

# Belgian-Style Beer Dinner at Millennium Featuring Russian River Brewing Company

June 24th, 2008



# Tips for tasting beer

1. Smell the beer. As soon as the beer is poured, swirl the cup, bring it to your nose, and inhale the beer's aroma several times. When a beer is cold, it may be necessary to swirl the beer in the cup, warm the beer by holding it between your hands, or putting your hand on the top of the cup to allow the volatiles to accumulate in a great enough concentration to be detected.
2. Visually inspect the beer. Tilt the cup, and examine it through backlighting. For darker beers, it may be necessary to use a small flashlight to adequately illuminate the beer. Examine the beer's color, clarity, and head retention.
3. Smell the beer again. Again, swirl the cup, bring it to your nose, and inhale the beer's aromas several times. Note how the beer's aroma changes as the beer warms and the volatiles begin to dissipate.
4. Taste the beer. Take about 1 ounce of beer into your mouth, and coat the inside of your mouth with it. Be sure to allow the beer to make contact with your lips, gums, teeth, palate, and the top, bottom, and sides of your tongue. Swallow the beer, and exhale through your nose. Pay attention to your impressions of the initial flavors of the beer (malt, hops, alcohol, sweetness), intermediate flavors (additional hop/malt flavor, fruitiness, diacetyl, sourness), aftertaste (hop bitterness, oxidation, astringency), and conditioning (appropriateness of level for style).
5. Notice the body of the beer. Take another mouthful of beer and note the the beer's viscosity and mouthfeel.
6. Form an overall impression. Relax. Take a deep breath. Smell the beer again, and taste it again. Pause to consider how the beer compares to other beers of its style.

# Witbier Style Sheet

Summary: A refreshing, effervescent, fruity, spicy, low to moderate strength wheat ale

Tonight's Sample: Russian River's Little White Lie

## Tasting Experience

### Aroma

Dominant notes: Sweetness, grainy and/or spicy wheat, coriander, citrus fruit, especially orange

Background notes: Honey, vanilla, florals, tartness, herbs, pepper, spicy/herbal hops, other spices

### Appearance

Color: Very pale straw to light gold

Clarity: Hazy, milky, whitish-yellow

Head: Dense, white, mousse-like head with very good retention

### Flavor

Dominant notes: Zesty citrus fruit, often orange, sweetness, crispness, tart finish

Moderate notes: Coriander, other herbal and spicy flavors, wheat graininess

Background notes: Honey, vanilla, light lactic sourness, spicy and/or earthy hop flavor, mild hop bitterness

### Mouthfeel

Body: Light/medium, smooth, creamy

Alcohol: Not prominent at all

Carbonation: High, effervescent

Finish: Dry, slightly tart, light acidity

## How to Taste

### Food Pairing

### Glassware

Pint or Pilsner



## 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

## Making the Beer

### Ingredients

Malt: Unmalted wheat, pale barley

Hops: Noble

Yeast: Mildly spicy ale yeast

Herbs/spices: Sometimes orange peel, coriander, or other spices

### Statistics

OG: 1.044 – 1.052

FG: 1.008 – 1.012

IBUs: 10 – 20

SRM: 2 – 4

ABV: 4.5 – 5.5%

# Saison Style Sheet

Overall Impression: Refreshing, medium to strong, highly carbonated, well hopped, fruity/spicy ale with dry, quenching acidity

Tonight's Sample: Lost Abbey's Red Barn

## Tasting Experience

### Aroma

Dominant notes: Fruity aromas, often oranges or lemons, peppery spices

Background notes: Spicy or floral hop aroma, slight sourness or acidity, soft alcohols

### Appearance

Color: Pale orange, golden, or amber

Clarity: Poor to good, some haze

Head: Long-lasting, dense, rocky white to ivory head leaving "Belgian lace"

### Flavor

Dominant notes: Fruity, frequently citrus, peppery

Moderate notes: Spicy or earthy hop flavor, hop bitterness,

Background flavors: Light malt, sourness, long bitter or spicy aftertaste

### Mouthfeel

Body: Light to medium

Alcohol: Moderately warming

Carbonation: Very high, effervescent

Finish: Very dry, balancing acidity

## How to Taste

### Food Pairing

### Glassware

Pint or Tulip



## History

Brewed at the end of the winter in Wallonia to last through summer, saisons had to last for months but not be too strong to be quenching and refreshing in the hot weather

## Making the Beer

### Ingredients

Malt: Pilsner + Vienna, Munich

Hops: Noble, EK Goldings, Styrian

Yeast: Saison

Adjunct: Sugar or honey

Other: Hard water, Lactobacillus or sour mash

### Statistics

OG: 1.048 – 1.065

FG: 1.002 – 1.012

IBUs: 20 – 35

SRM: 5 – 14

ABV: 5 – 7%

# Gueze Style Sheet

Overall Impression: Complex, pleasantly sour/acidic, balanced, pale, wheat-based ale fermented by a variety of traditionally Belgian microbiota  
Tonight's Sample: Russian River's Beatification

## Tasting Experience

### Aroma

Dominant notes: Sour/acidic, barnyard (earthy, goaty, hay, horsey, and horse blanket)

Background notes: Fruit, including citrus fruits (often grapefruit) or apples, rhubarb, honey, mild oak aroma

### Appearance

Color: Golden

Clarity: Excellent

Head: Thick rocky, mousse-like, with excellent retention

### Flavor

Dominant notes: Sour or acidic, balanced by barley and wheat, and by barnyard

Moderate notes: Mixed fruit, often citrus or apple

Background notes: Slight sweetness, honey, mild vanilla and/or oak flavor, occasionally very slight hop flavor

### Mouthfeel

Body: Light to medium

Alcohol: Low warming character

Carbonation: Highly carbonated

Finish: tart, puckering, not astringent

## How to Taste

### Food Pairing

### Glassware Tulip or Snifter



## History

Spontaneously fermented in the area around Brussels (the Senne Valley). Traditionally a mix of one, two, and three year old lambic

## Making the Beer

### Ingredients

Malt: Pilsner, unmalted wheat

Hops: Aged

Yeast: Naturally occurring, Brettanomyces

Other: oak aged, Pediococcus, Lactobacillus, etc.

### Statistics

OG: 1.040 – 1.060

FG: 1.000 – 1.006

IBUs: 0 - 10

SRM: 3 - 7

ABV: 5 – 8%

# Flanders Red Ale Style Sheet

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

Tonight's Sample: Russian River's Supplication

\*The Supplication shares characteristics of Flanders Reds and Oud Bruins; see next page for Oud Bruin style sheet

## Tasting Experience

### Aroma

Dominant notes: Red and black fruits (black cherries, plums, red currants), sourness and acidity

Background notes: Vanilla and/or chocolate, spices, little/no butterscotch (diacetyl)

### Appearance

Color: Deep red, or reddish-brown

Clarity: Good

Head: White to pale tan head with average to good retention

### Flavor

Dominant notes: Intense fruitiness (plum, orange, black cherry, red currant), tart sourness

Moderate notes: Mildly sweet malt

Background notes: Vanilla and/or chocolate, spices, mild hop bitterness, tannic bitterness with aged red wine-like character, little/no butterscotch (diacetyl)

### Mouthfeel

Body: Medium bodied and crisp

Alcohol: Mild character if noticeable

Carbonation: Low to moderate

Finish: Low to moderately astringent

## How to Taste

### Food Pairing

### Glassware Tulip or Snifter



## History

Indigenous to West Flanders, the beer is aged in oak barrels which contain ale souring bacteria. The tradition of blending old beer with young to balance the sourness is uncommon today

## Making the Beer

### Ingredients

Malt: Vienna, Munich, cara malt

Hops: Low-alpha continental

Yeast: Saccharomyces, Brettanomyces

Other: oak aged, Pediococcus, Lactobacillus, etc.

### Statistics

OG: 1.048 – 1.057

FG: 1.002 – 1.012

IBUs: 10 - 25

SRM: 10 - 16

ABV: 4.6 – 6.5%

# Oud Bruin Style Sheet

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

Tonight's Sample: Russian River's Supplication

\*The Supplication shares characteristics of Flanders Reds and Oud Bruins; see prior page for Flanders Red style sheet

## Tasting Experience

### Aroma

Dominant notes: Dark fruits (raisins, plums, figs, dates, black cherries), caramel or toffee malt, sourness

Background notes: Orange, treacle, chocolate, spices, sherry, sourness, little or no butterscotch (diacetyl)

### Appearance

Color: Dark reddish-brown to brown

Clarity: Good

Head: Ivory to light tan head with average to good retention

### Flavor

Dominant notes: Caramel or toffee malt, dark fruits (raisins, plums, figs, dates, black cherries, prunes), complexity, caramelization

Moderate notes: Sourness, as well as sweet-and-sour, orange, treacle, chocolate

Background notes: Spices, mild hop bitterness, mild oxidation, mild diacetyl

### Mouthfeel

Body: Medium to full

Alcohol: Mild character if noticeable

Carbonation: Low to moderate

Finish: No astringency, sweet and tart

## How to Taste

### Food Pairing

### Glassware Tulip or Snifter



## History

An East Flanders "old ale", with roots back to the 1600s. Historically brewed as a "provision beer" that would develop some sourness as it aged

## Making the Beer

### Ingredients

Malt: Pils, dark cara, tiny amount of black/roast

Hops: Low-alpha continental

Yeast:  
Saccharomyces,  
Brettanomyces

Other:  
Lactobacillus

### Statistics

OG: 1.040 – 1.074

FG: 1.008 – 1.012

IBUs: 20 - 25

SRM: 15 - 22

ABV: 4.0 – 8.0%

# Belgian-Style Golden Strong Ale Style Sheet

Overall Impression: A golden, complex, effervescent, strong Belgian-style ale  
Tonight's Sample: Russian River's & Avery's Collaboration Not Litigation

\*This beer is a blend of a Golden Strong (Avery Salvation) and a Dark Strong (Russian River Salvation); See next page for Dark Strong Ale style sheet

## Tasting Experience

### Aroma

Dominant notes: Prominent flavors of light fruits (pears, apples, oranges), peppers or spices

Background notes: Perfumey floral hops, soft spicy alcohols, light malt character

### Appearance

Color: Yellow to medium gold

Clarity: Good

Head: Massive, long-lasting, rocky, white head, leaving "Belgian lace"

### Flavor

Dominant notes: Fruitiness (pears, apples, oranges)

Moderate notes: Peppery spices, soft and spicy-sweet alcohol, peppery (phenolic) and hoppy bitterness

Background notes: Malt, spicy hop flavor, low to moderately bitter aftertaste

### Mouthfeel

Body: Light to medium

Alcohol: Smooth, noticeable warmth

Carbonation: Very high, effervescent

Finish: Dry, never astringent

## How to Taste

### Food Pairing

### Glassware

Tulip or Snifter



## History

Originally developed by the Moortgat brewery after WWII as a response to the growing popularity of Pilsner beers. Similar to a tripel, but paler, lighter, crisper, and drier, highlighting spiciness

## Making the Beer

### Ingredients

Malt: Pilsner

Hops: Noble, Styrian Goldings

Yeast: Belgian high-ester, high-phenolic ale yeast

Adjunct: White sugar

Other: Soft water

### Statistics

OG: 1.070 – 1.095

FG: 1.005 – 1.016

IBUs: 22 - 35

SRM: 3 - 6

ABV: 7.5 – 10.5%

# Belgian-Style Dark Strong Ale Style Sheet

Overall Impression: A smooth, dark, rich, complex, strong, Belgian-style ale  
Tonight's Sample: Russian River's & Avery's Collaboration Not Litigation

\*This beer is a blend of a Golden Strong (Avery Salvation) and a Dark Strong (Russian River Salvation); See prior page for Golden Strong Ale style sheet

## Tasting Experience

### Aroma

Dominant notes: Rich caramely, toasty, or bready malt sweetness, dark fruits (raisin, plum, dried cherry, fig, prune), soft perfumey or floral alcohol

Background notes: Peppery spiciness, little/no noble hops

### Appearance

Color: Deep amber to deep copper

Clarity: Clear to hazy

Head: Huge, dense, mousse-like, cream to light tan colored head

### Flavor

Dominant notes: Similar to aroma in moderately sweet malt and fruit notes, complex and smoothly blended flavors

Moderate notes: Similar to alcohol and spice notes in aroma

Background notes: low bitterness

### Mouthfeel

Body: Medium to full and creamy

Alcohol: Smooth noticeable warmth

Carbonation: High but without 'bite'

Finish: Very dry (Trappist) to semi-dry or sweet (Abbey)

## How to Taste

### Food Pairing

### Glassware Tulip or Snifter



## History

Developed by Trappist monasteries, seven of which still produce their own beers ('Trappist'); commercial brewers produce similar styles, sometimes licensed from monasteries ('Abbey')

## Making the Beer

### Ingredients

Malt: Pils, Munich, Belgian specialty

Hops: Noble or Styrian Goldings

Yeast: Belgian high-ester, ale yeast

Adjunct:  
Caramelized or unrefined sugar

### Statistics

OG: 1.075 – 1.110

FG: 1.012 – 1.024

IBUs: 20 - 35

SRM: 12 - 22

ABV: 8 – 11%

# English-style Strong Ale Style Sheet

**Overall Impression:** An ale of significant alcoholic strength, usually tilted toward a sweeter, maltier balance of flavors.

**Tonight's Sample:** Avery's Samael's Ale

## Tasting Experience

### Aroma

Dominant notes: Malty sweetness (caramel, molasses, toffee, treacle), dried fruits (raisin, prune, figs)

Background notes: Some oxidation, similar to Sherry or Port.

### Appearance

Color: Light amber to very dark brown

Clarity: Clear to almost opaque if dark

Head: Moderate to low cream to light tan-colored head

### Flavor

Dominant notes: Deep, rich malt complexity, with nuts, caramel, or molasses flavors, dried fruit flavors

Moderate notes: May be slightly to moderately hoppy, alcohol

Background notes: Light chocolate or roasted malt, oxidation similar to Sherry or Port, wood or barnyard flavors if oak-aged

### Mouthfeel

Body: Medium to full, chewy body

Alcohol: Significant alcoholic warming

Carbonation: Low to moderate

Finish: Dry to sweet

## How to Taste

### Food Pairing

### Glassware Pint or Stein



## History

A traditional English ale style, aged at the brewery, these beers often had age-related character and were used as 'stale' or stock ales for blending or enjoyed at full strength

## Making the Beer

### Ingredients

Malt: Modified pale, caramel, & v. little dark malt

Hops: Varies

Yeast: British ale yeast

Adjunct: Molasses or dark sugar, maize, flaked barley or wheat

### Statistics

OG: 1.060 – 1.090

FG: 1.015 – 1.022

IBUs: 30 – 60

SRM: 10 – 22

ABV: 6 – 9%