

## Uiltje Wit

Now for whatever reason, Belgian witbiers don't seem that popular in Australia, which is somewhat ironic as they seem to suit our climate well. And they seem to be well received each time a wit features in our beer packs, so I guess we'll keep finding new ones to put in our packs.

Produced for the European summer, it is always interesting to see a brewery take on a traditional beer style from another country. But the Netherlands and Belgium are next door neighbours, with lots of Belgian beers finding their way into Dutch bars and bottle shops so we'd expect Uiltje have tasted more than a few.

Our beer is a lively, golden colour with good aroma of bready malt, orange citrus and coriander. It has a crisp body with good carbonation as you'd expect from a witbier. They are always light with the bubbles of flavour dancing across your tongue.

There is a soft fruitiness that gives the mouthfeel a little more weight, though balanced out with the crispness of the wheat malt, some hop bitterness and a spicy yeast tingle on the finish.



**Style: Witbier**

**Country: Netherlands**

**Brewer: Brouwerij het Uiltje**

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

## Kees California Sunset 2023

This is a beer Kees has made a couple of times before, and now seems to roll out as a seasonal at the end of the European summer. We are now up to batch number 5, and it timed in without last container so we get to try something hoppy from Kees which is a rare thing.

As the name would suggest (and the label says anyway!) Kees is designating this beer as a West Coast IPA. Not trying to be a contrarian, but I reckon the ABV is a bit light on for a WCIPA. Maybe that's why the beer industry made up the 'XPA' beer style that I find so redundant!

Whatever we are going to call it, the aroma is a lovely hit of tropical fruits.

And that is exactly what you get in the taste. Loads of orange citrus, mango, pineapple, grapefruit and a little pine mixed in. The fruit sweetness is supported by a crisp grainy malt body that lends a lively mouthfeel.

There is a degree of bitterness there, but by no means aggressive. Again, maybe not really in the West Coast range of bitterness, but it makes for a really enjoyable beer. I've had more than a couple of these since they arrived – just to make sure my tasting notes are accurate, of course!

**Style: West Coast IPA (just!)**

**Country: Netherlands**

**Brewer: Brouwerij Kees**

**Alcohol Content (ABV): 5.7% (1.98 Std Drinks)**



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## Duvel Tripel Hop (Citra)

This is a beer featured in the packs previously, though way back in December 2017. That was shortly after the Citra hop version had been voted the beer-drinking public's favourite of the six different hop versions that had been made between 2010-2015.

But I'm sure many (most) of our members might not have had the opportunity to taste this beer, so here it is again. And I'll let you know that the beer is just as delicious as I remember it over five years ago.

The premise of the Duvel Tripel Hop series was that a single additional hop was used to dry hop the original Duvel beer. Over the years, the additional hop was changed. But the Citra version really was the best.

It is a wonderful beer, with an aroma bursting with a big tropical fruit aroma sitting over the grainy malt and orange citrus of the original beer.

To taste, this beer is so light and crisp. A lovely light malt body, with flavours of grapefruit, orange, peach and pineapple work in perfect harmony. Toward the finish, there is a reasonable hop bitterness, and this lovely white pepper tingle that lives long in the aftertaste.

Defying the ABV, this beer is effortless to drink. Often sequels don't live up to the original, but this beer really delivers. Duvel is awesome, so is the tripel hop. world class beer.

**Style: Belgian IPA**

**Country: Belgium**

**Brewer: Brouwerij Duvel-Mortgaat**

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



## Hoegaarden Julius 54BC

As you guys know, we are all about championing the small, independent breweries of Europe, so including a beer from AB-InBev would seem the antithesis of this ethos. But every now and then we have to acknowledge that the big guys can make some decent beers.

At the height of its powers, AB-InBev owned in excess of 630 beer brands (not individual labels, but brands). I remember reading a statistic that one in every three beers served around the world was owned by AB-InBev. Mental!!

When the American company AmBev merged with Belgian giant Interbrew in 2004, one of the big decisions was to close the Hoegaarden brewery. This particular beer was fated to disappear. After many protests, the decision to close was reversed and this beer, along with more than a few others, continued.

A traditional Belgian Strong Golden Ale, it pours a lovely golden colour with just the slightest cloudiness. The aroma is pretty much all about the Belgian yeast, heavy on the banana with a hint of clove. The body is quite crisp, with biscuity grain and some yellow stone fruit, let's say peach. There is a good bitterness that leads into the dry finish with a little prickly aftertaste. Really easy drinking for the ABV too.

The name is a reference to Ambiorix and the Belgae revolt against Caesar in 54BC, part of the Gallic Wars. The Belgian's did well initially, but it didn't end well!

**Style: Belgian Strong Golden Ale**

**Country: Belgium**

**Brewer: Brouwerij Hoegaarden (AB InBev)**

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



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## De Molen Choco & Nuut

I'll probably say this a few more times yet, but I'm really glad to have De Molen back. And this beer is a perfect reason why.

If we were to look at the stock lists of all of our breweries, we probably wouldn't find another Imperial Blond Bock with chocolate and hazelnuts. And that's what makes De Molen – and this beer – truly special.

It pours an inviting amber colour, and the nose is choc-full (see what I did there!) of hazelnuts and white chocolate. It smells really sweet and decadent. But the flavour is not quite as you'd expect from the aroma.

A nice medium bodied lager has that tingly mouthfeel that lifts the beer against the sweetness of the chocolate. The nutty flavour adds another layer to the taste, taking the beer on a more savoury path as opposed to sweet. And I defy anyone to tell me where that 10.5% ABV is hiding!

**Style: Imperial Bock**

**Country: Netherlands**

**Brewer: Brouwerij De Molen**

**Alcohol Content (ABV): 10.5% (2.73 Std Drinks)**



## Gouden Carolus Whisky-Infused

I've been wanting to put this beer in the packs since I first tasted it. Such a good beer but I never seemed to time it right to get some onto one of our shipment. But now....

This beer started life as part of the 'Indulgence' series; specialty beers that were released each year to much acclaim. But none more so than this beer which was voted 'World's Best Spirit Flavoured Beer' as the World Beer Awards in 2015.

At its heart, this is Het Anker's Cuvee Van De Keizer Imperial Dark Ale. A beer brewed once a year on the 24<sup>th</sup> February – Emperor Charles V's birthday. Hence the name meaning something like 'best beer of the emperor'. I reckon this is consistently one of the best beers coming out of Belgium each year.

But Het Anker decided to pimp it by infusing it with their own whisky, which is distilled from batches of their Gouden Carolus Tripel.

The result is an amazing beer. All the characteristics of the best strong darks with deep aroma and flavours of dark stone fruits (raisins, figs, dates), caramel and roasted malts, dark chocolate and hints of vanilla. Then there is the whisky undertones hiding in the background, masterfully blending in with the beer so that the original beer remains the hero.

Just such a good beer that you'll have to make sure to sip and savour, otherwise it will be gone before you know it!

**Style: Belgian Strong Dark Ale**

**Country: Belgium**

**Brewer: Brouwerij Het Anker**

**Alcohol Content (ABV): 11.7% (3.05 Std Drinks)**



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