

Steenbrugge White-Blanche

The Steenbrugge beer label has a history dating back to 1898 when beers were first brewed in the Steenbrugge Abbey. The location of the abbey actually dates back as far as 1084, when it was founded by St Arnoldus who was the patron saint of beer brewers!

The years between 1898 and 2003 the brewery was bought and sold several times, closed down more than once until it was finally sold into the Palm Brouwerij Group (owned by Swinkels Family Brewers). But with its enduring connection to the Steenbrugge Abbey and St Arnoldus, the Steenbrugge beers are one of Belgium's many 'abbey ales'.

This is your classic Belgian witbier, it pours a slightly cloudy golden colour with those typical witbier aromas of banana, coriander, citrus and clove.

To taste, the beer is light bodied, crisp and fairly light. With the body of at least 40% wheat, you get that characteristic cereal grain body. There is a citrus note as well as the spice flavours of coriander and clove.

Interestingly for the Steenbrugge beers, they use a traditional gruit mix (a blend of herbs and spice), which no doubt is to thank for the light herbal character in the flavour.



Style: Witbier

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Palm (Swinkels Family Brewers)

Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.0% (0.99 Std Drinks)



Pinta Czarna Dziura

This beer from Browar Pinta is one from their seasonal range, brewed in the cold months at the end of last year. The name translates as 'Black Hole' – a fitting name for this dark lager, a style also known as a Schwarzbier.

Schwarzbier originated in Germany and has been around since medieval times. First documented in 1390 was a beer called Braunschweiger Mumme ('Brunswick Mum') brewed in the town of Braunschweig ('Brunswick') in the Lower Saxony region. The style also had a strong history in the Thuringia state in central Germany.

Nowadays it is a common style to see in many breweries around the world, though Germany and Czech Republic would be the most common.

Our beer is dark brown in colour with a beige head. The aroma is of roasted malt and dark chocolate. These two flavours also dominate the taste.

Slightly sweet on the front palate, you'll get some dark chocolate and a little caramel. This is balanced out by the roasted malt astringency combined with an earthy hop character giving that pleasant bitterness from mid to back-palate.

Style: Schwarzbier

Country: Poland

Brewer: Browar Pinta

Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.5% (2.17 Std Drinks)

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Maltgarden Baking Addiction

Most of our members (and a good many of our wholesale customers) are now familiar with the pudding sours from Maltgarden. They've become a favourite, mostly I think because they are so different and unique to most other craft styles.

Well, this version of the style is a little different to even the other examples we've had before. So we present you Maltgarden's Blueberry and Glazed Banana Bread Double-Fruited Pudding Sour with Lime!

Now if you are like me, I try to imagine what a beer with lots of ingredients will taste like. But for this beer, I really couldn't imagine what it would all be like.

So best you open your can and find out. But be warned, this beer will pour very differently if you don't give the can a gentle roll. It's OK if you are pouring into a glass in one go, but you'll need to work a little harder if you are sharing.

And your pouring efforts will most likely produce one of the worst looking beers you've seen in a long while. It really does look more like a berry protein shake!

You are rewarded with a very interesting beer though, and it does exactly what it says on the can. Slightly sweet, more tart from the berry and citrus fruits than it is sour, and with this strangely familiar banana bread flavour and texture to the beer. It takes a few sips to take it all in, but I really was impressed with this beer for what it is.



Style: Pudding Sour

Country: Poland

Brewer: Browar Maltgarden

Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.5% (2.17 Std Drinks)

Tongerlo Christmas

When we think about Belgian Christmas beers, the words big, dark, roasty, spicy come to mind. But a few breweries do something a little different for their winter seasonal beer, and that's exactly what we have here from Brouwerij Haacht.

Our beer pours a lovely amber colour with a creamy white top. I noticed on pouring my beer that little beads of foam were dancing across the top. Completely inconsequential to tasting the beer, but I liked it!

The beer has a sweet and spicy aroma, malty and fruity with a background of herbal spice.

And that is exactly what comes through in the flavour. The early sweetness is of toffee malt, with a little yellow stone fruit. That quickly gives way to the noble hop bitterness and that herbal spice character. The beer finishes quite dry, with a pleasant prickly bitterness.

A tasty departure from the normal Christmas beers, and with the lower ABV easier to squeeze into a winter evening tasting session!

Style: Kerstbier

Country: Belgium

Brewer: Brouwerij Haacht

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



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Insel-Brau German Coast Double IPA

This beer from Insel Brauerie, on the island of Rügen in the German Baltic coast is an IPA with a difference. To borrow words from the brewery's own site, they describe the beer as being ***“strong, full of character, Nordically rough-edged...the roar of the Baltic Sea captured in the glass.”***

Simply calling this beer a Double IPA would really do it an injustice, and have the drinker expecting this beer to be something that it doesn't ever want to be.

We have a rich malty backbone supporting a beer with lots of hop character for a single hop beer. Only 100% German Magnum hops are used here, but the beer is fermented over a bed of pinecones and pine branches. And as is common for the Inselbrau beers, the beers are open fermented.

It definitely adds a resinous piney character, without it being sweet in nature. Quite the opposite in fact, with the beer having a dryness that makes it a very refreshing beer that finishes dry and slightly bitter with a pleasant earthy, piney aftertaste that lingers.

The label declares this as 'seltenes bier' which means 'rare beer'. You probably won't have a more interesting DIPa in a while.



Style: Double IPA

Country: Germany

Brewer: Rügener Insel-Brauerie

Alcohol Content (ABV): 7.5% (1.95 Std Drinks)

Struise Pannepot Special Reserva 2019 Port & Wine BA

Struise make some of our favourite barrel aged beers, but owing to limited availability (and cost), we don't often get to feature them in our monthly beer packs. But the stars have aligned, and we get to present this little beauty this month.

Pannepot is the beer Struise first gained recognition for, soon after starting off as and is the base beer for a multitude of barrel aged versions. It is a spiced strong dark ale that has been nicknamed the Old Fisherman's Ale, brewed in recognition of the dark beer favoured by the seasoned fishermen of French village of Panne.

This iteration was brewed in 2019 and then spent three years aging in a mix of wine and port barrels. And its no surprise that the aroma of this beer is all about the barrels. Lots of sweet red wine character, ripe berries and a touch of woody funk.

The flavour is also initially dominated by the red wine and port flavours. Sweet and thick, with raisins and berries, but in behind that is the Pannepot itself. A rich dark malty body with dark chocolate, caramel, plum, raisin, wood and a slight herbal acidity.

This beer has slept the whole period over which Covid played out but is now primed and ready for your drinking pleasure. Be sure to let it sit for a while if it has come from the fridge. You will get a lot more out of the flavours as it warms and opens up.

Style: Strong Dark Ale (Barrel Aged)

Country: Belgium

Brewer: De Struise Brouwers

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



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