

Belgian microbrewery uses its own unique yeast strain

Alvinne brewery not only unique for its beers, also the used yeast strain is very special

Moen, Belgium – Alvinne exists since 2004 and moved in 2011 to a new production facility in Moen, a small village near Kortrijk. The brewery is situated in an industrial building with a long history. The target audience is the passionate beer lover from all over the world. The mission statement is to deliver world class innovative beers, pushing the classical barriers away and this by only making use of malt ingredients, water, hops, yeast and the flavor of used wooden casks. Brewing about 15 different beers, a clear positioning of the portfolio became necessary. The Classical collection, with the Morpheus branding, holds the 3 basic beers of the brewery, accessible for a wide audience. Apart from this range, there is an Oak collection (barrel aged beers), Seasonal collection (cherry beer, Christmas beers) and the famous Sour collection.



The Alvinne team consists out of 3 enthusiastic people (from right to left): Davy Spiessens: brewmaster, Glenn Castelein: 2nd brewer, PR and Marc De Keukeleire: yeast and hygiene management.

Marc joined the brewery end of 2009 and brought in his passion and baby: his

own cultivated yeast strain.

The quest of the Morpheus Yeast

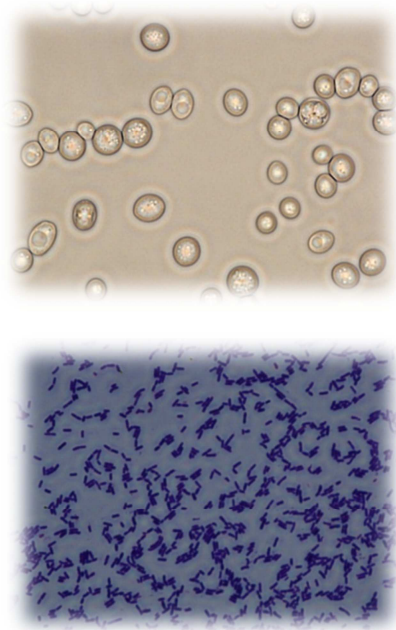


Marc (“the yeast whisperer”) has a Master degree in food science engineering with a specialization in dairy. Since years, he is going on holiday in the French Auvergne. This area is the place to be for cheese lovers. It is there where the best French AOC cheeses like Saint Nectaire, Bleu d’Auvergne have their origin. It was in that particular mystic area of France, with its old volcanoes, where Marc found his yeast, or must we say, the yeast found him?

He created his own recipe for a growth medium for yeasts, and trapped his strain in the open nature of the Auvergne. Of course, some “not wanted” yeast strains were growing in the beginning also, and it took him some years to select the interesting ones. This has asked a lot of dedicated patience. What are the criteria for good brewing yeast? First of all, it must be capable of fermenting maltose, the sugar that is found in malt. Further on, it doesn’t produce off flavors and it is alcohol tolerant.

Pilot tests were confirming above properties of the yeast culture and by January 2010, the sour range of Alvinne beers and some selected beers were fermented with the Morpheus yeast culture.

Almost none of the microbreweries around the world have their own unique yeast. Most of them use commercial yeast. Alvinne brewery thanks a big part of her uniqueness to this yeast. For the big traditional breweries that exist for several generations, the yeast is their treasure and kept safely in yeast banks under -70°C circumstances, in order to have a backup when things go wrong. Also Alvinne has a backup, safely put away in these super deep freezers.



The University of Leuven is known for its brewing yeast knowledge. The Morpheus yeast was analyzed. They found 2 *Saccharomyces Cerevisiae* strains and lactic bacteria (see pictures on the left). *Saccharomyces Cerevisiae* is the standard yeast type we know for brewing ale. Lactic bacteria are commonly used in dairy applications, but also in typical sour beers, but unwanted in “traditional” ales. Both are kept together in a medium that Marc calls a “matrix”. Finding a protocol to keep the matrix alive and active was the next challenge. Fermenting with lacto’s and yeast together is called a mixed fermentation e.g. resulting in a famous Flemish beer style that is called Old Flemish Brown. The brewery is geographically situated in the heart of the historically “mixed fermentation” area in Flanders, Belgium.

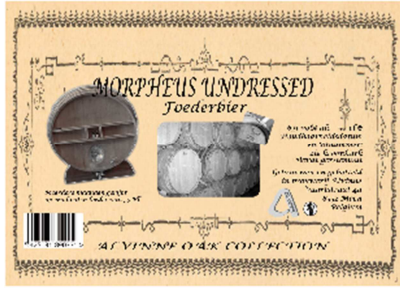
Brewing with the Morpheus Yeast

Because of the mixed culture, they can brew both traditional fermented beer resulting in a traditional ale; or mixed fermented beer, resulting in a sour beer. The Morpheus yeast has a very high alcohol tolerance. The traditional ale Cuvée de Mortagne has an alcohol level of about 14 vol %. Not many yeasts can take that amount of alcohol.

Thanks to the Morpheus yeast, Alvinne is recognized as the worldwide innovator for the mixed fermentation sour beers. There are a complete range of sour ales in the range now.

Enjoy the “probiotic”, super healthy sour ales!

Our Sour collection:



Morpheus Undressed Foederbier

- Type: Flemish old brown
- Alcohol: 6,9 vol %
- Color: Brown
- Aging: on foeder (big wooden vessel)



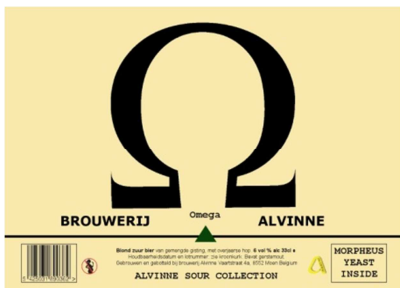
Wild West

- Type: Blond sour ale
- Alcohol: 6 vol %
- Color: golden blond
- Aging: on wine barrel



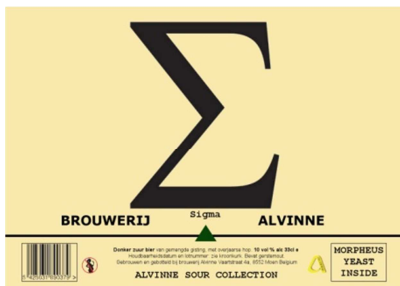
Cuvée Freddy

- Type: Dark sour ale
- Alcohol: 10 vol %
- Color: dark brown
- Aging: stainless steel



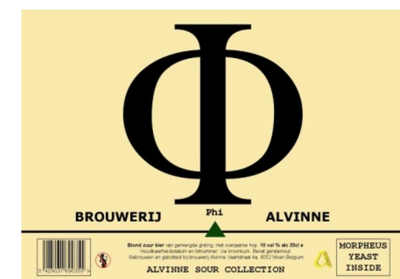
Omega

- Type: Blond sour ale
- Alcohol: 6 vol %
- Color: blond
- Aging: stainless steel



Sigma

- Type: Dark sour ale
- Alcohol: 10 vol %
- Color: dark brown
- Aging: stainless steel



Phi

- Type: Blond sour ale
- Alcohol: 10 vol %
- Color: blond
- Aging: stainless steel