

Blanche De Namur Rosee

Quite a few years ago while still living in London, I lined up 12 Belgian witbiers. Together with two mates, we tasted and rated them all. Our unanimous winner was Blanche De Namur.

So it was with great interest that we sourced this new beer from Brasserie Du Bocq. The brewers have taken their multi-award winning witbier and added fresh raspberry juice.

It pours a really attractive pink colour, with a rocky white foam that lasts well into the beer. The raspberry adds a fruity aroma to the banana and bubblegum of the witbier.

In the flavour it is pretty sweet. It does have a little tartness, though the sweet is more pronounced. The beer is light and refreshing, and given the low ABV it is super easy drinking. For witbier fans, and those who like their fruit beers a bit sweeter, I'm sure this will find favour.

The flavours do disappear quickly, and the lasting raspberry flavour is a little sweet, with a slight artificial feel. It's an interesting change on the classic witbier, but I'd probably stick with the original given the choice.

Style: Witbier

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brasserie Du Bocq

Alcohol Content (ABV): 3.4% (0.67 Std Drinks)



Hof ten Dormaal Lauwendries Saison

If you were to imagine a traditional European farmhouse brewery, Brouwerij Hof Ten Dormaal is about as authentic as you can get. The rural village of Tildonk, near the university town of Leuven is home to this quaint establishment.

They are known for using many of their own-grown ingredients. They have 15 acres on which they grow barley, wheat and spelt as well as growing two different types of hops. To complete the ecological cycle, the spent grain is fed to the horses and cows on the property including the beautiful big draught horses.

This saison is made with a host of different grains – barley, wheat, spelt, rye and oats and it is hopped with Magnum, Cascade and Prima Donna.

The beer is quite dry, with the typical funk you'd expect from a saison. Grainy malts combine with a grassy, floral hop bitterness that finishes with a peppery tickle.

Style: Saison

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Hof ten Dormaal

Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.8% (1.51 Std Drinks)



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Kees American Brown Ale

Brown Ales trace their origins back to the late 17th-Century. And like many historical beer styles they almost disappeared before undergoing somewhat of a revival; albeit that revival was a century ago.

They are mostly assigned to English brewers, and in more recent times the American Brown Ale was born. Of course, the American version involved adding more hops to the beer.

I've probably said it before, but I am a real fan of Brown Ales, particularly the well-executed American style. It's a beer that I'd like to see more of, so I'll always grab some when any of our brewers turn their hand to the style.

Sadly, we could only get a handful of cartons from Kees on the last container. Fortunately, we have just about enough to include this beer in our members pack.

Kees suggests the beer is 'richly sweet & nutty', and there's not a lot to argue about there. Quite rich caramel malt with hints of hazelnut. It finishes relatively dry with a lingering bitterness; though personally I'd love some more hops to this beer. (But I'm being fussy).



Style: American Brown Ale

Country: Netherlands

Brewer: Brouwerij Kees

Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.9% (1.54 Std Drinks)

Brasserie LeFort

This is our second beer of the LeFort label, but it is actually the original beer from the brewery.

We detailed a little history of the brewery when we featured the LeFort Tripel, and to complete the story we need to tell you that the original brewery on the town square in Kortrijk used to be home to a fort. Now you know how they got the name!

This beer is a Belgian Strong Dark Ale – the kind of catch-all beer style for big dark Belgian beers that aren't dubbels, quadrupel, stouts, etc.

Malt is the hero of this beer, with four different malts in the malt bill. Chocolate and a little caramel are the dominant flavours. Belgian candi sugar adds that bit of sweetness though the beer does dry out toward the finish.

Style: Belgian Strong Dark Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Omer Vander Ghinste

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



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De Molen Party sQuad

The first guest member tasting notes, from Terry Wilson who lives in Terranora, NSW.

De molen – a brewery that is a staple of the IBC monthlies, and how lucky we are for this to be so. It is a brewery that requires little introduction, but my first experiences weren't exactly what my opinion is now. I tried my first De mol in Nov of 2017, it was lighter fare and was good without being rememerable. I do remember however getting something very similar in appearance the month after and thought I got the same beer again. Little did I know the label design forever remains the same, the wording changes. As does everything within, and sometimes on the outside too (hands up who enjoys a waxy de mol?)

The De Molen in this pack is a waxy De Mol ☺ (instant win) - the Party sQuad. It is described as a dry quadruple barrel aged in bourbon, adding sweetness whilst still preserving some bitterness. It was part of the Borefts beer festival, an event one day I wish to attend, with Jason as my guide. Sounds like a great tour. Who is in?

It pours a darkish brown, with a beautiful beige, bone or off white head. It looks an absolute treat. From a distance I can already smell caramel with a touch of bourbon. On first sip there are some of the qualities expected of a quad. Mild spices, some vanilla, and dark fruits such as plum and fig, the butterscotch and caramel sweetness comes through and takes over, before a small touch of bourbon brushes the palette finishing with a subtle bitterness. This is enough to lick the lips and go back for more. It has a likeness to a barley wine more so than a quadruple for me, but I will not complain. This is a beautiful delicious brew, reaching the highest of heights expected of a waxy de mol. Enjoy!!!!

Style: Quadrupel

Country: Netherlands

Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen

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



Totem Speculoos Stout

Totem is another of Belgium's (relatively) new, small breweries. They commenced gypsy brewing, first at Brouwerij Anders in 2014, then with Bryggja Brewery from 2015. They finally set up their own brewery in 2019.

They tend to brew beers which are very atypical for a traditional Belgian brewery. No sign of any dubbels or tripels here!

This beer is a Russian Imperial Stout with coffee and 'speculoos'. Speculoos is a type of spiced shortbread biscuit. The biscuit is traditionally made just before St Nicholas' day in The Netherlands.

The colour of this beer is awesome, as it pours very thickly from the (quite solid!) can. Big aroma of coffee and some spice, with chocolate, caramel, raisins and dates. The flavour isn't as sweet as the aroma or body might suggest. A dark chocolate bitterness comes with a pappery and slightly earthy note in the very long finish.

Style: Russian Imperial (Coffee) Stout

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Totem

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



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