

## Caracole Troubllette

If you were to plan a flight of Belgian beers, you would likely open with a Belgian Witbier (as they are known in the Flemish dialect – they are called Biere Blanche in the French half of Belgium).

Quintessentially Belgian, this is a style that nearly disappeared by the 1960's when clear lager beers were preferred over the cloudy white beers. It was thanks to Pierre Celis's creation Hoegaarden that this style regained the affections of beer drinkers.

The aroma has lots of orange and lemon citrus, with the characteristic coriander joining in. This follows through in the flavour, with the citrus dominant up front.

A crisp wheat body and a little prickly hop note make for a light, refreshing beer. Slightly sweet in the middle, it finishes quite dry with a prickly hop bitterness.

This is one of the few times you want to drink your beer quite cold. It is a great thirst quencher on a warm summer afternoon.



**Style:** Witbier

**Country:** Belgium

**Brewer:** Brasserie La Caracole

**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 5.6% (1.46 Std Drinks)

## Brussels Beer Project Delta IPA

BBP began commercial operation as a gypsy brewer, making their first beers at Brouwerij Anders. They decided to brew four variants of a Belgian IPA, and put it to a democratic vote for the Brussels locals to choose their favourite.

Delta beat the Alpha, Beta and Gamma versions, and became their first core range beer.

Challenger, Smaragd (new one for me!) and Citra hops provide notes of lychee and passionfruit, backed by a medium malt body and finished with a Belgian saison yeast for a little funk and a very dry, moderately bitter finish.

In 2015 they opened a small brewery and bar in Brussels, just off the main square. But this was just for experimentation and small batches – they continued to brew their production beers at Anders. Plans are underway that by 2020 BBP will open a new 35,000 litre brew house on the Brussels canal and bring all their beers back to be brewed in their new home.



**Style:** Belgian IPA

**Country:** Belgium

**Brewer:** Brussels Beer Project

**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 6.5% (1.69 Std Drinks)

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## L'Arogante

In Belgium, they refer to the makers of L'Arogante as a beer company, rather than a brewery. As often happens, their story began with two friends chatting in a bar of their dreams of brewing commercially.

The first step was to start brewing small batches in each of their garages, before they made the decision to approach de ProefBrouwerij in Lochristi, just outside of Ghent. This large scale production brewery is responsible for producing beers for many breweries throughout Europe, and even further afield.

Incidentally, the brewery name is a mix of the two home towns of the friends – La Roche-en-Ardenne (where the pub for the business meetings was located) and Ghent. A clever play on words.

The beer is a hoppy blond ale, that combines a semi-sweet, fruity malt body with a very grassy, citrus hop-forward bitterness from the Magnum, Cascade and Amarillo hops. It finishes quite dry with a little yeasty, prickly lingering hop bite. This beer really changes as it warms, going from more bitter to releasing the sweetness of the malt body.



**Style:** Blond

**Country:** Belgium

**Brewer:** L'Arogante (De ProefBrouwerij)

**Alcohol Content (ABV):** 7.2% (1.87 Std Drinks)

## De La Senne Jambe-de-Bois

For those that know Brussels 'other' brewery Brasserie De La Senne, you may remember that they are renowned for their generous use of hops in all of their beers. And not the aromatic, US hops but rather than traditional noble hops.

So it is no surprise that their Tripel is known as the most bitter tripel in all of Belgium! (Look at the bottom right corner of the label – even the brewery notes this beer as a hoppy tripel).

As it tripel, the beer seems to break a few of the stylistic guidelines. The big yeast characteristics are there in the form of banana, clove and a little peppery spice. But there is also a citrus note in both the aroma and flavour that isn't normally expected.

The body is also a little thinner and sharper than the average tripel. A little bit like a big pilsner body that has the lovely crisp malt backbone. And this despite the use of Belgian candi sugar, as in most tripel.

It finishes very dry, with that yeast-driven peppery prickle adding to the long, pleasant lingering bitterness.

**Style:** Tripel

**Country:** Belgium

**Brewer:** Brasserie De La Senne

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



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## De Molen Fresh Hop '18

The Boreft Festival is De Molen's annual beer festival held on the grounds of their brewery in Bodegraven. They invite around 20 similarly-minded brewers from around the world for two days of tasting some of the world's best beers.

For their part, De Molen always makes a host of new beers, so each year we time a container so we can bring some of the festival beers over. And this beer is one that was made for Borefts.

Fresh Hop '18 is a double IPA featuring hops from De Molen's own hop farm. The De Molen staff picked the hops in September 15<sup>th</sup>, and the beer was made the following day.

Bittered with Apollo and Saaz, and fresh hops of Cascade, Chinook and Willamette. I was expecting this beer to be a tropical fruit bowl in a glass.

It actually isn't, and seems to be a beer that you work your way into. This is more an old style English IPA with a great balance of malt body and hop bitterness. As the beer warms slightly, the full malt sweetness – and a little boozy warmth as well – starts to come through and balance out the assertive bitterness that is so dominant in the first few sips.

**Style: Double IPA**

**Country: Netherlands**

**Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen**

**Alcohol Content (ABV): 9.2% (2.40 Std Drinks)**



## Emelisse Barrel Finished #1

The new team at Emelisse/Slot Oostende Brewery have been slowly stamping their personality on the Emelisse range since they began taking over in October 2016.

One of the true signatures of the old Emelisse brewery was their White Label range of barrel aged creations. We've featured a few of the subsequent White Label offerings under the new stewardship, but this is the first of the new signature 'Barrel Finished' beers.

And it seems appropriate that the first beer is a 13% Russian Imperial Stout (or 'IRS' as seems the convention for our Dutch brewers), with the chosen aging cask formerly home to a batch of Bowmore Whiskey.

It is a big beast of a beer, thick and rich pouring from the bottle like engine oil which settles quite still in the glass. A decadent aroma wafts from the glass.

Dark chocolate, roasted malts, toffee, a little coffee and a hint of wood smoke are all present. The beer only spent 5 weeks in the barrel, so the peaty Bowmore character is only subtle; but it is there.

**Style: Russian Imperial Stout**

**Country: Belgium**

**Brewer: De Halve Maan Brouwerij**

**Alcohol Content (ABV): 13.0% (3.38 Std Drinks)**



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