



Style: IPA

Country: The Netherlands

Brewer: Brouwerij Kees

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

Emelisse BIPA



Way back in July 2014, when Kees Bubberman (Brouwerij Kees) and John De Vries (now at De Molen) were manning the tanks at Emelisse, we included the Black IPA in our beer club packs. Now its called BIPA!

Many changes since then, with the brewery being sold and all the beers now being made by the new owners at the Slot-Oostende brewery. Possibly my favourite of the old Emelisse beers was the Black IPA, so it was with some consternation learning that the recipe of this beer had been changed.

The main difference to my senses is a real roastiness in the newer version versus a much fruitier (it was almost tropical) nature to the old version.

This beer has a much more noble hop character and a quite restrained hop bitterness. There is a lot more roastiness there though, with hints of coffee, burnt toast, charcoal and a little licorice.

It is pretty well balanced, with the slightest hint of alcohol. There is a little bitter chocolate, slightly spicy and very dry finish.

Style: Black IPA

Country: Netherlands

Brewer: Brouwerij Emelisse/Slot-Oostende

Alcohol Content (ABV): 8.0% (2.08 Std Drinks)

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Hoegaarden Verboden Vrucht

This beer was first brewed by Pierre Celis – famed for re-establishing the Belgian Witbier style with Hoegaarden - at his small brewery De Kluis which he opened back in 1966. In the 1980's he opened a new facility which was unfortunately destroyed by fire a few years after opening.

It was at this point the Belgian beer company Interbrew took over the brewery. Interbrew would go on to become the global behemoth we now know as AB-InBev.

So for decades, this beer has been brewed at the massive ABI brewery in Leuven. But it is proof that there are beers made by the multinationals that are very much worth drinking.

The 'Forbidden Fruit' has a wonderful balance of sweet ripe fruits, caramel malts, earthy hops and some gentle spices. It has a very full, round and somewhat soft mouthfeel. From a sweet start the beer dries out nicely with a lingering prickly bitterness and just a hint of alcohol warmth.

Style: Belgian Strong Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Hoegaarden (AB-InBev)

Alcohol Content (ABV): 8.5% (2.21 Std Drinks)



Alvinne Moen Rye Tripel

This is one of several new beers produced by Alvinne in the last few months. (So new I couldn't even get a picture of the bottle, as you can see!)

And it is a slight departure from the normal offerings, with the focus being on barrel-aging and fruit additions. This beer is pretty much a Belgian Tripel at heart, but Alvinne don't do normal.

It has a pleasant sweet and grainy malt body, with ripe fruit sweetness as well. The rye no doubt exaggerates the spicy prickle from the yeast. There is a little tartness as well, like green apples with a hint of grass or hay.

The farmhouse yeast adds the barnyard funk as well, which is easily noticeable but not necessarily the dominant feature of the beer. There is a lot going on in this beer, though it all seems to work together after a few sips.

The beer finishes quite dry, with a little spicy prickle and lingering funky bitterness.

Style: Tripel

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Alvinne

Alcohol Content (ABV): 9.0% (2.34 Std Drinks)



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