

# The RARE BEER CLUB

## APRIL 2024 SPECIAL OFFER

### BLONDE DE BLAUGIES BRASSERIE DE BLAUGIES (DOUR, BELGIUM)

Style: Belgian Strong Golden Ale

ABV: 8.0% Serving Temperature: 49–53° F Suggested Glassware: Tulip, Teku, Globe Snifter, or Goblet



Our tasting adventure starts off with Blonde de Blaugies (BDB), an outstanding Belgian strong golden ale that offers everything you want from the style. This artisanal tripel-style ale is one of two new beers introduced by the brewery in 2023, the other – Blidegarian Imperial Stout – is also featured in this Special Offer. It had been ten years since they introduced a new beer, 2013's La Vermontoise, a collaboration with Hill Farmstead, so we were excited to get our hands on what turned out to be a delicious and rare find.

The Blonde de Blaugies pours a slightly hazy gold with a pale amber rim. It's topped by dense bright white foam which leaves delicate lacing behind with every sip. The aromas coming from the glass are of clean cereal grain malts, floral hops, and fruity yeast. Lots of citrus notes and honey aromas are supported by wafts of apricot, peach, and flecks of white pepper. Further notes of bosc pear and golden apple sprinkled with coriander and clove enticed our olfactory senses and we couldn't wait to take a sip.

On the palate the Blonde de Blaugies carries itself with elegance but shows some rustic vibes as well. The first sip brings in bitter tangerine peel and fleshy stone fruit such as apricot and yellow plums seasoned with a sprinkling of white pepper. Lightly toasted malts make up the mid-palate complemented by fruity and floral yeast esters, then a second wave of fruit notes comes in towards the finish, reminiscent of pear and apple with hints of spicy phenols. This medium to full bodied blonde has a slightly prickly mousse at first but develops into round and creamy expressions with every sip. The finish shows a bit of the "farmhouse" as it were, which confirms the initial rustic vibe.

This is Belgian Blonde Ale at its finest. Blaugies used their decades of brewing experience and poured it literally into this amazing brew. Bravo!

**Aging & Pairing Notes:** The Blonde de Blaugies can be consumed fresh but will age gracefully for a few years. This will pair well with roasted pork tenderloin and mustard greens or smoked Cornish game hens with roasted herbed potatoes and edam cheese. Cheers!

### GIN TRINITAS TRIPEL (RBC EXCLUSIVE) JOPEN B.V. (HAARLEM, THE NETHERLANDS)

Style: Gin Infused Tripel

ABV: 10% Serving Temperature: 48–54° F Suggested Glassware: Tulip, Teku, or Thistle Glass



Next up in this special offering, we have the Rare Beer Club exclusive Jopen Gin Trinitas Tripel that, during fermentation, has been infused with oak chips that were soaked in Gospel Dutch Dry Gin. This infusion of flavor takes an already delicious beer and elevates it to new heights. The name Trinitas reflects Jopen's use of their "Holy Trinity" of brewing cereals used in Haarlem since the middle-ages: barley, wheat, and oats. Jopen Gin Trinitas Tripel is in very limited supply, imported exclusively for the Rare Beer Club.

Jopen Gin Trinitas Tripel pours a deep golden blonde with a touch of haze. It has a dense white creamy head that leaves behind delicate lacing. The initial aromas are bright and balanced Gospel Dutch Dry Gin notes of parsnip, Mittelfrüh hops, and Grains of Paradise with toasty vanilla from the oak chips. Then classic blonde/tripel notes come through with clove and white pepper, a hint of coriander, orange peel, ginger, honey, and a bit of bubblegum. Herbaceous hops give a sense of place, and fruity esters follow in the form of apricot blossom, peach nectar, and yellow plums. The aromas are complemented by lightly toasty and sweet malted barley, grainy wheat, and rustic oats.

Jopen Gin Trinitas Tripel envelops the palate with spicy and aromatic gin and vanilla flavors that are quickly accompanied by classic tripel flavors. One need not be a gin aficionado or connoisseur to enjoy these flavors as they do not overwhelm the beer but are very complementary to it. The aromas are well represented as flavors with the standouts being the toasty oak and stone fruit notes, with the spices

(Continued on reverse)

## GIN TRINITAS TRIPEL (CONT'D)

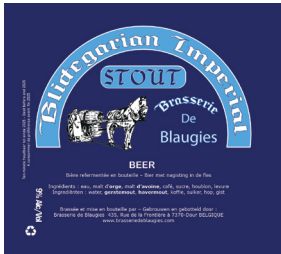
acting more as seasoning. Mid-palate we have a welcomed infusion of hoppy bitterness that brings us back sip after sip. Jopen Gin Trinitas Tripel is medium to full bodied, has a round and smooth mouthfeel, creamy mousse, and a well-structured, long-lasting finish showcasing the mastery of the Jopen brewing craft. Truly remarkable.

**Aging & Pairing Notes:** Aging the Jopen Gin Trinitas Tripel can be done for 2-5 years, but as always, we recommend drinking a few bottles now and putting a few bottles away to mature and enjoy at a later date. For food pairing the Jopen Gin Trinitas Tripel will go very well with smoked salmon on toast points with crème fraîche and dill, steamed mussels and pomme frites, or by itself for cocktail hour. Cheers!

## BLIDEGARIAN IMPERIAL STOUT BRASSERIE DE BLAUGIES (DOUR, BELGIUM)

Style: Belgian Imperial Stout with Coffee

ABV: 9% Serving Temperature: 50–55° F Suggested Glassware: Small Nonic, Tulip, or Globe Snifter



Third up in this fantastic special offer we have the Blidegarian Imperial Stout, a first for Brasserie de Blaugies. After trying this, you'd think they were making stouts from the inception of the brewery, that's how tasty it is. Being almost impossible to find in the US in 750ml bottles, or any format for that matter, the Rare Beer Club is proud to feature this ultra-rare imperial stout.

The Blidegarian Imperial Stout pours nearly opaque black with a dense tan head and leaves thin lacing with every sip. The aromas that abound are initially of deeply roasted malt with hints of char and a whisp of smoke which leads to dark chocolate aromas and rich coffee notes. The coffee was added at the end of the boiling process to enhance the roasted malt aromas. This culminates in pronounced notes of dark earth and dark dried fruit that are

complex and inviting.

On the palate is where the Blidegarian Imperial Stout really shines. The mouthfeel is smooth and round with grippy bitterness that initially greets our taste buds. Being bottle conditioned, the Blidegarian Imperial Stout has a creamy mousse with good carbonation that complements the coffee and roasted malt and brings forward dark chocolate and black fruit flavors. There are notes of spice and cola nut that come through mid-palate and floral flavors from the yeast as well. For a full-bodied stout at 9% abv its presence on the tongue is deceptively light, leaving us with no palate fatigue, just craving more. The finish is long and layered, carrying the chocolate and coffee notes all the way to the end. Another winner from Brasserie de Blaugies!

**Aging & Pairing Notes:** The “best by” date on the bottle states the Blidegarian Imperial Stout should be consumed by the end of 2025. They may be a bit cautious with that date (or it's their strategy to sell more beer!) but we wouldn't age it too far beyond that. To pair we recommend cast iron seared rib eye steaks with mushroom sauce and roasted root vegetables, with Belgian chocolate cake for dessert. Enjoy!

## SIN & REMORSE: SCOTCH WHISKY BARREL AGED (RBC EXCLUSIVE) JOPEN B.V. (HAARLEM, THE NETHERLANDS)

Style: Imperial Stout aged in Islay, Ben Nevis, and Caol Ila Whisky Barrels for 376 days

ABV: 12% Serving Temperature: 48–54° F Suggested Glassware: Glencairn, Tulip, Globe Snifter, or Thistle Glass



Last, but certainly not least in this awesome special offer, we have the unique and ultra-rare Jopen Sin & Remorse Imperial Stout that has been aged for 376 days in Scotch Whisky barrels from Islay, Ben Nevis, and Caol Ila. Whiskies distilled on the island of Islay are commonly characterized as peaty and smokey, while the Ben Nevis distillery focuses on malt-forward whiskies. This Jopen Sin & Remorse is in very limited supply and imported exclusively for the Rare Beer Club.

This Scotch Whisky barrel-aged imperial stout pours a deep, opaque black with a thick and creamy tan head. Aromas of peat and smoke waft in the air as this beer is poured, with rich notes of dark chocolate, espresso bean, and toasted oak. As we swirl, hints of dark cigar wrapper emerge, along with dried dark fruit such as raisins and dates. The ex-Scotch barrels give earthy depth that provides a solid base for the smokey malt to build on. The essence of peat gives a real depth to the aromas and the deeply roasted malt adds a bruleed brown sugar note that's carried throughout.

The Jopen Sin & Remorse Scotch Whisky barrel imperial stout has a large footprint and on the palate is well structured, focusing at first on the peaty and smokey notes of the barrels. The depth in flavor continues with notes of dark roasted espresso beans, toasted brown sugar, and dried black fruit. Dense and full of character, we noticed the flavors are layered so well that one can detect them individually. The mousse is also well integrated and adds a creamy texture to the mouthfeel. The length of the finish is prolonged and truly remarkable for such a complex beer.

**Aging & Pairing Notes:** The Jopen Sin & Remorse Scotch Whisky Barrel-aged Imperial Stout can be enjoyed now and will stand the test of time with long-term aging. For pairing we think triple-cream cheeses and Texas-style barbeque would be excellent, as would dark chocolate desserts, or your favorite fine cigar. Cheers!