

Jupiler

Every country has a nationally recognised beer, and for Belgium that beer is Jupiler. It is Belgium's #1 selling beer, with around 40% of the beer market.

This beer is quite literally everywhere – in every Shawarma kebab joint, any convenience store, virtually every eating establishment that sells alcohol, every petrol station even including the services on the freeway.

Everywhere you look you will see someone drinking a Jupiler. For a beer that was only introduced in 1966 it has taken over a country.

It has been remiss of me not to include this beer in our beer packs before now. But the time has arrived for everyone to have a Jupiler.

The name of the beer comes from the town in which the brewery is located. Jupille is a district in the city of Liege in the eastern-most province in Belgium.

The beer is pretty much what you'd expect for a mass-produced pils. It pours a perfectly clear golden body with aromas of malt and grassy hops. There is some malt sweetness while the beer is crisp and reasonably dry with a good bitterness that lingers in the aftertaste.

Sitting in a little Belgian canal-side bar, resting the legs after a day of sightseeing, this beer can be enjoyably refreshing. It is far from the worst pils you'll ever drink, and now you've had a classic taste of Belgian beer life.

Style: Pilsner

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brasserie Piedboeuf (AB-InBev)

Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.2% (2.05 Std Drinks)



Uiltje Bird of Prey Grapefruit

Uiltje have taken their flagship Bird of Prey IPA and pimped it with the addition of some fresh grapefruit.

The original beer is a tropical fruit bowl of taste and aroma with Chinook, Cascade, Citra, Mosaic and Amarillo hops combining for this multi award winning IPA. And the grapefruit just makes sense to throw in the mix.

There is a nice balance to the beer with the malt body combining with the fruit sweetness to support the hop bitterness and the added tart flavour given by the grapefruit. Neither really dominate, and that's what makes this such an easy beer to enjoy.

Is this variation better than the original? If you can remember the original then let me know. I generally favour the originals with most beers but on this one I reckon I could be swayed.

Style: IPA

Country: Netherlands

Brewer: Brouwerij het Uiltje

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

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Jan De Lichte

Jan De Lichte was the leader of a notorious gang of thieves who were Belgium's equivalent of Robin Hood and his merry men. They stole from and murdered the invading French troops during the War of the Austrian Succession in the 1740's. He was ultimately captured during the ceasefire in 1748, and later executed by the 'breaking wheel'. His home town was Aalst, and his exploits are celebrated by the 'Glass Tower' brewery with this beer bearing his name.

This was the fourth beer introduced to their range back in May 2005. It is an imperial witbier – a style that is rarely seen, even in Belgium which is the home of witbier.

For those unfamiliar with this style, it is simply Belgium's version of a wheat beer, often referenced as a 'white beer' because of the milky appearance resulting from the use of at least 40% wheat in the malt bill. This particular beer uses barley and wheat as well as oats and buckwheat. And typical for witbier there is coriander and curacao added.

The beer has an early malt sweetness that is somewhat smooth at first, giving way to a citrus flavour and hop bitterness that lightens the body. As it dries out it creates a pleasantly prickly finish.



Style: Imperial Witbier

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij De Glazen Toren

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

Lupulus Bruin Bio

Brasserie Lupulus are slowly becoming a more prominent brewery in the Belgian beerscape, having started quietly back in 2007.

It is no surprise that the brewery produces quality beers given that a fellow by the name of Pierre Gobron is responsible. Along with his brother-in-law Chris Brauweraerts, they set up the Achouffe brewery in 1982.

When Achouffe was sold to Duvel-Mortgaat in 2006, Pierre decided to set up his own brewery and Brasserie Lupulus was born in the town of Bovigny. It's a beautiful area of the Ardennes, in the very south of Belgium where it borders the top of Luxembourg.

We've previously enjoyed the Lupulus Hopera IPA as well as the Hibernatus winter beer. And looking forward I'm sure we'll introduce more. But this month is all about the Lupulus Bruin Bio beer.

There is a very inviting sweetness up front, with bready malt, toffee and dark dried fruits. There is low hop bitterness but it does have a little citrus bite from the orange peel added at the end of the boil. It dries toward the end leaving a malty and fruity aftertaste that lingers long.



Style: Belgian Strong Dark Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brasserie Lupulus

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

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De Dolle Special Extra Export Stout

De Dolle is well worth a visit if you ever find yourself with a spare Saturday or Sunday when in West Flanders. It is a really welcoming space, typically quirky and small scale. But it is places like this that make Belgium's brewing industry special.

The De Dolle beers are reasonably easy to find in bars and bottle shops, though they only produce around 1000 hectoliters per year (that's around 300,000 bottles). But this beer is pretty tricky to find in Belgium as it is only brewed once or twice a year. It was made for export to the US at the request of the US distributor. Pretty much as the name suggests!

And it is a very different style of beer for a brewery that produces a range of traditional Belgian styles. That just makes it all the more interesting though.

It is very English in style, save for the use of the Arabier yeast. Very dark, almost black body with a strong aroma of dark chocolate, coffee, dark dried fruits and brown sugar. The only surprise in the flavour is that the beer isn't as sweet as the aroma suggested. There is also an earthy bitterness and a hint of woody spice or even licorice.

The finish is long and slightly bitter in the dark chocolate sense. It probably sits somewhere between an imperial stout and a classic Belgian strong dark ale. Either way it is rather nice.



Style: Belgian Imperial Stout

Country: Belgium

Brewer: De Dolle Brouwers

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

Black Damnation II – Moccha Bomb (2018)

Something extra special from Struise as a thank you to all of our beer members for your patience and understanding while waiting for our delayed container this month!

The Black Damnation series from Struise are all based around Black Albert, a Belgian Royal Stout of 13% ABV. The idea was to create a series of different beers: some barrel aged or ice-distilled, some with additional ingredients or blends of different beers.

BD2 is a blend of 50% Black Albert matured on whole Columbian coffee beans, 25% De Molen Hel & Verdoemenis aged for 6 months in Jack Daniels barrels and 25% Cuvee Delphine (Black Albert aged 12 months in 4 Roses Bourbon barrels).

It is a beast of a beer with a heavy aroma of coffee, vanilla, roasted malts, dark fruits and bourbon notes. All of this and more are present in the taste, which is rich and full from the start.

Roasted malts with the bite of dark chocolate are the backbone of the beer, with coffee, bourbon, caramel, raisins, brown sugar, vanilla and even something a little spicy. It is boozy though the beer is velvety smooth, covering off the high alcohol so well. The balance of the blended beers is achieved with true skill from the Belgian masters of barrel-aged dark beers.

Style: Belgian Royal Stout

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Struise Brouwers

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



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