

## De Ranke Franc Belge

The Speciale Belge style beers are gaining in popularity in Belgium's domestic market. They represent the first real step up (in flavour) from the sessionable pilsners that dominate the beer market.

Probably the best known example of this style is the traditional De Koninck 'bolleke' beer, which is affectionately known as the beer of Antwerp.

But more of Belgium's brewers are turning to this style as an addition to their portfolio, and it is easy to see why.

A moderate alcohol content firmly places these beers into the 'sessionable' category. And with a lovely balance of biscuity malt and hop bitterness, they are flavoursome and very drinkable.

And that's what we have with this beer from De Ranke. Definitely a biscuity malt backbone from those pale malts, and then a very well balanced hop bitterness. Only whole Fuggles hop cones are used, having that classic European grassy, floral hop character that lingers in the aftertaste, inviting another taste.



**Style: Speciale Belge**  
**Country: Belgium**  
**Brewer: Brouwerij De Ranke**  
**Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.2% (1.35 Std Drinks)**

## De Brabandere Kwaremont

Many of the beers we feature have a pretty cool story behind them, and this beer is one that will appeal to any cycling fans.

There is a section of the Tour de Flandres cycle race that follows a cobbled road known as The Oude Kwaremont. It is a steep 2.2km ascent which has earned the nickname 'The Calf Biter'.

And this is the 'koersbier' or race beer, brewed as the perfect after-race refreshment in the style of a Belgian blond.

The aroma is mostly typical Belgian yeast character, with banana and spice. The flavour is a little fuller, with a solid malt backbone supporting a somewhat pronounced bitterness with hints of tropical fruit zest, and herbaceous, floral bitterness.

And at 6.6% this beer is brewed to the exact angle of the ascent up the climb it is named after.

**Style: Blond**  
**Country: Belgium**  
**Brewer: Brouwerij De Brabandere**  
**Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.6% (1.72 Std Drinks)**



Join our monthly beer club online at: [www.beercollector.com.au/monthly\\_six\\_packs](http://www.beercollector.com.au/monthly_six_packs)

72 different beers over the year, tasting notes and exclusive member offers  
Ask about a private tasting event

## Petrus Dubbel

The Belgian Dubbel style is a staple in many Belgian brewery ranges. It forms part of the classic Belgian 'Blond, Dubbel, Tripel, Quad' line up.

This style originated with the Trappist Monasteries, being a stronger and darker version of the monks everyday 'single' beer. Westmalle is known to have brewed this beer as early as 1856, and was the first monastery brewery to label their beer as a 'Dubbel Bruin' in 1926.

But back to the Petrus Dubbel.

By convention this beer is dark brown colour, and malt is the obvious hero of the beer. Six different specialty malts are used in this beer. The aroma presents notes of caramel, brown sugar, dark stone fruits like prunes and figs plus some spice.

All of this comes through in the flavour as well. A slightly sweet caramel malt backbone with very little hop presence. Those dark stone fruits are there in abundance – take your pick from plums, figs, dates, raisins, cherry. A slightly roasted malt bite helps balance the sweetness, and there is hints of some spice and a little nuttiness in the aftertaste.



**Style: Dubbel**

**Country: Belgium**

**Brewer: Brouwerij De Brabandere**

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

## Atrium Avalanche



With this beer, we welcome Brasserie Atrium into our portfolio. A new Belgian brewery located in the town of Marche-En-Famenne, in the Luxembourg province, owners and brewers Valery and his wife Paula opened their doors early in 2019.

We first met Val many years ago when he was helping Dany at Fantome. He told us of his intentions to set up a brewery in Brazil, but as often happens plans changed and – luckily for us - they set up in Belgium instead.

This beer is a red IPA, which I love. It is a great combination of malt and hops, with both used in abundance.

There is a lovely strong malt backbone of caramel, a bit bready and with a little jammy stickiness to it. Then come the hops – the beer is double dry hopped with Cascade, Mosaic and Simcoe giving a really fruity character with a bit of pine. Its just delicious!

**Style: Red IPA**

**Country: Belgium**

**Brewer: Brasserie Atrium**

**Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.8% (1.77 Std Drinks)**

Join our monthly beer club online at: [www.beercollector.com.au/monthly\\_six\\_packs](http://www.beercollector.com.au/monthly_six_packs)

72 different beers over the year, tasting notes and exclusive member offers

Ask about a private tasting event

## Kees Barrel Project 19.12

I'm starting to really look forward to these barrel project releases from Kees.

Every month, he is releasing a barrel aged treat. Typically, Imperial Stout and Barley Wines lend themselves really well to barrel aging, particularly if the barrel previously held whiskey, bourbon or rum. But every so often, our very creative made from Middelburg comes up with something just a little different.

This is an imperial saison of 9.5%, aged for 6 months in Buffalo Trace bourbon barrels. When I read that listing on his email, I wanted one then and there. But we patiently waited a few months, and now we can share them with you.

I guess the first thing I noticed was that it wasn't very saison-y! There is a really solid malt body to this beer, that made me think of an English barley wine. And it is pretty obvious that it has spent time in a bourbon barrel, but that's not a bad thing.

After a few sips, the saison character seemed to become more prominent. While the body is heavy, it is smooth (there are oats in the malt bill) and it finishes drier than you'd initially think. There is some light funkiness, even a little tartness to the aftertaste. And a bit of vanilla. It is an interesting and pretty tasty project. Definitely one of out the box!



**Style: Imperial Saison (Barrel-Aged)**

**Country: Netherlands**

**Brewer: Brouwerij Kees**

**Alcohol Content (ABV): 9.5% (2.47 Std Drinks)**



## De Molen Said & Done

Strap yourselves in for this beer, as it is something different – even from De Molen!

Here we have ourselves a Sour Imperial Stout with walnut extract, caramel and salt. Oh, and it is also aged in Bowmore Whiskey barrels to add that touch of smoke and peat.

It is one of those beers that you can't possibly hope to taste from the off. It takes a few sips before your tastebuds are able to recognise what you are drinking as it is a bit out there.

The aroma has lots of salted caramel, roasted malts, a little dark stone fruit and of course the nutty character. The flavour I guess is pretty similar. Early on we have the slightly sour imperial stout, though it borders on tart (like from cherries) rather than sour. There is a sweetness to the malt body, caramel or toffee, but there is a roasted astringency and smokiness that cuts through that sweetness. It really does change, particularly as it warms.

I'll stop trying to describe it, just enjoy it and see what you get.

**Style: Imperial Stout**

**Country: Netherlands**

**Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen**

**Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.4% (2.71 Std Drinks)**

Join our monthly beer club online at: [www.beercollector.com.au/monthly\\_six\\_packs](http://www.beercollector.com.au/monthly_six_packs)

72 different beers over the year, tasting notes and exclusive member offers

Ask about a private tasting event