

# The RARE BEER CLUB

## NOVEMBER SPECIAL OFFER: 4 CELLARABLE BELGIAN-STYLE RARITIES!

### FATHER CHRISTMAS 2022 BARREL OF MONKS BREWING

Style: Belgian-Inspired Dark Strong Ale w/ Spices  
ABV: 10% Serving Temperature: 50–57° F  
Suggested Glassware: Chalice, Goblet, Tulip, or Snifter Glass



Barrel of Monks Father Christmas is a Belgian-style holiday strong ale brewed with European malt and hops, a classic Belgian yeast strain, and gently accented with holiday spices.

Father Christmas pours a deep-dark cola color capped by medium-brown foam, exhibiting solid retention and a bit of lacing around the edges of our glasses. We found generous levels of cola, brown sugar, and smooth spicing in the initial aromatics. Nicely developed Belgian-style yeast characteristics were focused around clove, ripe fruitiness, and subtle black pepper. Pleasant core caramelization and expressive floral and fruit notes: ripe pear, apple, and dark berries. From the initial approach, this strong ale proves to be a beautiful combo of complex Belgian yeast character, dark specialty malts, expressive ripe fruits, and subtle spicing. This is exactly what we're looking for from a strong, Belgian-style holiday ale.

It's medium-full to full in body, with vibrant underpinning carbonation along with fresh, ripe fruit elements keeping this super lively. There's expressive Belgian yeast character bringing along some delicious white pepper and clove notes. Nice core bitterness that tempers the generous caramelization and sweet, yeast-driven fruitiness throughout this beer. This Barrel of Monks Father Christmas is very lively on the palate overall, as we'd expect from the best of Belgian-style holiday releases, bringing a ton of complexity but still staying super easy to dig into and very flexible in terms of pairing options. Significant dark berries, impressive complexity from the specialty-malt additions, and just loads of toffee and caramels and subtle chocolate tying everything together. A beautiful Belgian-style holiday ale. Lasting finish of toasty clove and white pepper, lingering generous caramel and toffee, and some vibrant red fruits to the end.

**Aging & Pairing Notes:** Per the brewery, this vintage aged release should age gracefully for years. Father Christmas is bottle-conditioned and exhibits a potent ABV—suggesting this should have plenty of life ahead. For pairings, we'd look to the core notes for guidance: generous pepper and clove, vibrant fruitiness, and significant core caramelization have us looking to a variety of pork and turkey options. Perfect for the holidays, and as flexible as you'd expect from a well-handled, Belgian-style offering.

### STRAFFE HENDRIK HERITAGE 2016 HUISBROUWERIJ DE HALVE MAAN

Style: Blended Quadrupel aged in Rum barrels  
ABV: 11% Serving Temperature: 50–57° F  
Suggested Glassware: Chalice, Tulip, or Snifter



From the renowned Huisbrouwerij De Halve Maan in Belgium, known to some of you for their delicious Straffe Hendrik line of beers, we're proud to offer the Straffe Hendrik Heritage 2016. The brewery of the half moon has been in operation since 1856, and it makes some decadent special releases. This blended quadrupel starts with Straffe Hendrik Quadrupel as the base. It is aged for at least a year in oak barrels, and then different barrels are added into the aging program each year. The 2016 version highlights quadrupel aged in rum barrels, but blended with portions of quad aged in red Bordeaux, Cognac, Armagnac, etc. barrels from previous vintages. Each year of Straffe Hendrik Heritage is its own unique expression, highlighting that year's barrels and building on their evolving library of barrel-aged quads. We would like to hang out in such a library. A very limited amount of bottles of the Heritage 2016 release have ever been sold in the U.S.

Heritage 2016 pours deep cola-brown, capped by a creamy light-tan foam that basically lasts forever. Generous quad character comes through immediately from the aromatics: stacked layers of caramelization and dark malts, dried fruits, and a coconut-like roundness courtesy of the rum barrel influence. The aroma's rich, nutty, and packed with quad and barrel impacts.

Finely integrated carbonation provides some nice lightness to an otherwise massive presentation. Heritage 2016 leads with decadent dark caramel, dried fruits, and undertones of ripe cherries. The rum barrel comes through as plush and nicely rounded, presenting firm tannins but otherwise smooth and tropical. Some spices from the barrel influence and Belgian yeast. An incredibly developed quad, with seemingly endless layers to dig into.

(Continued on reverse)

## STRAFFE HENDRIK HERITAGE 2016 (CONT'D)

**Aging & Pairing Notes:** It's in its prime now, but this should continue to age gracefully. The brewery suggests pairing with similarly flavorful fare: strong cheese, meat and game, foie gras, or dark chocolate.

### OUDE GEUZE VERMOUTH MIKKELLER W/ BROUWERIJ BOON

**Style:** Blended Oude Geuze Lambic aged in white Vermouth foeders

**ABV:** 6.6% **Serving Temperature:** 42–47° F

**Suggested Glassware:** Flute, Lambic Tumbler, Tulip, or White Wine Glass



This oude geuze is a delicious, modern take on lambic from Mikkeller and Brouwerij Boon. This collaborative oude geuze includes lambic aged in oak foeders that were previously used for white vermouth, emphasizing a high percentage of 2-year-old lambic, with some 1-year-old lambic added for bottle conditioning, along with a dash of 3-year-old lambic. The result is vibrantly tart, with subtle white-vermouth influences that integrate perfectly with the core salinity, funk, and tree fruits presented by the blended lambics. One of the best collabs we've ever had from Mikkeller (and we've tasted quite a few in the Rare Beer Club over the years).

Mikkeller x Boon Oude Geuze Vermouth pours a bright, golden-orange color that glows in the glass. The beer's capped by modest white foam that leaves behind fine-bubbled lacing along the perimeter. Hugely expressive aromatics in the initial pour: potently tart lemon and lime, a bit of bleu cheese, and some delightful funk backed up by secondary notes of herbaceous white vermouth. This blended lambic is especially mouthwatering and engaging from the start.

This oude geuze offers up a beautifully rounded, white-wine/lambic impact from that first sip, staying beautifully lean and reasonably dry throughout—but there's just so much to dig into here. Hugely satisfying on the geuze front, with layers of lemony tartness and funk, so clearly expressed overall, with endearing sourness and generous combinations of tree fruits. Beautiful blend of lambic acidity, herbal-tinged white vermouth, and some subtle vanilla and oak tannins from its aggregated barrel time. This one's a hugely delicious oude geuze collab, with a long-lasting finish of tart lemons and toasty oak, all nicely dry through the duration.

**Aging & Pairing Notes:** Mikkeller x Boon Oude Geuze Vermouth is bottle-conditioned, with tight construction and potent core acidity. The breweries suggest a best-by date of 15+ years out—so you can feel free to cellar this one for a bit. They point to food-pairing options like white-fish dishes, or serving this as an aperitif. Fried calamari, steamed mussels, or white fish with butter should go great here.

### SCALDIS PRESTIGE 2018 BRASSERIE DUBUISSON

**Style:** Strong Belgian Amber Ale Aged in Oak Barrels

**ABV:** 13% **Serving Temperature:** 43–48° F

**Suggested Glassware:** Chalice, Tulip, or Galopin



The 2018 Scaldis Prestige is one we've craved and finally got our hands on. It's being offered for the first time to our Rare Beer Club members, though it's the third style of Scaldis Prestige we've featured. In a previous Special Offer we've featured the Prestige de Charmes, which started with a base of Scaldis Tripel aged in Meursault-Charmes white burgundy barrels for 6 months, and the Prestige de Nuits, comprised of Scaldis Noel aged in Nuits-St-Georges red burgundy barrels for 6 to 9 months. We're now featuring this one to help round out your cellar with the whole Prestige Collection. Like the Charmes and Nuits, the Scaldis Prestige starts with a base beer, this one being the brewery's Scaldis Caractère, which then is aged for six months in oak barrels where it picks up additional aromas and flavors. A small quantity of sugar and yeast is added to the beer during bottling which produces refermentation providing natural CO<sub>2</sub> saturation and elevates the alcohol-by-volume to 13%. The net result is an incredibly detailed Belgian amber vibe melded with soft oak and fruity yeast esters. The 2018 Prestige has a very limited presence in the U.S.

Scaldis Prestige pours a slightly hazy, amber-orange color, capped by a thin layer of off-white foam. It presents as a beer that's spent plenty of time in oak. Generous aromatics of caramel, toffee, candied orange peel, and toasty-oaky vanilla take the lead, complimented by herbaceous and fruity hops, vibrant dried apricot, cherries, figs, and dates. As it warms slightly, impressions of clove and hints of banana come to mind, as well as crème brûlée and brown sugar.

Prestige de Charmes is full bodied, smooth, and well-rounded on the palate. The aromas carry over as flavors and are full of caramel and brown sugar sweetness, with a lot of oak-influenced vanilla and clove. Light hop bitterness is accompanied by the bitterness of lightly toasted sugar, with underlying vanilla and toffee, which brings forth the crème brûlée aspect of the aroma as a flavor. Dense dried figs and sweet dates appear with a touch of cherry and lead back to candied orange peel. The yeast brings forth fruity and floral esters to mingle with the sweetness. However, the sweetness is fully attenuated leaving a finely bubbled mousse and dry finish. Lingering in the warm, sweater on the inside finish, are clove and the oaky woodiness of the barrel. A beautiful Rare Beer from Belgium—this one blew us away.

**Aging & Pairing Notes:** Suitable for some additional aging time, but it's certainly drinking great now. For pairings: the brewery suggests the pronounced character of the beer goes very well with spicy and full-bodied dishes. An excellent pan fried foie gras, red meat or game dishes with reduced sauces, as well as hearty desserts and dark chocolates. By the way, we still have some of the 2018 Scaldis Prestige de Charmes tucked away in case you missed it the first time.