

Original Landbier Zwick'l

In 8 years of our beer club, we've only ever featured one Zwickelbier before, but now we have our second. This time we have the Original Landbier Zwick'l from the Bayreuther Bierbrauerei from Bayreuth in Germany.

A Zwickelbier is a traditional German lager, naturally carbonated, unfiltered and unpasteurised. It is referred to as the cask ale of the lager world. Often grouped into the Kellerbier category, the difference being it is less hoppy, a little lighter in taste and not allowed to lager as long as Kellerbier.

Interestingly, the term 'Zwickel' refers to the small amount of beer the beermaster takes from the barrel, using the special tap known as a 'Zwickelhahn'.

This beer pours a reddish-brown colour, with a slight cloudiness. Aromas are of sweetish bready malts, some fruit and a touch of woodiness. There is early sweetness in the taste, grainy malt and dried stonefruit, with a little herbal, grassy note. Medium hop bitterness balances out the taste. Simple, tasty and refreshing – you can see why these types of beers are served in steins and drunk all afternoon long.



Style: Zwickelbier

Country: Germany

Brewer: Bayreuther Bierbrauerei

Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.3% (2.09 Std Drinks)

Uiltje Fred & Willamette

It must be quite a cool job coming up with the marketing for the Uiltje beers. They are producing new beers every week, and somehow still presenting very cool can art and beer names for the new creations. Here we have another hoppy beer packaged in a very fun-looking can.

Fred & Willamette is of course a play on words for one of the old-school hops used in the beer. Our 'Stone Age IPA' features Willamette, East Kent Goldings, Columbus and Centennial hops, supported by a malt base of Maris Otter Pale Malt and some Pilsner Malt.

The malt base is very much a feature of this beer, vying for the spotlight with those traditional hops. The bready malt provides the early inviting sweetness, joined by the hops with notes of pineapple, orange and grapefruit along with that grassy, earthy flavour. The beer finishes quite dry, with a lingering herbal bitterness.

So not really a Stone Age beer, more an English IPA. This was the style of IPA's more common in the late 1990's and early 2000's – before the US IPA's with their tropical fruit flavours and aromas took the craft beer market by storm.



Style: IPA

Country: Netherlands

Brewer: Brouwerij het Uiltje

Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.2% (2.15 Std Drinks)

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La Debauche Fur & Bones

Farmhouse ales were traditionally brewed throughout the Kingdom of Flanders, which now incorporates parts of France, Belgium and The Netherlands. And while there is some commonality to the style, farmhouse ales probably have the greatest variance of any established beer style.

That is because the beers were made using ingredients specific to the area, or dependent on the produce of the particular farm. Farmhouse ales really were a reflection of the region, particularly the yeast used in the beer.

This beer from La Debauche is quite a delicate farmhouse ale, with the flavours and aromas more subtle than some of the saisons we've enjoyed from say our Belgian brewers.

It pours a light straw colour, with a definite cloudiness. The aroma is of grainy malt with a little fruitiness and light funk.

The beer is crisp and light, quite grainy in the texture. Even early on, the beer is quite dry, with not a lot of fruit sweetness. Looking for fruit it is more in the form of dried fruits like apricot or pineapple.

The hops add a firm level of bitterness without any real fruity flavours, and the beer finishes with a little spicy, peppery bitter aftertaste. It is really refreshing, and a great thirst quencher, and that is what this style of beer was designed for.



Style: Farmhouse Ale

Country: France

Brewer: Brasserie La Debauche

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

Bootjes Bier

Here's a beer from another new brewery to our packs, but one that has been around for 10 years. Antwerpse Brouw Compagnie was started in 2012 when the international marketing manager from Duval Moortgat (Johan van Dyck) decided to swap from a big beer company to explore the history of brewing in Antwerp. We'll save the full story for another beer.

Being an Antwerp local with a love of the history of his city, it is no surprise that this beer is a tribute to the Red Star Line. This shipping line carried some two million immigrants from Antwerp to North America over the period 1873-1934.

The beer is a celebration of the Trans-Atlantic link, combining the tradition of Belgian brewing with the influence of craft beer in the USA. Brewed using four different malts and a selection of both Belgian and US aromatic hops, this beer is finished with ginger and coriander.

Sweet toffee malt early on, with a prickly carbonation and bite from the ginger, the hops provide a citrus hit and slight herbal note. It finishes quite light and dry, with a little fruit and good bitterness in the aftertaste.



Style: Red Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Antwerpse Brouw Compagnie

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

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Schneider Weisse Tap 06 - Aventinus

This beer is one of the first German beers I ever tried, and that was at least 20 years ago. It was pretty mind blowing at the time, and it still holds up in today's busy beer market. That's the thing about the classic beers from heritage breweries – they are the original and the best.

Schneider Weisse was founded in 1872, so they are old but nowhere near the oldest brewery still operating. It is based in the village of Kelheim in Bavaria, on the banks of the Danube River where they exclusively brew their range of weissebier (wheat beer).

The Aventinus is the oldest wheat doppelbock in the world, first produced back in 1907. And it is still rated at one of the best in the world.

The beer is a malt bomb that pours a lovely dark ruby colour. The aroma is sweet dark and dried fruits, banana, brown sugar, caramel, bread and some woodiness.

In the taste there is a beautiful sweet fruit and malt that greets the tastebuds. The flavour is full but gentle, smooth but bold. Lots of those dried dark stone fruits from the aroma, caramel mat, brown sugar, and just enough bitterness and carbonation so that it isn't too sweet. The beer is quite heavy on the tongue and leave this lovely coating behind that is enjoyed with the long, rich aftertaste. This beer truly is a classic!



Style: Weizen Doppelbock

Country: Germany

Brewer: Schneider Weisse Brauhaus

Alcohol Content (ABV): 8.2% (3.23 Std Drinks)

Adriaen Brouwer Oaked



Belgian beer fans may well be familiar with the Adriaen Brouwer range of beers. They are produced by Brouwerij Roman, who are reportedly the oldest still-operating brewery in Belgium. They've been brewing since 1545!

This beer was based on the previous seasonal offering the Winter Wood, which we featured in our February 2019 pack. This beer was aged on wood chips from whiskey barrels, but now the beer spends time in sherry or whiskey barrels and is then blended. It is basically the same Belgian strong dark ale at heart, though there is a little more roasted malt in the grain bill which gives it that darker brown colour.

Lots of sweet dark fruits, caramel malts, sherry and whiskey plus vanilla from the barrels are all present in the aroma. The first taste is rich and smooth, belying the 10% ABV.

More flavours open up as the beer warms a little. Caramel, brown sugar, dried figs, raisins, plums and cherries all present in the taste. Underneath those flavours the sweet sherry (and to a lesser extent for me at least) and whiskey barrel notes add themselves.

This beer is now a part of the Roman core range, so you don't have to wait all year for it to become available.

Style: Belgian Strong Dark Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Roman

Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.0% (2.60 Std Drinks)

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