



Brasserie des Franches Montagnes (BFM)



Brasserie des Franches-Montagnes (BFM) started in 1997, and has been one of the pillars of the Swiss craft beer renaissance ever since. BFM's range of bottle-conditioned, top- and bottom-fermented beers is as staunchly original as their region. The Franches-Montagnes (ancient French for "Free Mountains") are part of the Jura Mountains, along the North-Western Border of Switzerland. The region has been for centuries famous for its watches made by master craftsmen. This happy combination of tradition and modernism is also evident in BFM's famed products, all crafted in small batches and hand-bottled at 3287 feet above sea level by the brew master himself. Jérôme Rebetz was formally trained as an oenologist but soon decided to turn to beer brewing as it allowed for more creativity. His creations are a subtle combination of the vintner's taste and the convivial pleasures of sharing a beer with friends along with the passionately independent spirit of the Jura mountain-folk. His beers are a rare breed that is not to be ignored.

BEER TASTING

Product 1: Biere Ambree parfumees au Tarry Suchong (B.A.T.S)

Weisse Beer with Smoked Tea Leaves
Alc./Vol.: 6%



This beer is inspired by the aromas of the legendary asphalt mines of the Swiss Travers region. Brewmaster Jerome has long been captivated by the fragrances he observed while wandering the mining tunnels, so he set out to evoke them in this beer. Brewed with smoked tea leaves, and smoked malt from Bamberg. It uses Hallertauer Magnum hops for bitterness, Tettnanger Hallertauer for flavor, and Lapsong Tarry Suchong tea leaves from China.

Formats: 11.2oz flip-cap bottles

Product 2: Jerome & Spike Collaboration Brew

Rye based Barleywine
Alc./Vol.: 12.0%

This is a collaboration brew between Terrapin Beer Company, of Athens GA, brewmaster Spike Buckowski and Jerome Rebetz, brewmaster of BFM. Strong ale made with 20% rye and 80% malted barley and then aged in rum barrels at BFM brewery in Switzerland.



Formats: 11.2oz flip-cap bottles & kegs

Product 3: LA Quatorze (NEW RELEASE – will be available May 2012)

Wheat Doublebock IPA “Stout”

Alc./vol. 7.4 %

This is a unique new creation that is between an IPA and Wheat Beer with a touch of coffee extracted in a very special way and various types of hops added throughout the 90 minute boil.

Malts: Wheat Malt 40%, Pale Malt, and Crystal Malt

Hops: Nuggets, Kent Goldings, Soraci Ace, Nelson Sauvin, and Cascade

Plato: 7

Formats: 11.2oz flip-cap bottles & 25.4oz bottles & kegs



Product 4: La Dragonne

Hot Winter Specialty (drank warm)

Alc./Vol.: 9.27%

After primary fermentation honey, cinnamon, anise, orange peel, cloves, cardamom, coriander and juniper are added to the maturation tank. The beer is then heated to 167 F to get all spices consummated in the liquid. La Dragonne does not have any carbonation and is to be enjoyed warm to enjoy the intensity and balance of all flavors & aromas.

Formats: 25.4oz bottles only



Product 5: Cuvee Alex Le Rouge

Imperial Stout

Alc./Vol.: 10.3%

Cuvee Alex Le Rouge was created in the honor of the Jurassion revolutionist Alex the Red, founding member of the SMABE (Societe Mondiale des Amateurs de Bieres Extremes). Cuvee Alex La Rouge is an imperial stout brewed with vanilla, pepper and tea. This is a great beer to keep aged in your home cellar, as it gets better with year.

Formats: 11.2oz flip-cap bottles





Product 6: VINTAGE 2006 Abbaye de Saint Bon Chien

Abbey Style

Alc/vol. 11.0%

Boldly treading the boundary between port, wine and beer, L'Abbaye de Saint Bon-Chien is an unique ale aged in wooden casks which have been used for several years before to age Merlot, Merlot Cabernet, Whisky and then Grappa. It manages to merge into L'Abbaye all the complex aromas of a vintage red wine along with the delicate harmony and flavors of the wood and its former contents. This process requires close monitoring of the beer's evolution. The final version is blended from different casks, to ensure optimal balance, complexity and enjoyment! This beer was named in memory of Bon-Chien, the late brewery cat, deceased in June 2005, whose antics were very popular with brewery visitors.

Each year brings a new flavor and aroma and taste for this product.

Formats: 25.4oz bottles & kegs

“Roll Out the Barrel, Open Your Wallet” By Eric Asimov, Jan 2, 2009 – Excerpt from NYTIMES

I AM about to take your breath away. How do I know this? Because I felt as if the wind had been knocked out of me when I realized that in the middle of a deep recession I am recommending a beer that costs \$35 a bottle. What? Am I insane?

Probably. It would take a rare occasion for me to pay \$35 for a bottle, but I'll tell you about this extraordinary beer anyway. It is the 2006 vintage — for a beer this expensive must have a vintage — of the Abbaye de Saint Bon-Chien, an unfiltered, unpasteurized, limited-edition ale brewed by Brasserie des Franches-Montagnes in Switzerland. In its favor, the beer comes in a 25.4-ounce bottle, rather than the more typical 12 ounces. More important, it is superb: brown in color yet bright in the mouth, with a bracing, spicy, tart, almost woolly complexity reminiscent of a Belgian lambic.

About the only thing against it is the price. Aside from that, what makes this beer so unusual? The Abbaye de Saint Bon-Chien is one of a growing number of beers that spend some time aging in oak barrels, which may be typical for wine and whiskey but is a rare thing indeed for beer. In a way, the brewers of these barrel-aged beers have reached backward into the future.

Centuries ago, barrels were the only vessels in which to brew and store beers. Most brewers strove to eliminate any flavorings that wood might impart to the beers, soaking and scrubbing the wood to make the barrels as neutral as possible. In industrialized times, of course, steel and aluminum serve a brewer's purpose with far less effort and wear than wood.

But in the last decade or so, brewers have given barrels another look. Inspired by winemakers, whiskey producers and even lambic brewers, who never stopped using barrels, these brewers see oak barrels not as storage vessels but as tools that can make beer more complex and interesting.

Recently the beer panel tasted 25 oak-aged beers. For the tasting, Florence Fabricant and I were joined by two guests: Richard Scholz, an owner of Bierkraft in Park Slope, Brooklyn, and Matt Stinton, the bar manager at Hearth in the East Village, which serves several different barrel-aged beers.

We all agreed that the tasting was fascinating, with many highly refined beers and few that indulged in extravagance for the sake of extravagance. Most striking was the number of styles on display in the tasting.

The Abbaye de Saint Bon-Chien, which was our No. 1 beer, was in fact aged in barrels that had previously been used for rum, grappa, Burgundy, cabernet sauvignon and other wines. None of these flavors were evident in the beer, or perhaps they were so well integrated that they could not be detected. In fact, in only one of the 25 beers was the taste of oak obvious, as in a bad vanilla-scented chardonnay: we rejected this bottle.

So, why are these beers so expensive? Garrett Oliver, the brewmaster at the Brooklyn Brewery, cites the high cost of labor and storage for these beers, which are made by hand in small lots. What's more, barrels themselves can be very expensive.

Obviously, these are not beers for chugging. They are specialized brews that can go beautifully with food. The tangy lambic-style beers would go well with seafood or cheeses. The richer imperial stout-style brews could be just the thing with chocolate. As for the cost, well, think of them as you would of a bottle of wine for sharing. You wouldn't mind paying \$35 for a bottle of wine, would you? Don't answer that.

To read the full article: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/07/dining/07wine.html>