

Corsendonk Blanche

The beers of Corsendonk are Abbey Ales, meaning they have an historical connection to an abbey, but the beers are no longer brewed or even owned by the abbey. Instead Brouwerij Corsendonk operated from 1906 til 1953, at which time the brewery was closed down.

Fast forward three decades, and the original brewers grandson revived the brand. No longer having a brewery, they arranged for their beers to be brewed at Brasserie Du Bocq in nearby Pernode in the Namur province.

For forty years, this arrangement has served both parties well, and the Corsendonk beers continue to be a part of the Belgian brewing landscape.

This is their witbier, which is really only made for export. It is classically Belgian in style, with a slightly hazy appearance and an aroma of banana, coriander and orange peel.

It is light and well carbonated, with a crisp wheaty body. The coriander and orange are present in the taste, along with the over-riding banana esters from the yeast. It has a prickly, somewhat spicy finish, maybe a little sweeter than some of the other witbiers I've had.



Style: Witbier

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Corsendonk (by Brasserie Du Bocq)

Alcohol Content (ABV): 4.8% (1.25 Std Drinks)

Maredsous Blond

The Maredsous beers are easily found in Belgium, and across much of western Europe, but that doesn't change the fact they are really good beers.

The centuries-old Maredsous abbey is in the town of Denée is the southern Belgian province of Namur. And since 1963 they have had their beers brewed under licence by the Duvel-Moortgat brewery.

Thanks to the distribution network of Duvel, the Maredsous beers are easily found in Belgium and across much of western Europe. That doesn't change the fact they are excellent beers, brewed to recipes handed down from the original Benedictine monks.

This Maredsous Blond was originally brewed for the refreshment of the working monks, it was the first beer brewed by the original brewery and is still enjoyed at meal times by the Monks to this day.

The beer pours a lovely golden colour, with a strong malty aroma mixed with the floral and herbal yeast note.

It has a full and smooth bready malt body, balanced by a solid hop bitterness. The sweetness stays through the beer, though it does dry out on the finish with a herbal, slightly spicy finish that lingers in the aftertaste.

Style: Blond

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Abbaye de Maredsous (Brouwerij Duvel-Moortgat)

Alcohol Content (ABV): 6.0% (1.56 Std Drinks)



Join our monthly beer club online at: 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

Bornem Dubbel

The Bornem label is brewed by Brouwerij Van Steenberge, most known for the Gulden Draak beers amongst a host of others.

Another of the Belgian Abbey Beers, with links to the Sint-Bernardus Abbey in Bornem, Van Steenberge has brewed these beers since 1971.

The Belgian Dubbel style is a great stepping stone into the darker style beers for those that may be a little apprehensive. It is more brown in colour than overly dark like a stout. Traditionally with an ABV around 6.5-8.0%, they'll have in inviting malt and dried stone fruit sweetness up front, with the beer drying out as you progress.

The Bornem Dubbel fits that bill, with the flavour of caramel malt, raisins and a little red berry. The beer has a relatively high carbonation, so sits lightly on the pallet. Spicy Belgian yeast and some earthy hop bitterness balance out the sweetness.

It feels an uncomplicated beer, but in a good way. Very easy drinking, but with more than enough flavour to sip and savour.

Style: Belgian Dubbel

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Van Steenberge

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



Gouden Carolus Tripel

I can't quite believe that we've never featured this beer in a previous beer pack but looking back over the records it is the case. Well, we can make good on that oversight this month.

As I've said before, tripels really are the beer style every Belgian brewery is judged on. They are our equivalent of a pale ale in the sense that virtually every brewer makes a tripel, and it is often the first beer they release.

This beer has a little more heritage though, said to have originally been brewed in honour of the Knights of the Golden Fleece when they came to Mechelen in 1491!

It pours a slightly hazy yellow gold colour, with a classically Belgian yeast aroma along with citrus and spices. The taste is a beautifully balanced mix of bready malt but crisp body, coriander and citrus, with good bitterness and a spicy yeast note that gives a lingering prickly finish.

This beer doesn't get the same recognition as Westmalle Tripel or Tripel Karmeliet, but I reckon it is right up there with both of these style-defining beers.

And this is one terrific tripel – I mean it has twice been voted 'World's Best Tripel' at the World Beer Awards!

Style: Tripel

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Het Anker

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



Join our monthly beer club online at: 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

McChouffe

McChouffe is the lesser-known sibling, and dark beer variant to the famous La Chouffe strong blonde ale.

This beer is a little nod to strong Scotch Ales, with a Belgian slant of course. It sits somewhere between a Belgian Dubbel and a Scotch Ale. The brewery calls the beer a 'Ardense sKotch'. (There is a play on words there, but it only works in Flemish!)

It is a dark brown colour with a ruby red tinge, topped by a foamy white cap. The aroma is quite strong, with licorice and aniseed dominating the rich malt body.

To taste, the beer is much softer than the aroma would suggest. Sweet dark malts give a backbone of caramel and over-ripe fruits. The dark Belgian candi sugar really aids the colour, without the beer having too much of the roasted malt character, meaning it is softer to taste.

A little hop bitterness from the Saaz-Saaz and Styrian Golding hops lift the mouthfeel, while the flavours combine for a pleasant aftertaste.



Style: Strong Dark Ale

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brasserie Achouffe (Brouwerij Duvel-Moortgat)

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

Bush Caractère

Commencing operations back in 1769, the Dubuisson brewery celebrated its 250th anniversary in 2019 and with that came a branding change for their beers.

You may previously have recognised this beer under the name 'Bush Scaldis' or just simply 'Bush Beer'. At one point it was Belgium's strongest ABV beer, and was originally known as 'Bush Beer 24'. There is a story – too long for the space in these notes – about the forced change of name for this beer. Apparently it was trying to pass itself off as an American beer of similar name!

Whatever it is called, this is one of Belgium's iconic beers. Simply labelled as an 'Amber', we'll put it in the category of barley wine.

Amber in colour thanks to the generous use of caramel malt, with a gorgeous nose that hints at orange marmalade, raisins, banana and cloves.

First to taste is the sweet caramel malt, with that background of dried orange and yellow fruits. The house yeast has been preserved for over 80 years, and it provides a lovely bit of spicing and a peppery tingle. Despite the big ABV, the beer isn't too sweet, and dries out toward the finish which is long, full and smooth with that gentle warmth of the alcohol.

Style: Barley Wine

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brasserie Dubuisson

Alcohol Content (ABV): 12.0% (3.12 Std Drinks)



Join our monthly beer club online at: 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