

ONE STYLE PER PAGE VERSION

2017 Belgian Beerfest

Style Guidelines

The following categories and styles have been agreed upon for the 2017 competition. Belgian Beerfest Guidelines are based on the AABC style guidelines and BJCP 2015 Style Guide in the case of 1.3 Trappist Single. Beers will be judged against the Style Guidelines in this document. For this reason, brewers must specify one of the listed Styles for each entry. The organizers reserve the right to reclassify non-conforming entries to a listed Style.

Note: Beers will be judged at appropriate serving temperatures, typically 8–12°C for ales and 5–7°C for lagers.

1. LIGHT COLOURED ALES

- 1.1 Trappist Single
- 1.2 Belgian Blonde Ale
- 1.3 Belgian Strong Golden Ale
- 1.4 Tripel

2. DARK COLOURED ALES

- 2.1 Dubbel
- 2.2 Belgian Strong Dark Ale
- 2.3 Biere De Garde

3. SUMMER ALES

- 3.1 Witbier
- 3.2 Belgian Pale Ale

4. SAISON

- 4.1 Saison

5 WILD BEERS

- 5.1 Straight Lambic
- 5.2 Gueuze
- 5.3 Flanders Red Ale
- 5.4 Flanders Brown Ale/Oud Bruin
- 5.5 Fruit Lambic
- 5.6 Belgian Speciality (specify type)

ONE STYLE PER PAGE VERSION

PREFACE TO 2016 BELGIAN BEERFEST STYLE GUIDELINES.

Notes to All:

The style categories have been revised from previous editions of the style guideline. In some cases, style parameters, descriptions, and well-known commercial examples have been changed. Please familiarize yourself with the new guidelines before using them. The style categories have been re-numbered, reordered and re-categorized in order to accommodate new style types. Please double-check the guidelines to ensure the style number matches the name you are referencing.

Notes to Brewers:

Some styles require additional information to help judges evaluate your beer. Read the guidelines carefully and provide the required information. Omitting required information will likely result in a misjudged beer.

If you enter a specialty or experimental beer not identified in the guidelines, or use unusual ingredients, please provide supplemental information so the judges can properly understand your beer and intent.

Notes to Organizers:

Please ensure that supplemental information submitted by brewers is available to the judges. If brewers omit required information, please seek clarification from the brewers before the competition date.

You are free to group style categories and sub-categories in whatever logical groupings you wish for the purpose of your competition, taking into account the number of entries and available judges.

You are free to split and regroup style categories for the purpose of your competition, if you feel that a different grouping would be beneficial to your entrants. You are not constrained to keep all sub-categories within a major category together when constructing flights.

Notes to Judges:

Understand that most beer styles are not defined by a single beer. Many styles are quite broad and can encompass multiple stylistically accurate variants. Do not let your understanding of a single beer limit your appreciation of the full range of each beer style.

You are free to judge beers in a flight in whatever order makes sense to you, although you should try to sequence the beers in a manner that allows you to preserve your senses and to fairly evaluate each beer.

Pay careful attention to the modifiers used in describing the styles. Look for guidance on the magnitude and quality of each characteristic. Notice that many characteristics are optional; beers not evidencing these non-required elements should not be marked down. Phrases such as “may have”, “can contain”, “might feature”, “is acceptable”, “is appropriate”, “is typical”, etc. all indicate optional elements. Required elements are generally written as declaratory phrases, or use words such as “must” or “should”. Elements that must not be present often use phrases such as “is inappropriate”, “no”, or “must not”.

Seek to understand the intent of the style categories and to judge each beer in its entirety. Don't overly focus on single elements. Look to the overall balance and character of the beer for your final opinion.

If a style guideline calls for required information from the brewer, but this information has not been provided to you please request it from the competition organizer. If the organizer does not have the information, then make a quick evaluation and decide how you

wish to categorize the entry. Make note of it on your score sheet and then judge it as such. It may not always be accurate, but it's the best you can do under the circumstances. Do not overly penalize the brewer for missing information; it might not be his fault. Do the best you can and use common sense.

If you come across a beer that is clearly out of style, check with the organizer to make sure the entry has been properly labelled and/or categorized. Handling errors do occur.

Acknowledgements:

The committee would like to acknowledge the significant effort made by the Australian Amateur Brewing Association committee in creating and updating the AABC Style Guidelines upon which these guidelines are based.

[NOTES ON COLOUR CODING OF CHANGES IN THE AABC2008 LIST](#)

Additions to the BJCP style guidelines are indicated in blue. This is principally to indicate the new styles added by AABA in 2008.

Deletions from descriptions in the BJCP styles are indicated in ~~blue~~ font. This is to assist brewers and judges who are already familiar with the BJCP descriptions to identify the changes.

The update changes from BJCP2004 to BJCP 2008 are shown in brown. See www.bjcp.org for more details. Deletions are shown in ~~brown~~. Some changes in the commercial examples have not been tracked because they are not readily available in Australia.

1. BELGIAN LIGHT COLOURED ALES

1.1 Trappist Single [BJCP]

Appearance: Pale yellow to medium gold colour. Generally good clarity, with a moderate –sized, persistent, billowy white head with characteristic lacing.

Aroma: Medium low to medium high Trappist yeast character, showing a fruity spicy character along with a low to medium spicy or floral hops, occasionally enhanced by light herbal / citrusy spice additions. Low to medium low grainy – sweet malt backdrop., which may have a light honey or sugar quality. Fruit expression can vary widely (citrus, pome fruit, stone fruit). Light spicy yeast driven phenolics found in the best examples. Bubblegum inappropriate.

Flavour: Fruity, hoppy, bitter and dry. Initial malty- sweet impression, with a grainy-sweet soft malt palate, and a dry, hoppy finish. The malt might have a light honeyed biscuit or cracker impression. Moderate spicy or floral hop flavour. Esters can be citrus, (orange, lemon, grapefruit), pome fruit (apple, pear), or stone fruit (apricot, peach). Light to moderate spicy, peppery, or clove phenolics. Bitterness rises towards the crisp, dry finish, with an aftertaste of light malt, moderate hops and yeast character.

Mouthfeel: Medium light to medium body. Smooth. Medium-high to high carbonation, can be somewhat prickly. Should not have noticeable alcohol warmth.

History: Whilst Trappist breweries have a history of brewing a lower strength beer for monk’s daily ration, the bitterpale beer that this style describes is a relatively modern invention reflecting current tastes. Westvleteren first brewed theirs in 1999, but replaced older lower gravity products.

Comments: Often not labelled or available outside the monastery, or infrequently brewed. Might also be called monk’s beer or Brother’s Beer. Highly attenuated, generally 85% or higher.

History: While Trappist breweries have a tradition of brewing a lower strength beer as a monk’s daily ration, the bitter, pale beer this style describes is a relatively modern invention reflecting current tastes. Westvleteren first brewed theirs in 1999, but replaced older lower gravity products.

Ingredients: Pilsner malt, Belgian Trappist Yeast, Saaz type hops.

Style Comparison: Like a hop fermented Belgian/Trappist interpretation of a German Pils – pale, hoppy, and well attenuated but showing prototypical Belgian yeast character. Has less sweetness, higher attenuation, less character malt, and is much more hop centered than a Belgian Pale Ale. More like a much smaller, more highly hopped tripel than a smaller Belgian Blonde Ale.

Vital statistics

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV	SRM
1044 –	1004 –	25 - 45	4.8 –	3 - 5
1054	1010		6.0%	

Commercial Examples: Achel 5 Blond, St. Bernardus Extra 4, Westmalle Extra, Westvleteren Blond.

1.2 Belgian Blond Ale [BJCP]

Appearance: Light to deep gold colour. Generally very clear. Large, dense, and creamy white to off-white head. Good head retention with Belgian lace.

Aroma: Light earthy or spicy hop nose, along with a lightly sweet pils malt character. Shows a subtle yeast character that may include spicy phenolics, perfumy or honey-like alcohol, or yeasty, fruity esters (commonly orange-like or lemony). Light sweetness that may have a ~~can~~ **slightly** sugar-like character. Subtle yet complex.

Flavour: Smooth, light to moderate pils malt sweetness initially, but finishes medium-dry to dry with some smooth alcohol becoming evident in the aftertaste. Medium hop and alcohol bitterness to balance. Light hop flavour, can be spicy or earthy. Very soft yeast character (esters and alcohols, which are sometimes perfumy or orange/lemon-like). Light spicy phenolics optional. Some ~~can~~ **lightly caramelised** sugar or honey-like sweetness on palate.

Mouthfeel: Medium-high to high carbonation, can give mouth-filling bubbly sensation. Medium body. Light to moderate alcohol warmth, but smooth. Can be somewhat creamy.

Overall Impression: A moderate-strength golden ale that has a subtle Belgian complexity, slightly sweet flavour, and dry finish.

History: Relatively recent development to further appeal to European Pils drinkers, becoming more popular as it is widely marketed and distributed.

Comments: Similar strength as a dubbel, similar character as a Belgian Strong Golden Ale or Tripel, although a bit sweeter and not as bitter. Often has an almost lager-like character, which gives it a cleaner profile in comparison to the other styles. Belgians use the term “Blond,” while the French spell it “Blonde.” **Most commercial examples are in the 6.5–7% range. Many Trappist table beers (singles or Enkels) are called “Blonde” but these are not representative of this style.**

Ingredients: Belgian pils malt, aromatic malts, sugar ~~can~~ **sugar or sucrose**, Belgian yeast strains that produce complex alcohol, phenolics and perfumy esters, noble, Styrian Goldings or East Kent Goldings hops. No spices are traditionally used, although the ingredients and fermentation by-products may give an impression of spicing (often reminiscent of oranges or lemons).

Vital Statistics: (Most are 6.5-7% alcohol by vol.).

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1062-1075	1008-1018	15-30	6-7.5%

Commercial Examples: Leffe Blond, Affligem Blond, La Trappe (Koningshoeven) Blond, Grimbergen Blond, Val-Dieu Blond, Straffe Hendrik Blonde, Pater Lieven Blond Abbey Ale

1.3 Belgian Golden Strong Ale [BJCP]

Appearance: Yellow to medium gold in colour. Good clarity. Effervescent. Massive, long-lasting, rocky, often beady, white head resulting in characteristic “Belgian lace” on the glass as it fades.

Aroma: Complex with significant fruity esters, moderate spiciness and low to moderate alcohol and hop aromas. Esters are reminiscent of lighter fruits such as pears, oranges or apples. Moderate spicy, peppery phenols. A low to moderate yet distinctive perfumy, floral hop character is often present. Alcohols are soft, spicy, perfumy and low-to-moderate in intensity. No hot alcohol or solventy aromas. The malt character is light. No diacetyl.

Flavour: Marriage of fruity, spicy and alcohol flavours supported by a soft malt character. Esters are reminiscent of pears, oranges or apples. Low to moderate phenols are peppery in character. A low to moderate spicy hop character is often present. Alcohols are soft, spicy, often a bit sweet and are low-to-moderate in intensity. Bitterness is typically medium to high from a combination of hop bitterness and yeast-produced phenolics. Substantial carbonation and bitterness leads to a dry finish with a low to moderately bitter aftertaste. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: **Very highly carbonated.** Light to medium body, although lighter than the substantial gravity would suggest (thanks to **candi** sugar and high carbonation). Smooth but noticeable alcohol warmth. No hot alcohol or solventy character. Always effervescent. Never astringent.

Overall Impression: A golden, complex, effervescent, strong Belgian-style ale.

History: Originally developed by the Moortgat brewery after WWII as a response to the growing popularity of Pilsner beers.

Comments: Strongly resembles a Tripel, but may be even paler, lighter-bodied and even crisper and drier. **The drier finish and lighter body also serve to make the assertive hopping and spiciness more prominent.** References to the devil are included in the names of many commercial examples of this style, referring to their potent alcoholic strength and as a tribute to the original example (Duvel). The best examples are complex and delicate. High carbonation helps to bring out the many flavours and to increase the perception of a dry finish. **Traditionally bottle conditioned.**

Ingredients: The light colour and relatively light body for a beer of this strength are the result of using pilsner malt and up to 20% white **candi** sugar (**sucrose**). Noble hops or Styrian Goldings are commonly used. Belgian yeast strains are used – those that produce fruity esters, spicy phenolics and higher alcohols – often aided by slightly warmer fermentation temperatures. **Fairly soft water,**

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1070-1095	1005-1016	22-35	7.5-10.5%

Commercial Examples: Duvel, Hapkin, Lucifer, Brigand, Judas, Delirium Tremens, Dulle Teve, Avery Salvation, North Coast Pransqster, Unibroue Eau Benite

1.4 Belgian Tripel [BJCP]

Appearance: Deep yellow to deep gold in colour. Good clarity. Effervescent. Long-lasting, creamy, rocky, white head resulting in characteristic “Belgian lace” on the glass as it fades.

Aroma: Complex with moderate to significant spiciness, moderate fruity esters and low alcohol and hop aromas. Generous spicy, peppery, sometimes clove-like phenols. Esters are often reminiscent of citrus fruits such as oranges, but may sometimes have a slight banana character. A low yet distinctive spicy, floral, sometimes perfumy hop character is usually found. Alcohols are soft, spicy and low in intensity. No hot alcohol or solventy aromas. The malt character is light. No diacetyl.

Flavour: Marriage of spicy, fruity and alcohol flavours supported by a soft malt character. Low to moderate phenols are peppery in character. Esters are reminiscent of citrus fruit such as orange or sometimes lemon. A low to moderate spicy hop character is usually found. Alcohols are soft, spicy, often a bit sweet and low in intensity. Bitterness is typically medium to high from a combination of hop bitterness and yeast-produced phenolics. Substantial carbonation and bitterness lends a dry finish with a moderately bitter aftertaste. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium body, although lighter than the substantial gravity would suggest (thanks to **eandî** sugar and high carbonation). High alcohol content adds a pleasant creaminess but little to no obvious warming sensation. No hot alcohol or solventy character. Always effervescent. Never astringent.

Overall Impression: Strongly resembles a Strong Golden Ale but slightly darker and somewhat fuller-bodied. Usually has a more rounded malt flavour but should not be sweet.

History: Originally **developed at** popularised by the Trappist monastery at Westmalle.

Comments: High in alcohol but does not taste strongly of alcohol. The best examples are sneaky, not obvious. High carbonation **and attenuation** helps to bring out the many flavours and to increase the perception of a dry finish. Most Trappist versions have at least 30 IBUs and are very dry. Traditionally bottle conditioned (“refermented in the bottle”).

Ingredients: The light colour and relatively light body for a beer of this strength are the result of using pilsner malt and up to 20% white **eandî** sugar (**suerose**). Noble hops or Styrian Goldings are commonly used. Belgian yeast strains are used – those that produce fruity esters, spicy phenolics and higher alcohols – often aided by slightly warmer fermentation temperatures. **Spice additions are generally not traditional and, if used, should not be recognisable as such.** Fairly soft water.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1075-1085	1008-1014	20-40	7.5-9.5%

Commercial Examples: Westmalle Tripel, Chimay Cinq Cents (White), **Tripel Karmeliet**, Val-Dieu Triple, St. Bernardus Tripel, Affligem Tripel, Grimbergen Tripel, La Trappe Tripel, Witkap Pater Tripel, Corsendonk Abbey Pale Ale, St. Feuillien Tripel, New Belgium Trippel, Unibroue La Fin du Monde, **Brooklyn Triple**, Dragonmead Final Absolution

2. BELGIAN DARK COLOURED ALES

2.1 Belgian Dubbel [BJCP]

Appearance: Dark amber to copper in colour, with an attractive reddish depth of colour. Generally clear. Large, dense, and long-lasting creamy off-white head.

Aroma: Complex, rich malty sweetness; malt may have hints of chocolate, caramel and/or toast (but never roasted or burnt aromas). Moderate fruity esters (usually including raisins and plums, sometimes also dried cherries).

Rarely Esters **sometimes will** include banana or apple. Spicy phenols and higher alcohols are common (may include light clove and spice, peppery, rose-like and/or perfumy notes). Spicy qualities can be moderate to very low. Alcohol, if present, is soft and never hot or solventy. A small number of examples may include a low noble hop aroma, but hops are usually absent. No diacetyl.

Flavour: Similar qualities as aroma. Rich, complex medium to medium-full malty sweetness on the palate yet finishes moderately dry. Complex malt, ester, alcohol and phenol interplay (raisiny flavours are common; dried fruit flavours are welcome; clove-like spiciness is optional). Balance is always toward the malt. Medium-low bitterness that doesn't persist into the finish. Low noble hop flavour is optional and not usually present. No diacetyl. Should not be as malty as a bock and should not have crystal malt-type sweetness. No spices.

Mouthfeel: Medium-full body. Medium-high carbonation, which can influence the perception of body. Low alcohol warmth. Smooth, never hot or solventy.

Overall Impression: A deep reddish, moderately strong, malty, complex Belgian ale.

History: Originated at monasteries in the Middle Ages, and was revived in the mid-1800s after the Napoleonic era.

Comments: Most commercial examples are in the 6.5 – 7% ABV range. Traditionally bottle-conditioned.

Ingredients: Belgian yeast strains prone to production of higher alcohols, esters, and phenolics are commonly used. **Soft** Water can be soft to hard. **Impression of** complex grain bill, **although traditional versions are typically Belgian Pils malt with caramelised sugar syrup or other unrefined sugars providing much of the character.**

Homebrewers may use Belgian Pils or pale base malt, Munich-type malts for maltiness, Special B for raisin flavours, **Cara Vienne or CaraMunich** for dried fruit flavours, other specialty grains for character. Dark **and** **caramelised sugar syrup or** sugars for colour and rum-raisin flavours. Noble-type, English-type or Styrian Goldings hops commonly used. No spices **are traditionally used, although restrained use is allowable.**

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1062-1075	1008-1018	15-25	6-7.6%

Commercial Examples: Westmalle Dubbel, La Trappe Dubbel, Corsendonk Abbey Brown Ale, Grimbergen Double, Affligem Dubbel, Chimay Premiere (Red), Duinen Dubbel, St. Feuillien Brune, New Belgium Abbey Belgian Style Ale, Stoudts Abbey Double Ale

2.2 Belgian Dark Strong Ale [BJCP]

Appearance: Deep amber to deep coppery-brown in colour (“dark” in this context implies “more deeply coloured than golden”). Huge, dense, moussy, persistent cream- to light tan-coloured head. Can be clear to somewhat hazy.

Aroma: Complex, with a rich malty sweetness, significant esters and alcohol, and an optional light to moderate spiciness. The malt is rich and strong, and can have a Munich-type quality **often** with a ~~occasional~~ caramel, toast and/or bready aroma. The fruity esters are strong to moderately low, and can contain raisin, plum, dried cherry, fig or prune notes. Spicy phenols may be present, but usually have a peppery quality not clove-like. Alcohols are soft, spicy, perfumy and/or rose-like, and are low to moderate in intensity. Hops are not usually present (but a very low noble hop aroma is acceptable). No diacetyl. No dark/roast malt aroma. No hot alcohols or solventy aromas. No recognizable spice additions.

Flavour: Similar to aroma (same malt, ester, phenol, alcohol, hop and spice comments apply to flavour as well). Moderately malty or sweet on palate. Finish is variable depending on interpretation (authentic Trappist versions are moderately dry to dry, Abbey versions can be medium-dry to sweet). Low bitterness for a beer of this strength; alcohol provides some of the balance to the malt. Sweeter and more full-bodied beers will have a higher bitterness level to balance. Almost all versions are malty in the balance, although a few are lightly bitter. The complex and varied flavours should blend smoothly and harmoniously.

Mouthfeel: High carbonation but no carbonic acid “bite.” Smooth but noticeable alcohol warmth. Body can be variable depending on interpretation (authentic Trappist versions tend to be medium-light to medium, while Abbey-style beers can be quite full and creamy).

Overall Impression: A dark, very rich, complex, very strong Belgian ale. Complex, rich, smooth and dangerous.

History: Most versions are unique in character reflecting characteristics of individual breweries.

Comments: Authentic Trappist versions tend to be drier (**Belgians would say “more digestible”**) than Abbey versions, which can be rather sweet and full-bodied. Higher bitterness is allowable in Abbey-style beers with a higher FG. Barleywine-type beers (e.g., Scaldis/Bush, La Trappe Quadrupel, Weyerbacher QUAD) and Spiced/Christmas-type beers (e.g., N’ice Chouffe, Affligem Noël) should be entered in the Belgian Specialty category, not this category. **Traditionally bottle fermented.**

Ingredients: Belgian yeast strains prone to production of higher alcohols, esters, and sometimes phenolics are commonly used. **Water can be soft to hard.** **Impression of a complex grain bill, although many traditional versions are quite simple, with caramelised sugar syrup or unrefined sugars and yeast providing much of the complexity.** **Homebrewers may use** Belgian Pils or pale base malt, Munich-type malts for maltiness, other Belgian specialty grains for character. ~~Candi~~ **Caramelised sugar syrup or unrefined sugars** lighten the body and add colour and flavour (**particularly** if ~~candi~~ **dark** sugars are used). Noble-type, English-type or Styrian Goldings hops commonly used. Spices generally not used; if used, keep subtle and in the background. Avoid US/UK crystal type malts (these provide the wrong type of sweetness).

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1075-1110	1010-1024	20-35	8-11%

Commercial Examples: Westvleteren 12 (yellow cap), Rochefort 10 (blue cap), Chimay Grande Reserve (Blue), Rochefort 8 (green cap), St. Bernardus Abt 12, Gouden Carolus Grand Cru of the Emperor, **Brasserie des Rocs Grand Cru, Gulden Draak, Kasteelbier Bière du Chateau Donker**

2.3 Bière de Garde [BJCP]

Appearance: Three main variations exist (blond, amber and brown), so colour can range from golden blonde to reddish-bronze to chestnut brown. Clarity is good to poor, although haze is not unexpected in this type of often unfiltered beer. Well-formed head, generally white to off-white (varies by beer colour), supported by high carbonation.

Aroma: Prominent malty sweetness, often with a complex, light to moderate toasty character. **Some caramelisation is acceptable.** Low to moderate esters. Little to no hop aroma (may be a bit spicy **or herbal**). Commercial versions will often have a musty, woody, cellar-like character that is difficult to achieve in homebrew. Paler versions will still be malty but will lack richer, deeper aromatics and may have a bit more hops. No diacetyl.

Flavour: Medium to high malt flavour often with a toasty, toffee-like or caramel sweetness. Malt flavours and complexity tend to increase as beer colour darkens. Low to moderate esters and alcohol flavours. Medium-low hop bitterness provides some support, but the balance is always tilted toward the malt. **The malt flavour lasts into the finish but the finish is medium-dry to dry and malty, never cloying.** Alcohol can provide some additional dryness in the finish. Low to no hop flavour, although paler versions can have slightly higher levels of **herbal or spicy hop flavour** (which can also come from the yeast). Smooth, well-lagered character. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Medium to medium-**light (lean) -full** body, often with a smooth, silky character. Moderate to high carbonation. Moderate alcohol, but should be very smooth and never hot.

Overall Impression: A fairly strong, malt-**accentuated**, lagered artisanal farmhouse **beer**.

History: Name literally means “beer which has been kept or lagered.” A traditional artisanal farmhouse ale from Northern France brewed in early spring and kept in cold cellars for consumption in warmer weather. It is now brewed year-round. Related to the Belgian Saison style, the main difference is that the Bière de Garde is rounder, richer, sweeter, malt-focused, often has a “cellar” character, and lacks the spicing and tartness of a Saison.

Comments: Three main variations are included in the style: the brown (brune), the blond (blonde), and the amber (ambrée). The darker versions will have more malt character, while the paler versions can have more hops (but still are malt-focused beers). A related style is Bière de Mars, which is brewed in March (Mars) for present use and will not age as well. **Attenuation rates are in the 80–85% range. Some fuller-bodied examples exist, but these are somewhat rare.**

Ingredients: The “cellar” character in commercial examples is unlikely to be duplicated in homebrews as it comes from indigenous yeasts and molds. Commercial versions often have a “corked”, dry, astringent character that is often incorrectly identified as “cellar-like.” Homebrews therefore are usually cleaner. Base malts vary by beer colour, but usually include pale, Vienna and Munich types. **Kettle caramelisation tends to be used more than crystal malts, when present.** Darker versions will have richer malt complexity and sweetness from crystal-type malts. **Sugar may be used to add flavour and aid in the dry finish.** Lager or ale yeast fermented at cool ale temperatures, followed by long cold conditioning (**4–6 weeks for commercial operations**). Soft water. Floral, **herbal** or spicy continental hops.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1060-1080	1008-1016	18-28	6-8.5%

Commercial Examples: Jenlain (**amber**), St. Amand (brown), Ch’Ti Brun (brown), Ch’Ti Blond (blond), La Choulette (all 3 versions), La Choulette Bière des Sans Culottes (blonde), Saint Sylvestre 3 Monts (blonde), Biere Nouvelle (brown), Castelain (blonde), Jade (amber), Brasseurs Bière de Garde (amber)

3. SUMMER ALES

3.1 Belgian Witbier [BJCP]

Appearance: Very pale straw to very light gold in colour. The beer will be very cloudy from starch haze and/or yeast, which gives it a milky, whitish-yellow appearance. Dense, white, moussy head. Head retention should be quite good.

Aroma: Moderate sweetness (often with light notes of honey and/or vanilla) with light, grainy, spicy wheat aromatics, often with a bit of tartness. Moderate perfumy coriander, often with a complex herbal, spicy, or peppery note in the background. Moderate zesty, **citrusy** orangey fruitiness. A low spicy-herbal hop aroma is optional, but should never overpower the other characteristics. No diacetyl. Vegetal, celery-like, or ham-like aromas ~~from certain types of spices~~ are inappropriate. Spices should blend in with fruity, floral and sweet aromas and should not be overly strong.

Flavour: Pleasant sweetness (often with a honey and/or vanilla character) and a zesty, orange-citrusy fruitiness. Refreshingly crisp with a dry, often tart, finish. Can have a low wheat flavour. Optionally has a very light lactic-tasting sourness. Herbal-spicy flavours, **which may include coriander and other spices**, are common ~~but and should be subtle and balanced~~, not overpowering, ~~and can taste moderately of coriander and other spices at a more subtle level~~. A spicy-earthy hop flavour is low to none, and **if noticeable**, never gets in the way of the spices. Hop bitterness is low to medium-low (as with a Hefeweizen), and doesn't interfere with refreshing flavours of fruit and spice, nor does it persist into the finish. Bitterness from orange pith should not be present. Vegetal, celery-like, ham-like, or soapy flavours ~~from certain types of spices~~ are inappropriate. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Medium-light to medium body, often having a smoothness and light creaminess from unmalted wheat and the occasional oats. Despite body and creaminess, finishes dry and often a bit tart. Effervescent character from high carbonation. Refreshing, from carbonation, light acidity, and lack of bitterness in finish. No harshness or astringency from orange pith. Should not be overly dry and thin, nor should it be thick and heavy.

Overall Impression: A refreshing, elegant, tasty, moderate-strength wheat-based ale.

History: A 400-year-old beer style that died out in the 1950s; it was later revived by Pierre Celis at Hoegaarden, and has grown steadily in popularity over time.

Comments: The presence, character and degree of spicing and lactic sourness varies. Overly spiced and/or sour beers are not good examples of the style. **Coriander of certain origins might give an inappropriate ham or celery character**. The beer tends to be fragile and does not age well, so younger, fresher, properly handled examples are most desirable. **Most examples seem to be approximately 5% ABV**.

Ingredients: About 50% unmalted wheat (traditionally soft white winter wheat) and 50% pale barley malt (usually pils malt) constitute the grist. In some versions, up to 5-10% raw oats may be used. Spices of freshly-ground coriander and Curaçao or sometimes sweet orange peel complement the sweet aroma and are quite characteristic. Other spices (e.g., chamomile, cumin, cinnamon, Grains of Paradise) may be used for complexity but are much less prominent. Ale yeast prone to the production of mild, spicy flavours is very characteristic. In some instances a very limited lactic fermentation, or the actual addition of lactic acid, is done.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1044-1052	1008-1012	10-20	4.5-5.5%

Commercial Examples: Hoegaarden Wit, Vuuve 5, Blanche de Bruges, Blanche de Bruxelles, Brugs Tarwebier, Sterkens White Ale, Celis White (**now made in Michigan**), Blanche de Brooklyn, **Great Lakes Holy Moses**, Unibroue Blanche de Chambly, Blue Moon Belgian White, **Ommegang Witte**

3.2 Belgian Pale Ale [BJCP]

Appearance: Amber to copper in colour. Clarity is very good. Creamy, rocky, white head often fades more quickly than other Belgian beers.

Aroma: Prominent aroma of malt with moderate fruity character and low hop aroma. Toasty, biscuity malt aroma. May have an orange- or pear-like fruitiness though not as fruity/citrusy as many other Belgian ales. Distinctive floral or spicy, low to moderate strength hop character optionally blended with background level peppery, spicy phenols. No diacetyl.

Flavour: Fruity and lightly to moderately spicy with a soft, smooth malt and relatively light hop character and low to very low phenols. May have an orange- or pear-like fruitiness, though not as fruity/citrusy as many other Belgian ales. Has an initial soft, malty sweetness with a toasty, biscuity, nutty malt flavour. The hop flavour is low to none. The hop bitterness is medium to low, and is optionally complemented by low amounts of peppery phenols. There is a moderately dry to moderately sweet finish, with hops becoming more pronounced in those with a drier finish.

Mouthfeel: Medium to medium-light body. Alcohol level is restrained, and any warming character should be low if present. No hot alcohol or solventy character. Medium carbonation.

Overall Impression: A fruity, moderately malty, somewhat spicy, easy-drinking, copper-coloured ale.

History: Produced by breweries with roots as far back as the mid-1700s, the most well-known examples were perfected after the Second World War with some influence from Britain, including hops and yeast strains.

Comments: Most commonly found in the Flemish provinces of Antwerp and Brabant. Considered “everyday” beers (Category I). Compared to their higher alcohol Category S cousins, they are Belgian “session beers” for ease of drinking. Nothing should be too pronounced or dominant; balance is the key.

Ingredients: Pilsner or pale ale malt contributes the bulk of the grist with (cara) Vienna and Munich malts adding colour, body and complexity. ~~Candi~~ Sugar is not commonly used as high gravity is not desired. Noble hops, Styrian Goldings, East Kent Goldings or Fuggles are commonly used. Yeasts prone to moderate production of phenols are often used but fermentation temperatures should be kept moderate to limit this character.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1048-1054	1010-1014	20-30	4.8-5.5%

Commercial Examples: De Koninck, Speciale Palm, Dobbie Palm, Ginder Ale, Op-Ale, ~~Vieux-Temps~~, Brewer’s Art House Pale Ale, Ommegang Rare Vos (unusual in its 6.5% ABV strength)

4 SAISON

4.1 Saison [BJCP]

Appearance: Often a distinctive pale orange but may be golden or amber in colour. There is no correlation between strength and colour. Long-lasting, dense, rocky white to ivory head resulting in characteristic “Belgian lace” on the glass as it fades. Clarity is poor to good though haze is not unexpected in this type of unfiltered farmhouse beer. Effervescent.

Aroma: High fruitiness with low to moderate hop aroma and moderate to no herb, spice and alcohol aroma. Fruity esters dominate the aroma and are often reminiscent of citrus fruits such as oranges or lemons. A low to medium-high spicy or floral hop aroma is usually present. A moderate spice aroma (from actual spice additions and/or yeast-derived phenols) complements the other aromatics. When phenolics are present they tend to be peppery rather than clove-like. A low to moderate sourness or acidity may be present, but should not overwhelm other characteristics. Spice, hop and sour aromatics typically increase with the strength of the beer. Alcohols are soft, spicy and low in intensity, and should not be hot or solventy. The malt character is light. No diacetyl.

Flavour: Combination of fruity and spicy flavours supported by a soft malt character, a low to moderate alcohol presence and tart sourness. Extremely high attenuation gives a characteristic dry finish. The fruitiness is frequently citrusy (orange- or lemon-like). The addition of one or more spices serve to add complexity, but shouldn't dominate in the balance. Low peppery yeast-derived phenols may be present instead of or in addition to spice additions; phenols tend to be lower than in many other Belgian beers, and complement the bitterness. Hop flavour is low to moderate, and is generally spicy or earthy in character. Hop bitterness may be moderate to high, but should not overwhelm fruity esters, spices, and malt. Malt character is light but provides a sufficient background for the other flavours. A low to moderate tart sourness may be present, but should not overwhelm other flavours. Spices, hop bitterness and flavour, and sourness commonly increase with the strength of the beer while sweetness decreases. No hot alcohol or solventy character. Substantial High carbonation and bitterness, moderately sulfate water and high attenuation give a very dry finish with a long, bitter, sometimes spicy aftertaste. The perceived bitterness is often higher than the IBU level would suggest. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Light to medium body. Alcohol level can be medium to medium-high, though the warming character is low to medium. No hot alcohol or solventy character. Very high carbonation with an effervescent quality. There is enough prickly acidity on the tongue to balance the very dry finish. A low to moderate tart character may be present but should be refreshing and not to the point of puckering.

Overall Impression: A refreshing, medium to strong fruity/spicy ale with a distinctive yellow-orange colour, highly carbonated, well hopped, fruity and dry with a quenching acidity.

History: A seasonal summer style produced in Wallonia, the French-speaking part of Belgium. Originally brewed at the end of the cool season to last through the warmer months before refrigeration was common. It had to be sturdy enough to last for months but not too strong to be quenching and refreshing in the summer. It is now brewed year-round in tiny, artisanal breweries whose buildings reflect their origins as farmhouses.

Comments: Varying strength examples exist (table beers of about 5% strength, typical export beers of about 6.5%, and stronger versions of 8%+). Strong versions (6.5–9.5%) and darker versions (copper to dark brown/black) should be entered as Belgian Specialty Ales. Sweetness decreases and spice, hop and sour character increases with strength. Herb and spice additions often reflect the indigenous varieties available at the brewery. High carbonation and extreme attenuation (85–95%) helps bring out the many flavours and to increase the perception of a dry finish. All of these beers share somewhat higher levels of acidity than other Belgian styles while the optional sour flavour is often a variable house character of a brewery.

Ingredients: Pilsner malt dominates the grist though a portion of Vienna and/or Munich malt contributes colour and complexity. Sometimes contains other grains such as wheat and spelt. Adjuncts such as candi sugar and honey can also serve to add complexity and thin the body. Hop bitterness and flavour may be more noticeable than in many other Belgian styles. A saison is sometimes dry-hopped. Noble hops, Styrian or East Kent Goldings are commonly used. A wide variety of herbs and spices are generally often used to add complexity and uniqueness in the stronger versions, but should always meld well with the yeast and hop character. Varying degrees of acidity and/or sourness can be created by the use of gypsum, acidulated malt, a sour mash or Lactobacillus. Hard water, common to most of Wallonia, can accentuate the bitterness and dry finish.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1048- 1065	1002- 1012	20-35	5-7%

Commercial Examples: Saison Dupont Vielle Provision, Foret and Moinette Blonde; Fantome Saison(s); Saison de Pipaix and La Folie; Saison Silly; Saison Regal; Saison Voisin; LeFebvre Saison 1900; Ellezelloise Saison 2000; Brooklyn saison; Southampton Saison; New Belgium Saison; Pizza Port SPF 45-Carlsbad Saison, Ommegang Hennepin

5. WILD BEERS

5.1 Straight (Unblended) Lambic [BJCP]

Appearance: Pale yellow to deep golden in colour. Age tends to darken the beer. Clarity is hazy to good. Younger versions are often cloudy, while older ones are generally clear. Head retention is generally poor. **Head colour is white.**

Aroma: A decidedly sour/acidic aroma is often dominant in young examples, but may be more subdued with age as it blends with aromas described as barnyard, earthy, goaty, hay, horsey, and horse blanket. A mild oak and/or citrus aroma is considered favorable. An enteric, smoky, cigar-like, or cheesy aroma is unfavorable. Older versions are commonly fruity with aromas of apples or even honey. No hop aroma. No diacetyl.

Flavour: Young examples are often noticeably sour and/or lactic, but aging can bring this character more in balance with the malt, wheat and barnyard characteristics. Fruity flavours are simpler in young lambics and more complex in the older examples, where they are reminiscent of apples or other light fruits, rhubarb, or honey. Some oak or citrus flavour (often grapefruit) is occasionally noticeable. An enteric, smoky or cigar-like character is undesirable. Hop bitterness is low to none. No hop flavour. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Light to medium-light body. In spite of the low finishing gravity, the many mouth-filling flavours prevent the beer from tasting like water. As a rule of thumb lambic dries with age, which makes dryness a reasonable indicator of age. Has a medium to high tart, puckering quality without being sharply astringent. Virtually to completely uncarbonated.

Overall Impression: Complex, sour/acidic, pale, wheat-based ale fermented by a variety of Belgian microbiota.

History: Spontaneously fermented sour ales from the area in and around Brussels (the Senne Valley) stem from a farmhouse brewing tradition several centuries old. Their numbers are constantly dwindling.

Comments: Straight lambics are single-batch, unblended beers. Since they are unblended, the straight lambic is often a true product of the “house character” of a brewery and will be more variable than a gueuze. They are generally served young (6 months) and on tap as cheap, easy-drinking beers without any filling carbonation. Younger versions tend to be one-dimensionally sour since a complex Brett character often takes upwards of a year to develop. An enteric character is often indicative of a lambic that is too young. A noticeable vinegary or cidery character is considered a fault by Belgian brewers. Since the wild yeast and bacteria will ferment ALL sugars, they are bottled only when they have completely fermented. Lambic is served uncarbonated, while gueuze is served effervescent. **IBUs are approximate since aged hops are used; Belgians use hops for anti-bacterial properties more than bittering in lambics.**

Ingredients: Unmalted wheat (30-40%), pilsner malt and aged (surannes) hops (3 years) are used. The aged hops are used more for preservative effects than bitterness, and makes actual bitterness levels difficult to estimate. Traditionally these beers are spontaneously fermented with naturally-occurring yeast and bacteria in predominately oaken barrels. Home-brewed and craft-brewed versions are more typically made with pure cultures of yeast commonly including *Saccharomyces*, *Brettanomyces*, *Pediococcus* and *Lactobacillus* in an attempt to recreate the effects of the dominant microbiota of Brussels and the surrounding countryside of the Senne River valley. Cultures taken from bottles are sometimes used but there is no simple way of knowing what organisms are still viable.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1040-1054	1001-1010	0-10	5-6.5%

Commercial Examples: The only bottled version readily available is Cantillon Grand Cru Bruocsella of whatever single batch vintage the brewer deems worthy to bottle. De Cam sometimes bottles their very old (5 years) lambic. In and around Brussels there are specialty cafes that often have draught lambics from traditional brewers or blenders such as Boon, De Cam, Cantillon, Drie Fonteinen, Lindemans, **Timmermans** and Girardin.

5.2 Gueuze [BJCP]

Appearance: Golden in colour. Clarity is excellent (unless the bottle was shaken). A thick rocky, mousse-like, white head seems to last forever. Always effervescent.

Aroma: A moderately sour/acidic aroma blends with aromas described as barnyard, earthy, goaty, hay, horsey, and horse blanket. While some may be more dominantly sour/acidic, balance is the key and denotes a better gueuze. Commonly fruity with aromas of citrus fruits (often grapefruit), apples or other light fruits, rhubarb, or honey. A very mild oak aroma is considered favorable. An enteric, smoky, cigar-like, or cheesy aroma is unfavorable. No hop aroma. No diacetyl.

Flavour: A moderately sour/acidic character is classically in balance with the malt, wheat and barnyard characteristics. A low, complementary sweetness may be present but higher levels are uncharacteristic. While some may be more dominantly sour, balance is the key and denotes a better gueuze. A varied fruit flavour is common, and can have a honey-like character. A mild vanilla and/or oak flavour is occasionally noticeable. An enteric, smoky or cigar-like character is undesirable. Hop bitterness is generally absent but a very low hop bitterness may occasionally be perceived. No hop flavour. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Light to medium-light body. In spite of the low finishing gravity, the many mouth-filling flavours prevent the beer from tasting like water. Has a low to high tart, puckering quality without being sharply astringent. Some versions have a low warming character. Highly carbonated.

Overall Impression: Complex, pleasantly sour/acidic, balanced, pale, wheat-based ale fermented by a variety of Belgian microbiota.

History: Spontaneously fermented sour ales from the area in and around Brussels (the Senne Valley) stem from a farmhouse brewing tradition several centuries old. Their numbers are constantly dwindling and some are untraditionally sweetening their products (post-fermentation) to make them more palatable to a wider audience.

Comments: Gueuze is traditionally produced by mixing one, two, and three-year old lambic. “Young” lambic contains fermentable sugars while old lambic has the characteristic “wild” taste of the Senne River valley. A good gueuze is not the most pungent, but possesses a full and tantalizing bouquet, a sharp aroma, and a soft, velvety flavour. Lambic is served uncarbonated, while gueuze is served effervescent. **IBUs are approximate since aged hops are used; Belgians use hops for anti-bacterial properties more than bittering in lambics. Products marked “oude” or “ville” are considered most traditional.**

Ingredients: Unmalted wheat (30-40%), pilsner malt and aged (surannes) hops (3 years) are used. The aged hops are used more for preservative effects than bitterness, and makes actual bitterness levels difficult to estimate. Traditionally these beers are spontaneously fermented with naturally-occurring yeast and bacteria in predominately oaken barrels. Home-brewed and craft-brewed versions are more typically made with pure cultures of yeast commonly including *Saccharomyces*, *Brettanomyces*, *Pediococcus* and *Lactobacillus* in an attempt to recreate the effects of the dominant microbiota of Brussels and the surrounding countryside of the Senne River valley. Cultures taken from bottles are sometimes used but there is no simple way of knowing what organisms are still viable.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1040-1060	1000-1006	0-10	5-8%

Commercial Examples: Boon Oude Gueuze, Boon Oude Gueuze Mariage Parfait, De Cam Gueuze, De Cam/Drei Fonteinen Millennium Gueuze, Drie Fonteinen Oud Gueuze, Cantillon Gueuze, Hanssens **Oude** Gueuze, Lindemans Gueuze Cuvée René, Girardin Gueuze (Black Label), Mort Subite (Unfiltered) Gueuze, Oud Beersel Oude Gueuze

5.3 Flanders Red Ale [BJCP]

Appearance: Deep red, burgundy to reddish-brown in colour. Good clarity. **White to very pale tan head.** Average to good head retention.

Aroma: Complex fruitiness with complementary malt. Fruitiness is high, and reminiscent of black cherries, oranges, plums or red currants. There is often some vanilla and/or chocolate notes. Spicy phenols can be present in low amounts for complexity. The sour, acidic aroma ranges from complementary to intense. No hop aroma. Diacetyl is perceived only in very minor quantities, if at all, as a complementary aroma.

Flavour: Intense fruitiness commonly includes plum, orange, black cherry or red currant flavours. A mild vanilla and/or chocolate character is often present. Spicy phenols can be present in low amounts for complexity. Sour, acidic character ranges from complementary to intense. **Rich, sweet-Malty** flavours range from complementary to prominent. Generally as the sour character increases, the sweet character blends to more of a background flavour (and vice versa). No hop flavour. Restrained hop bitterness. An acidic, tannic bitterness is often present in low to moderate amounts, and adds an **aged red wine-like character with a long, dry finish.** Diacetyl is perceived only in very minor quantities, if at all, as a complementary flavour.

Mouthfeel: Medium bodied. Low to medium carbonation. Low to medium astringency, like a well-aged red wine, often with a prickly acidity. Deceivingly light and crisp on the palate although a somewhat sweet finish is not uncommon.

Overall Impression: A complex, sour, red wine-like Belgian-style ale.

History: The indigenous beer of West Flanders, typified by the products of the Rodenbach brewery, established in 1820 in West Flanders but reflective of earlier brewing traditions. The beer is aged for up to two years, often in huge oaken barrels which contain the resident bacteria necessary to sour the beer. It was once common in Belgium and England to blend old beer with young to balance the sourness and acidity found in aged beer. While blending of batches for consistency is now common among larger breweries, this type of blending is a fading art.

Comments: Long aging and blending of young and well-aged beer often occurs, adding to the smoothness and complexity, though the aged product is sometimes released as a connoisseur's beer. Known as the Burgundy of Belgium, it is more wine-like than any other beer style. The reddish colour is a product of the malt although an extended, less-than-rolling portion of the boil may help add an attractive Burgundy hue. Aging will also darken the beer. The Flanders red is more acetic and the fruity flavours more reminiscent of a red wine than an Oud Bruin. **Can have an apparent attenuation of up to 98%.**

Ingredients: A base of Vienna and/or Munich malts, **light to medium cara-malts**, and a small amount of Special B are used with up to 20% **maize flaked corn or corn grits.** Low alpha acid continental **or British** hops are commonly used (avoid high alpha or distinctive American hops). Saccharomyces, Lactobacillus and Brettanomyces (and acetobacter) contribute to the fermentation and eventual flavour.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1048-1057	1002-1012	10-25	4.6-6.5%

Commercial Examples: Rodenbach Klassiek, Rodenbach Grand Cru, Bellegems Bruin, Duchesse de Bourgogne, New Belgium La Folie, Petrus Oud Bruin, Southampton **Publiek-House** Flanders Red Ale, Verhaege Vichtenaar

5.4 Flanders Brown Ale/Oud Bruin [BJCP]

Appearance: Dark reddish-brown to brown in colour. Good clarity. Average to good head retention. **Ivory to light tan head colour.**

Aroma: Complex combination of fruity esters and rich malt character. Esters commonly reminiscent of raisins, plums, figs, dates, black cherries or prunes. A malt character of caramel, toffee, orange, treacle or chocolate is also common. Spicy phenols can be present in low amounts for complexity. A sherry-like character may be present and generally denotes an aged example. A low sour aroma may be present, and can modestly increase with age but should not grow to a noticeable acetic/vinegary character. Hop aroma absent. Diacetyl is perceived only in very minor quantities, if at all, as a complementary aroma.

Flavour: Malty with fruity complexity and some caramelization character. Fruitiness commonly includes dark fruits such as raisins, plums, figs, dates, black cherries or prunes. A malt character of caramel, toffee, orange, treacle or chocolate is also common. Spicy phenols can be present in low amounts for complexity. A slight sourness often becomes more pronounced in well-aged examples, along with some sherry-like character, producing a “sweet-and-sour” profile. The sourness should not grow to a notable acetic/vinegary character. Hop flavour absent. Restrained hop bitterness. Low oxidation is appropriate as a point of complexity. Diacetyl is perceived only in very minor quantities, if at all, as a complementary flavour.

Mouthfeel: Medium to medium-full body. Low to moderate carbonation. No astringency with a sweet and tart finish.

Overall Impression: A malty, fruity, aged, somewhat sour Belgian-style brown ale.

History: An “old ale” tradition, indigenous to East Flanders, typified by the products of the Liefman brewery (now owned by Riva), which has roots back to the 1600s. Historically brewed as a “provision beer” that would develop some sourness as it aged. These beers were typically more sour than current commercial examples. While Flanders red beers are aged in oak, the brown beers are **warm aged in stainless steel.**

Comments: Long aging and blending of young and aged beer may occur, adding smoothness and complexity and balancing any harsh, sour character. A deeper malt character distinguishes these beers from Flanders red ales. This style was designed to lay down so examples with a moderate aged character are considered superior to younger examples. As in fruit lambics, Oud Bruin can be used as a base for fruit-flavoured beers such as kriek (cherries) or frambozen (raspberries), though these should be entered in the classic-style fruit beer category. The Oud Bruin is less acetic and maltier than a Flanders Red, and the fruity flavours are more malt-oriented.

Ingredients: A base of Pils malt with judicious amounts of **crystal dark cara** malts and a tiny bit of black or roast malt. **Often includes maize.** Low alpha acid continental **or British hops** are typical (avoid high alpha or distinctive American hops). Saccharomyces and Lactobacillus (and acetobacter) contribute to the fermentation and eventual flavour. Lactobacillus reacts poorly to elevated levels of alcohol. A sour mash or acidulated malt may also be used to develop the sour character without introducing Lactobacillus. Water high in carbonates is typical of its home region and will buffer the acidity of darker malts and the lactic sourness. Magnesium in the water accentuates the sourness.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1040-1074	1008-1012	20-25	4-8%

Commercial Examples: Liefman’s Goudenband, Liefman’s Odnar, Liefman’s Oud Bruin, Ichtegem Old Brown, **Riva Vondel**

5.5 Fruit Lambic [BJCP]

Appearance: The variety of fruit generally determines the colour though lighter-coloured fruit may have little effect on the colour. The colour intensity may fade with age. Clarity is often good, although some fruit will not drop bright. A thick rocky, mousse-like head, sometimes a shade of fruit, is generally long-lasting. Always effervescent.

Aroma: The fruit which has been added to the beer should be the dominant aroma. A low to moderately sour/acidic character blends with aromas described as barnyard, earthy, goaty, hay, horsey, and horse blanket (and thus should be recognizable as a lambic). The fruit aroma commonly blends with the other aromas. An enteric, smoky, cigar-like, or cheesy aroma is unfavorable. No hop aroma. No diacetyl.

Flavour: The fruit added to the beer should be evident. A low to moderate sour and more commonly (sometimes high) acidic character is present. The classic barnyard characteristics may be low to high. When young, the beer will present its full fruity taste. As it ages, the lambic taste will become dominant at the expense of the fruit character—thus fruit lambics are not intended for long aging. A low, complementary sweetness may be present, but higher levels are uncharacteristic. A mild vanilla and/or oak flavour is occasionally noticeable. An enteric, smoky or cigar-like character is undesirable. Hop bitterness is generally absent. No hop flavour. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Light to medium-light body. In spite of the low finishing gravity, the many mouth-filling flavours prevent the beer from tasting like water. Has a low to high tart, puckering quality without being sharply astringent. Some versions have a low warming character. Highly carbonated.

Overall Impression: Complex, fruity, pleasantly sour/acidic, balanced, pale, wheat-based ale fermented by a variety of Belgian microbiota. A lambic with fruit, not just a fruit beer.

History: Spontaneously fermented sour ales from the area in and around Brussels (the Senne Valley) stem from a farmhouse brewing tradition several centuries old. Their numbers are constantly dwindling and some are untraditionally sweetening their products (post-fermentation) with sugar or sweet fruit to make them more palatable to a wider audience. Fruit was traditionally added to lambic or gueuze, either by the blender or publican, to increase the variety of beers available in local cafes.

Comments: Fruit-based lambics are often produced like gueuze by mixing one, two, and three-year old lambic. “Young” lambic contains fermentable sugars while old lambic has the characteristic “wild” taste of the Senne River valley. Fruit is commonly added halfway through aging and the yeast and bacteria will ferment all sugars from the fruit. Fruit may also be added to unblended lambic. The most traditional styles of fruit lambics include kriek (cherries), framboise (raspberries) and druivenlambik (muscat grapes). **ENTRANT MUST SPECIFY THE TYPE OF FRUIT(S) USED IN MAKING THE LAMBIC.** Any overly sweet lambics (e.g., Lindemans or Belle Vue clones) would do better entered in the Belgian Specialty category since this category does not describe beers with that character. **IBUs are approximate since aged hops are used; Belgians use hops for anti-bacterial properties more than bittering in lambics.**

Ingredients: Unmalted wheat (30-40%), pilsner malt and aged (surannes) hops (3 years) are used. The aged hops are used more for preservative effects than bitterness, and makes actual bitterness levels difficult to estimate.

Traditional products use 10-30% fruit (25% if cherry). Fruits traditionally used include tart cherries (with pits), raspberries or Muscat grapes. More recent examples include peaches, apricots or merlot grapes. Tart or acidic fruit is traditionally used as its purpose is not to sweeten the beer but to add a new dimension. Traditionally these beers are spontaneously fermented with naturally-occurring yeast and bacteria in predominately oaken barrels. Home-brewed and craft-brewed versions are more typically made with pure cultures of yeast commonly including *Saccharomyces*, *Brettanomyces*, *Pediococcus* and *Lactobacillus* in an attempt to recreate the effects of the dominant microbiota of Brussels and the surrounding countryside of the Senne River valley. Cultures taken from bottles are sometimes used but there is no simple way of knowing what organisms are still viable.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
1040-1060	1000-1010	0-10	5-7%

Commercial Examples: Boon Framboise Mariage Parfait, Boon Kriek Mariage Parfait, Boon Oude Kriek, Cantillon Fou' Foune (apricot), Cantillon Kriek, Cantillon Lou Pepe Kriek, Cantillon Lou Pepe Framboise, Cantillon Rose de Gambrinus, Cantillon St. Lamvinus (merlot grape), Cantillon Vigneronne (Muscat grape), De Cam Oude Kriek, Drie Fonteinen Kriek, Girardin Kriek, Hanssens Oude Kriek, Oud Beersel Kriek, **Mort Subtite Kriek**

5.6 Belgian Specialty Ale [BJCP]

Appearance: Variable. Colour varies considerably from pale gold to very dark. Clarity may be hazy to clear. Head retention is usually good. Generally moderate to high carbonation.

Aroma: Variable. Most exhibit varying amounts of fruity esters, spicy phenols and/or yeast-borne aromatics. Aromas from actual spice additions may be present. Hop aroma may be none to high, and may include a dry-hopped character. Malt aroma may be low to high, and may include character of non-barley grains such as wheat or rye. Some may include aromas of Belgian microbiota, most commonly *Brettanomyces* and/or *Lactobacillus*. No diacetyl.

Flavour: Variable. A great variety of flavours are found in these beers. Maltiness may be light to quite rich. Hop flavour and bitterness may be low to high. Spicy flavours may be imparted by yeast (phenolics) and/or actual spice additions. May include characteristics of grains other than barley, such as wheat or rye. May include flavours produced by Belgian microbiota such as *Brettanomyces* or *Lactobacillus*. May include flavours from adjuncts such as ~~and~~ **caramelised sugar syrup** or honey.

Mouthfeel: Variable. Some are well-attenuated, thus fairly light-bodied for their original gravity, while others are thick and rich. Most are moderately to highly carbonated. A warming sensation from alcohol may be present in stronger examples. A “mouth puckering” sensation may be present from acidity.

Overall Impression: Variable. This category encompasses a wide range of Belgian ales produced by truly artisanal brewers more concerned with creating unique products than in increasing sales.

History: Unique beers of small, independent Belgian breweries that have come to enjoy local popularity but may be far less well-known outside of their own regions. Many have attained “cult status” in the U.S. (and other parts of the world) and now owe a significant portion of their sales to export.

Comments: This is a catch-all category for any Belgian-style beer not fitting any other Belgian style category. The category can be used for clones of specific beers (e.g., Orval, La Chouffe); to produce a beer fitting a broader style that doesn't have its own category (e.g., ~~Belgian-style barleywines, Trappist Enkels and Quadrupels, Belgian spiced-Christmas-type beers, etc.~~) or to create an artisanal or experimental beer of the brewer's own choosing (e.g., strong Belgian golden ale with spices, something unique). Creativity is the only limit in brewing but the entrants must identify what is special about their entry.

The judges must understand the brewer's intent in order to properly judge an entry in this category. THE BREWER MUST SPECIFY EITHER THE BEER BEING CLONED, THE NEW STYLE BEING PRODUCED OR THE SPECIAL INGREDIENTS OR PROCESSES USED. Additional background information on the style and/or beer may be provided to judges to assist in the judging, including style parameters or detailed descriptions of the beer. Beers fitting other Belgian categories should not be entered in this category.

Ingredients: May include herbs and/or spices. May include unusual grains and malts, though the grain character should be apparent if it is a key ingredient. May include adjuncts such as ~~and~~ **caramelised sugar syrup** and honey. May include Belgian microbiota such as *Brettanomyces* or *Lactobacillus*. Unusual techniques, such as blending, may be used through primarily to arrive at a particular result. The process alone does not make a beer unique to a blind judging panel if the final product does not taste different.

Vital Statistics:

OG	FG	IBUs	ABV
varies	varies	varies	varies

Commercial Examples: Orval; De Dolle's Arabier, Oerbier, Boskeun and Still Nacht; La Chouffe, McChouffe, Chouffe Bok and N'ice Chouffe; Ellezelloise Hercule Stout and Quintine Amber; Unibroue Ephemere, Maudite, Don de Dieu, etc.; Minty; Zatte Bie; Caracole Amber, Saxo and Nostradamus; Silenrieu Sara and Joseph; Fantôme Black Ghost and Speciale Noël; St. Fullien Noël; Gouden Carolus Noël; Affligem Noël; Guldenburg and Pere Noël; De Ranke XX Bitter; Bush (Scaldis); Grottenbier; La Trappe Quadrupel; Weyerbacher QUAD; Bière de Miel; Verboden Vrucht; New Belgium 1554 Black Ale; Cantillon Iris; **Lindemans Kriek and Framboise**, and many more

2016 Belgian Beerfest. STYLE CHART – Vital Statistics.

CATEGORY - Style	OG	FG	ABV%	IBU	COLOUR SRM
1.1 Trappist Single	1044 - 1054	1004 - 1010	4.8 – 6%	25 - 45	3 - 5
1.2 Belgian Blonde Ale	1062-1075	1008-1018	6.0-7.5%	15-30	4-7
1.3 Belgian Strong Golden Ale	1070-1095	1005-1016	7.5-10.5%	22-35	3-6
1.4 Tripel	1075-1085	1008-1014	7.5-9.5%	20-40	4.5-7
2.1 Dubbel	1062-1075	1008-1018	6.0-7.6%	15-25	10-17
2.2 Belgian Strong Dark Ale	1075-1110	1010-1024	8.0-11.0%	20-35	12-22
2.3 Bière de Garde	1060-1080	1008-1016	6.0-8.5%	18-28	6-19
3.1 Belgian Witbier	1044-1052	1008-1012	4.5-5.5%	10-20	2-4
3.2 Belgian Pale Ale	1048-1054	1010-1014	4.8-5.5%	20-30	8-14
4.1 Saison	1048-1065	1002-1012	5.0-7.0%	20-35	5-14
5.1 Straight (unblended) Lambic	1040-1054	1001-1010	5.0-6.5%	0-10	3-7
5.2 Gueze	1040-1060	1000-1006	5.0-8.0%	0-10	3-7
5.3 Flanders Red Ale	1048-1057	1002-1012	4.6-6.5%	10-25	10-16
5.4 Flanders Brown Ale/Oud Bruin	1040-1074	1008-1012	4.0-8.0%	20-25	15-22
5.5 Fruit Lambic	1040-1060	1000-1010	5.0-7.0%	0-10	3-7
5.6 Belgian Specialty Ale	Variable	Variable	Variable	Variable	Variable

Colour – SRM equivalence

Colour	SRM value
Straw	2-3
Yellow	3-4
Gold	5-6
Amber	6-9
Deep amber/light copper	10-14
Copper	14-17
Deep copper/light brown	17-18
Brown	19-22
Dark brown	22-30
Very dark brown	30-35
Black	30
Black, opaque	40