

Malted North

Episode 03

T'is Always the Saison: French and Belgian Farmhouse Beers and Saisons

Corrected Transcript of Podcast Episode (reference list and links at the end)

BARRY 0:05

So I got it right.

BRENNAN 0:05

There you go.

BARRY 0:06

All right. Welcome back to Malted North.

JASON 0:10

*

----- Show Open ----- 0:11

BARRY 0:11

Live, live from the lounge at Yoerg Brewing Company on St. Paul's East Side, the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood. As you can probably tell, we're laughing because a big truck decided to go by right as we started the recording of this podcast. I'm leaving it in. I'm here with our usual crew. *laughter* Brennan McCaig, brewer at Yoerg's Brewing Company here in St. Paul. *laughter* And Jason Paddett, professor at St. Thomas. And as I like to say, a brewing polymath. listen to previous episodes for longer versions of that introduction or read the show notes. I want to just dive right in because I'm super excited about tonight's episode. We are talking about saisons or the saison style or styles of beer. We're going to get into this. There's a million questions. I can see forward brows already on our listeners' faces. We're going to dive in. You're going to learn everything about this that you're going to need to know to explore and this category of beers. What I do want to say, stick around as you may know if you've listened to any of the other episodes of Malted North, we'd like to feature a band, a local friends of Yoerg. Can I sing in Yoerg? I love this episode's choice. We do it at the end of the podcast so stick all the way through to hear it. It's going to be a live performance that I recorded last week on the East Side at the Eagles Club on the East Side. A few from And a friend of Yoerg's and a friend of mine going on years, And we're going to have an interesting tango for you to hear at the end of the episode. So stay tuned for that. All Let's dive in. Saison.

----- "What are we drinking" segment ----- 1:51

BARRY 1:51

We normally start our show, and this is going to be no exception, with a segment that we like to call... We should have a little jingle for this, but

JASON 1:58
one.

BARRY 1:58
we don't have

JASON 1:59
Yeah, I know.

BARRY 2:00
Our house band needs to come up with a jingle. We need our Max Weinberg 7 or something, too.

"What are we drinking"?

BRENNAN 2:08
What are we drinking?

BARRY 2:09
What are we drinking? That is the segment. And we're going to sip some things. I'm sorry, folks, you don't get to join us for this. But we're going to tell you about it. And tonight, it's going to have a saison focus. Rather than just a random thing that we decided to bring up to the lounge, we're talking saisons. So I want to turn this over to who should we start with? Who wants to start with the what are we drinking?

BRENNAN 2:32
Sure

----- Brennan's saison ----- 2:32

BRENNAN 2:32
, I'll set the table a little bit so saisons are kind of blue cheese of beer a little bit, I think. There's just a wide range of what a saison is, um, what goes into it, I'm excited to talk about the history of them, but they're kind of a little bit of a catch-all. Um, so tonight I've got poured on the table here for Barry and Jason a saison that I made, at my house, homebrewing. And this was a beer that I entered in the State Fair this year, and this is inspired by a brewery called de Blaugies. And de Blaugies has a saison called La Vermontoise, which is a, I don't know if it's 100% spelt, but it is a, is a spelt saison that is hopped exclusively with Amarillo, which is a Washington hop. So it's kind of non-traditional in a sense of what a traditional saison is, um, but it's a really cool beer. And you can get it here at, at Yoerg I was inspired by it one day to try

and see if I could do something similar. So, um, I put together a grain bill that had some spelt, had a little bit of rye in it, and then hopped it with a hop called Idaho 7, which is typically used in more hazy and more IPA type beers. Um, so I kind of want to see how it would function in, in this application. And so I, I think it's a cool little Um, it did not score particularly well, because it's a little bit outside the, what the, uh, beer judges certification program might determine is a saison. Um, but I think it's a very tasty little number and I, I hope you guys enjoy it. So, what I think, you know, as you guys try it, I think you'll get a little bit of earthy you know, rustic sort of flavor from the grain. And then you're going to get some black tea, kind of rosin-y sort of, uh, vibes from the hops. And then the kind of finishes with this typical sticky DuPont yeast kind of finish to it. So it, um, enjoy gentlemen.

JASON 4:30

Cheers.

BARRY 4:31

Oh, cheers. My microphone was tipped away while I picked up the glass.

Oh yeah.

JASON 4:37

That hits the spot.

BARRY 4:38

Yeah.

I'm going to edit out that part about it not doing We're going to pretend the judges love this because what were the judges thinking?

BRENNAN 4:46

Um, so it, it, it's a little bit outside the bounds of what a just by the box saison is. So I think a lot of people, when they think saison, they think DuPont and DuPont can be the only saison.

BARRY 5:00

So Brennan, when you, you, you, you've, you've used the word DuPont a few times. You used it in your description of the, say your saison saying it has a DuPont yeast or that characteristic in there is DuPont. It's not a kind of yeast. It's a, it's a beer, isn't it? Isn't

BRENNAN 5:13

It

BARRY 5:13

it

BRENNAN 5:13

is.

BARRY 5:13
a brand of a brand?

BRENNAN 5:14
Yep.

BARRY 5:14
Okay.

BRENNAN 5:14
It's a brewery. Yep. So, so the DuPont saison is gosh, one of the oldest and longstanding saisons in, in the world. And unfortunately we don't have it here at York. Um, but if you can get your hands on it, it is just the, the benchmark that all other saisons are sort of measured to. Um, and, uh, so it, the yeast that I used in this did have a little bit of the DuPont strain in it. Um, it was a kind of a conglomerate of a couple of yeast, but DuPont is, uh,

BARRY 5:43
they sell it commercially.

BRENNAN 5:45
Um, yeah, yeah. A lot of, yeah, you can get it commercially just like, um, some of the German breweries we talked about. So you can find,

BARRY 5:50
yeah, yeah,

JASON 5:51
exactly. Yeah. The DuPont yeast, basically if you buy a Belgian saison yeast, it's going to be the DuPont strain. And then they also sell a French saison yeast. And we'll get into some of the tech, Fermenting later, but, uh, there's some interesting differences in those yeasts.

BARRY 6:10
Yeah, no, I'm, I'm liking this. I've had, I've had the, the DuPont and, uh, I totally get that reference. I was thinking it was the style reference, but it would, it would make a lot of sense. that there's, there's a commonality there in terms of, a key ingredient which imparts flavor. So we can talk, talk more about that. So great. I, I've derailed your, what are we drinking? Um, I've had a few sips of this. I think it's wonderful.

JASON 6:32
Yeah, it's absolutely fantastic.

BARRY 6:34

And we should describe, it's, uh, a pale, uh, golden color. it's, um, hazy in appearance. I mean, in, or cloudy, I guess.

BRENNAN 6:41

Cloudy.

BARRY 6:42

I don't want to say hazy because people start thinking hazy IPAs. It's, it's cloudy, which means unfiltered, correct?

BRENNAN 6:47

Yep. Yeah. So that's probably coming from the spelt.

BARRY 6:49

Okay,

BRENNAN 6:49

The

BARRY 6:50

cool.

BRENNAN 6:50

spelt is very haze positive.

JASON 6:52

Exactly. A lot like wheat.

BRENNAN 6:54

And then Idaho 7 is kind of a unique, newer hop variety. Would not have been traditionally used ever in a saison, but,

JASON 7:02

Exactly.

BRENNAN 7:03

I don't know, I was trying something out and.

BARRY 7:05

Nice. Nice. All right. in the spirit of moving on,

JASON 7:09

Yeah.

BARRY 7:09

Jason, you're up.

----- Mad Fritz saison ----- 7:10

JASON 7:10

All right. So, uh, what I've poured out for the team here is a little beer called the goose that laid the golden egg. And this is actually brewed by a friend of mine, uh, Niles Ackerley out in California uh, Mad Fritz. And, uh, Niles actually, his day job, he's a vintner. Uh, the brewery's his side job. Uh, he's about a 200 barrel a year brewery and he is very terroir driven. So he's in St. Helena, California in Napa. He really strives to have all of his beers represent Napa, Sonoma, Mendocino, uh, local counties sourcing, uh, all of his ingredients. He'll even go out and get his water locally and, uh, bring it back to the brewery to, to use. Um, and this beer is a really great example of kind of the tradition of farmhouse beers in that, uh, where Niles brew in it is certainly not a farmhouse. Uh, he's in a little, uh, office park now. but he's using a very interesting old technique called Solera. Uh, so what he's doing here is brewing a base beer. And this one's interesting because after it goes into the barrel, it gets a little bit of Brettanomyces. And the brett creates kind of that sour, funky note. Um, but one of the interesting things, this one has been in my stash for quite a while. So this is bottled in He usually ages these for anywhere from three to eight months before they, uh, even make their way to the bottle. So this probably brewed in 2018, 2019. And, uh, the base beer here is actually, um, a golden ale, and he's using, uh, Glacier hops. Um, but with that kind of brett character, he allows that to work its magic in the barrel for three to eight months. And then he'll take a portion of that and blend it in with, uh, new beer. And, lo and behold, it freshens up that beer that's been aging in the barrel, sou up. And as a result, you don't end up with that tart pucker because this beer isn't completely, uh, a sour mixed culture beer at this point. It has some, some fresh beer, uh,

BARRY 9:28

Oh, nice.

JASON 9:28

added in.

BARRY 9:28

Okay.

JASON 9:29

Yeah.

BARRY 9:30

Oh, nice. And this is, uh, this is a more, I would say, copper, copper, amber color. It's, uh, less cloudy, less hazy than, than Brennan's, saison. But it's still, it's still got a cloudy characteristic,

JASON 9:43

Yeah. Yeah. And part of the color here is definitely from the barrel. Uh, so it's picking up some of that French oak because he ages everything that he brews in, in French oak. Uh, because it's technically the base is a golden ale, so it'd be pretty golden in color. Um, and, you know, it's also been in a bottle for five years. So all the yeast has had time to settle out. So this is certainly, uh, a uh, clearer. Brennan's beer was only bottled over the summer.

BARRY 10:08

right?

JASON 10:08

Yeah.

BRENNAN 10:08

You said this was a nine?

JASON 10:11

So this one tops in at only 8%, but he's made some that, uh, through that blending process over the years have come in around 9%. Uh, what also is characteristic, uh, or, or is a specific trait of this beer, is also the use of rye. So this is 26% malted rye that, uh, Nile malted himself.

BARRY 10:32

I, I did, uh, sneak a sip here, and, uh, I totally can taste that. I can taste the oak, I can taste the rye, and that brett characteristic. It's not overpowering, like a kettle sour, which also uses that, that brett. It just adds that, like you just mentioned, a slight sour, and just a pleasant tart characteristic to it.

JASON 10:51

Yeah.

BARRY 10:51

This is, this is, this is lovely, but it definitely has a heavier more what I would probably, incorrectly say, a more maltier, uh, mouthfeel to, to the saison that we tasted, Brennan.

BRENNAN 11:03

The, the 26% rye is a hefty,

BARRY 11:05

Yeah.

BRENNAN 11:05

that's a, that's a big chunk of the grain bill.

JASON 11:07

it is.

BRENNAN 11:07

Uh,

JASON 11:08

It is.

BRENNAN 11:08

Super noticeable.

JASON 11:09

Yeah,

BRENNAN 11:10

It's

JASON 11:10

yeah.

BRENNAN 11:10

good.

BARRY 11:11

Oh, it's delicious.

BRENNAN 11:12

It almost has, like, a little whiskey on the finish.

BARRY 11:17

looking at it, and then tasting it, it's like, anybody that, uh, that is familiar with it. a, a bourbon or a rye whiskey is going to be familiar with some of the, the flavors and tannins in this, and would appreciate it, and I'm one of those people.

JASON 11:31

Yeah, the

BARRY 11:32

All

JASON 11:32

three of

----- Wooden Ship Basil and Lemongrass Saison ----- 11:33

JASON 11:33

us.

BARRY 11:33

right. we've gotten to the point of the podcast where it's my turn for what I'm drinking and uh, you know, we've, we've kind of gotten off your gear for, um, a little bit. I'm going to continue uh, over this past in prep for doing tonight's podcast, We were looking for breweries in the twin cities that, uh, make beers, at least that they, uh, classify as farmhouse or saison. And I found one, or actually uh, turned me on to a brewery in South Minneapolis. I think specifically they're in Linden Hills.

JASON 12:03

Yeah.

BARRY 12:03

I'll put the link in, in the notes somewhere about 44th. It's beautiful. Um, nice, embedded in the neighborhood corner place. I'm sure it was something else before it was a brewery. It seems like I've even been there before. But anyway, lovely spot dog friendly, which is, uh, a weekend requirement for me, my wife and I like to take our to breweries Anyway, they have a Cezanne on their menu and I tried it and I liked it a lot. a lot of what we've just tasted now, I can report our presence in the saison that they have on their menu. And I wanted to take some, some, so that we could taste it here on the podcast. Unfortunately, or at least I thought at the time, unfortunately, they do not have their straight saison, um, available, uh, to go. But they do have a variant of their saison and I'm going to crack that open now and see what people think of it. And it doesn't have a specific name. it is what they call their basil lemongrass Cezanne. And, uh, I've got a four pack here. I'm going to crack open a can and we're going to taste it on the air here. So hold on. All right. So, um, we've got the basil grass, basil grass. That's what they should

JASON 13:11

Basil

BARRY 13:11

call it.

JASON 13:11

grass. Yeah.

BRENNAN 13:11

Basil grass.

BARRY 13:13
That should be the

JASON 13:14
Oh,

BARRY 13:14
name

JASON 13:14
we

BARRY 13:14
of

JASON 13:14
should.

BARRY 13:14
a nice bluegrass

JASON 13:15
To

BARRY 13:15
band.

JASON 13:16
them, yes.

BARRY 13:17
the

BRENNAN 13:17
That should be

JASON 13:17
It

BARRY 13:17
name.

JASON 13:17
should be their

BRENNAN 13:18

It should

JASON 13:18

house.

BRENNAN 13:18

be the name of the podcast. Their

JASON 13:20

house band and the name of this beer, Basil Grass.

BARRY 13:23

They do have cute names for a lot of their beers, but their saison is just saison.

JASON 13:27

Mm-hmm.

BARRY 13:27

Their Basil Lemongrass Saison is just Basal Lemongrass Saison. Simple, short, sweet, to the point. So let's, um,

BRENNAN 13:34

Very

BARRY 13:35

we're smelling

BRENNAN 13:36

Basil

BARRY 13:36

it.

BRENNAN 13:36

and Lemongrass.

BARRY 13:38

Have you tasted it yet?

BRENNAN 13:39

No.

BARRY 13:40

All right. Cheers, I take a sip.

JASON 13:42

Cheers.

BARRY 13:44

Ooh. Yeah.

BRENNAN 13:47

That is distinctly both of those

JASON 13:49

Exactly.

BRENNAN 13:49

things.

BARRY 13:49

Yes.

JASON 13:50

Oh,

BRENNAN 13:50

Yeah,

JASON 13:50

yeah.

BRENNAN 13:51

that's cool.

JASON 13:52

It's like a Thai salad.

BARRY 13:55

But it does have, on the back end, though, you're getting that hay, you're getting that Saison

BRENNAN 14:01

Yeah.

BARRY 14:02

character. It must be the yeast character that we're tasting.

BRENNAN 14:04

Probably, yeah, a little bit. I was going to say, they nailed the body on this.

JASON 14:09

Yeah.

BRENNAN 14:09

Like, this is phenomenal. I would, this is like a picnic beer to me. Like, you could drink this in the hot weather. I mean.

JASON 14:16

Exactly.

BARRY 14:16

This is refreshing and delicious. And I think you're right. I can taste basil. I can taste lemongrass. But it's all in service of the beer. It's not like a fruited beer, which is like just, you know, sipping you know, juice.

BRENNAN 14:31

Yeah.

JASON 14:31

Right.

BRENNAN 14:31

Neither one of these things has main character energy.

BARRY 14:34

Yeah.

BRENNAN 14:34

Like, they're all very harmonious in this.

JASON 14:36

Right. Right. And you not that I'm encouraging you to do this, but sip on it all day because it's only 4.5%.

BARRY 14:43

Right. yeah, no, this is, this is super Thank Wooden Ship. I paid for it with my money, so they didn't give it to me. They're not promoting this, I'm super happy that there's a brewer making a beer like this in

BRENNAN 14:55

Yeah.

BARRY 14:55
the Twin Cities.

BRENNAN 14:56
Shout out, Wooden

BARRY 14:57
Ye,

BRENNAN 14:57
Ship.

BARRY 14:58
absolutely.

BRENNAN 14:58
Come on the podcast.

BARRY 14:59
Yeah, no, absolutely.

BRENNAN 15:01
I kind of dig their operation. I get it. Like you said, it's a really cool little joint.

BARRY 15:04
You've been there. Yeah.

BRENNAN 15:05
Oh yeah. They just make good beer. And I think they've, they've kind of busted into the THC world a little bit too.

BARRY 15:12
Oh, that's right. They,

BRENNAN 15:13
some.

BARRY 15:13
they do have

BRENNAN 15:13
But it's just, it's like, it's right in the neighborhood. And

JASON 15:16

exactly.

BRENNAN 15:16

Just a neat little spot.

JASON 15:17

Yeah.

BARRY 15:17

Go there. Highly recommended. All right.

BRENNAN 15:20

So what did we just do?

JASON 15:23

Exactly.

BRENNAN 15:24

We all drank a Saison and all three were wildly different.

----- Intro to saisons and farmhouse beers ----- 15:28

BARRY 15:28

Yes. Thank you, Brennan, for that transition. Let's talk Saison. You've already alluded to this earlier that it is sort of a catch all universal description, for something that we're now going to talk about and see what is the style? Can it be called a style or is it styles plural? why do we talk about it? Why is it a category? Let's go. Who wants to start?

JASON 15:50

I'll, I'll kick it off.

BARRY 15:52

Hey, t, Jason.

JASON 15:53

Yeah, so, farmhouse beers, you know, you could always have that question, like, what is it, Does it really mean it was brewed in a farmhouse? Well, in the old days, absolutely. Today, eh, you know, it's become a style. And in the United States, we tend to think of beer in terms of style. Our judging system is very much set up for particular styles, whereas in other parts of the world, it really just describes the place or brewing techniques and not necessarily a standard type of beer. So, historically, farmhouse beers have come to be known as something

from, uh, Belgium and France, but they're definitely brewed in other parts of the world. You can find Germany, England, Scandinavia, the United States, all places that had farms, all places that had small breweries, uh, often they were very terroir driven, the ingredients that were being grown locally, in fact maybe even on your farm, uh, and you can still find breweries operating today all around the world but, you know, we tend to think of Germany as kind of like mega breweries now. Even in Bavaria, there's still lots of farmhouse breweries. Sure, they're making lagers now, but not the kind of mass-produced Helles and, uh, Pilsners that you might see from the big six in Munich. More like Keller beers and land beer, which is a very interesting, uh, Very different depending on which farmhouse you go to, how it's actually going to be brewed, but probably still a lager, uh, but lots of variation in terms of, uh, ingredients. And, you know, let's not kid ourselves. These modern breweries do capitalize to some extent on, uh, nostalgia, uh, look no further than Ommegang in the U. S. First time I

BARRY 17:46

Right,

JASON 17:46

ever

BARRY 17:46

right.

JASON 17:46

drove up there in 1998, you come upon this beautiful farmhouse about five miles outside of Cooperstown, New York, and you go inside the brewery and you're like, oh, this is a modern brewery. They're operating with very modern equipment here. It has the look and feel and they're certainly doing what, you know, farmhouse breweries have been doing for generations, but they've also adapted to modern techniques. So, uh, I think one of the interesting things is with, uh, kind of the Scandinavian tradition in brewing.

BARRY 18:20

Wow.

BRENNAN 18:20

Yeah, so, the Scandinavian, particularly Norway, has a yeast that, that they use, which is called the kveik. Kveik yeast, and it is one of the most versatile yeasts that a home brewer and really any brewer can get because it is, the bulldozer of yeast. It is, it does not care about its environment one

JASON 18:41

is

BRENNAN 18:41

bit. It to ferment any kind of sugar that you put in its way. and it really, it did that because it, over time, like if farmers are making beer, they're just going to stick it in a farmhouse. They're going to pitch the magic yeast ring in and just walk away. you know, the, the magic yeast ring, like it was, it was funny because like you see there, there, this kind of spiky looking cotton ring that are called the, the gjærstokk or the, jästkubb which were basically infected, know, equipment that was where the yeast lived. They didn't really, at the time, didn't know what yeast was. They just knew that chucked this sheep's bone ring of, you know, sheep vertebrae that was in the last batch of beer. If you pitch it in the next one, it's going to make more beer.

JASON 19:23

till Carlsberg isolated, uh, lager

BRENNAN 19:26

the

JASON 19:26

yeast in 19th century. We didn't know what this really was. We knew that somehow it fermented, but we didn't know what exactly was doing it.

BRENNAN 19:35

Yeah. It's really cool. And, and there's a really, there's a fun history in, in Scandinavia of all of these different kveik strains. So there's multiple different strains of farmhouse yeast from Norway. get Voss, you can get Hornindal, you can get Lutra. Those are all different commercially available yeast that all do very different things. Um, and so for a homebrewer who's looking to, to um, a lager, but doesn't have the ability to, to control the temperature. Cause as we know, like most lagers need to be fermented around 55 to 52 degrees, uh, Fahrenheit.

BARRY 20:08

Now we do.

BRENNAN 20:09

Now we do. could just go get Lutra and you can ferment that bad boy up to 98

BARRY 20:15

What?

BRENNAN 20:15

degrees Fahrenheit.

BARRY 20:15

You

BRENNAN 20:15

You just pitch it.

BARRY 20:16

You can double the.

BRENNAN 20:17

And it is gonna come out clean, it is gonna come out, I mean, some of the purists can say that, "Oh yeah, we can detect that it's a kveik strain", and I beg to differ. I've had a number of these, I've used them, it is clean, it is, it's gonna make a great beer. I've had, fest beers that are fermented with Lutra, and you couldn't tell the difference.

JASON 20:37

Exactly, I've used Lutra for both a pseudo-logger, and for a Citra IPA, and they both turned out pretty darn close to

BRENNAN 20:48

Yeah,

JASON 20:48

style.

BRENNAN 20:48

it's really cool, and it's the directory of Norwegian yeast is funny. I found on one point that it was like some guy tried to go catalog all of them, and so he was traveling to these different farmhouses to see if they made beer, and to see if they made beer, where did they get their yeast? And some of it was fun, because it would be like, "Oh yeah, they shared that it's a yeast from so and so generation, generation, generation". And at one point, our yeast went bad, so we went and talked to Ivar down the way, and he gave us some of their yeast. And then there were some that was like, "Sven closed the door on our face and didn't want to talk to us".

BARRY 21:22

Right!

BRENNAN 21:23

So, it's kinda cool, but it really was a yeast that was evolved out of just having to do its work no matter the circumstance.

BARRY 21:31

Yeah, yeah.

BRENNAN 21:31

And it was a farmhouse yeast that they were like, "We're gonna make this beer, it is just beer. It is not, we're not winning competitions, but this is going to ferment, it's going to make beer and it's going to taste okay".

JASON 21:42

I mean you generally think of any of the low countries, right? Places where you didn't necessarily have great areas to have vineyards. You

BARRY 21:51

yeah.

JASON 21:51

were going to brew beer,

BARRY 21:52

Yeah,

JASON 21:52

you know?

BARRY 21:53

there you go.

JASON 21:53

If you had a farming culture, those farmers were going to make beer.

BARRY 21:58

And if in this case they discovered something that was extremely tolerant to a range of temperatures for fermentation, then like, well, heck yeah.

JASON 22:09

You've got it.

BRENNAN 22:10

you can harvest it.

BARRY 22:12

Yeah.

BRENNAN 22:12

It is

BARRY 22:12

Oh,

BRENNAN 22:13

so hardy that, I mean,

BARRY 22:14

okay.

BRENNAN 22:14

they literally, yeah, it's a cool yeast. It's a lot of fun. And, you know, and it just kind of makes sense that, you know, it's just another farm tool. Like

BARRY 22:22

Yeah.

BRENNAN 22:22

you pulled that ring out of the fermenter and you just hung it on the wall, let it dry, and you just used it the next time.

JASON 22:27

Yeah. And

BRENNAN 22:29

you know, most of those beers are meant for the farm, right? They're being drank by farmers you know, in the Saison world. It was also, know, in the Hainaut region where it's also mine workers. So, it was really a beer that, was kind of like, so the 4.5% that you have there on the Wooden Ship beer isn't out of question. So, most Saisons in the past, traditionally, are going to be low alcohol.

BARRY 22:51

That's what I thought,

BRENNAN 22:52

Yep. Because they're meant for like working outside and, you

BARRY 22:55

right.

BRENNAN 22:55

know, I

BARRY 22:55

It's not

BRENNAN 22:56

don't know

BARRY 22:56

just brewed

BRENNAN 22:56
about you,

BARRY 22:56
on the

BRENNAN 22:56
b.

BARRY 22:57
farm. It's brewed for

BRENNAN 23:00
All those times that I go out there and I'm bailing hay, you know, I don't want to drink a 9% beer. Um. But the other piece about it, too, is at the time, you know, we've touched on this in previous episodes, that the attenuation of the yeast there, so basically how much sugar that it is fermenting and taking out of your beer was nowhere near the quality we have now. So the product that you were drinking was generally sweeter, and not to the point of probably being sickly, but just not as clean and as refined as get to enjoy today. They likely would have even been a little bit sour, based on, you know, kind of the conditions, and so the beer that Jason brought today that was blended in the Solera method would have been something that they would have done to kind of harsh that, or to mellow that harshness,

JASON 23:45
exactly,

BRENNAN 23:45
you know, to really say, this is tart, let's mix some younger beer that is less lactic and less sour, and try to mellow this out a little would have been kind of the operation of the day. So it was fun to you know, a newer of that beer. The other piece you know, kind of some of this farmhouse stuff is that they didn't have refrigeration. Like, so farmhouse beers were fermented in the farmhouse, so they were just kind of put in the magic barrel, and they tossed the magic ring in, and a couple months later, a couple weeks later, they had beer. And so, essentially, they brewed kind of through the spring until it got too warm. Now, in Norway, it's hard to imagine the fjords being too

JASON 24:27
Too

BRENNAN 24:27
warm.

JASON 24:27

warm.

BRENNAN 24:27

But they had a yeast that could handle anything.

JASON 24:31

Exactly.

BRENNAN 24:31

You know, uh, hell be the day that it is 100 degrees in Norway. you know, and that kind of fits a little bit with, with German tradition too, was that, you know, you brewed seasonally. So you wanted to have beer ready for different seasons, and they're all very different products, and, these farmhouses kind of did the same thing that these Bavarian brewers did, which is they shared yeast, right? So if your yeast went bad, you just go visit your neighbor and get some of theirs. So

BARRY 24:56

Right, right.

BRENNAN 24:57

borrow some yeast and propagate it with yours and see if you can turn out a new product, and sometimes you just wound up with a new yeast,

JASON 25:04

Yeah.

BRENNAN 25:04

you know? Um, so it's kind of cool. It's hard to trace the lineages of some of them, but if you're comfortable with not knowing exactly what you're going to get from a yeast, they're fun to experiment with. And it's, they, they make great beer.

BARRY 25:15

Oh, great.

JASON 25:17

Yeah. mean, the important point to remember is this was not a commercial operation, right? You were producing this beer to be provisions, more or less, for the people who are seasonal farm workers, uh, that out there doing that labor in the fields for you, uh, and not necessarily like selling it commercially as we would think about going to York's today or to any of our craft breweries here in Minnesota. So, you know, this, this whole notion of beer being a very repeatable, uh, product that would be the same every time.

BARRY 25:55

Right, right, right.

JASON 25:56

Is just a very, modern notion with the inventions of refrigeration.

BARRY 26:01

and, and, you know, while it's comforting, it's also boring.

JASON 26:04

Yeah.

----- Who's brewing: traditionally women? Grisette ----- 26:07

BARRY 26:07

farmhouse, thank you for, for bringing us right, right to the farmhouse for this, because I've always thought was just more like an ambiance that people thought about. You know, I never really thought about the actual farms. maybe we covered this and this is just an aside. But you know, they're brewing it for specific purposes for specific people. Are farmers brewing the beer?

BRENNAN 26:28

you know, it, it depends. So there's a lot of, in, tradition. So the grisette, which we'll talk about a little bit later is a more of a kind of a French saison. It translates to little gray. And so it was in the [Hauts de France] region, which is all minor, you know, mining area. Grisette was the young women who would bring this beer to the miners. And so it kind of took that name and was, you know, at the time brewing was, was the, a woman's job was they brewed the beer and they, t brought it to the miners

BARRY 26:58

part of history we've seemed to have forgotten.

BRENNAN 27:00

Yes, for

JASON 27:01

Absolutely.

BRENNAN 27:01

sure. so yeah, so I, I mean, I don't know if the farmers were always the ones making the beer, but somebody on the farm was, could have been, c have been the farmer's wife.

BARRY 27:09

So, this might be a classic case we've talked, I think, in the past about, like, Trappist beer or monk beers, where the monastery was brewing beer internally. For the people in the monastery, for the monks, then it became either known or available more widely, and I think became kind of a profit center for those, and kind of started distributing that way. And so styles were created primarily in a utilitarian way for the people that were brewing the beer or for the people that were drinking the beer, and those became emulated to the point where now we have styles like a triple, um, came from the Trappist, legacy. And so that's what we're talking about here, too, right?

JASON 27:55

More or less, yeah. Yeah, you know, it's, it's very interesting that with the advent of lager beers, a lot of what the farmhouse beers represented fell out of fashion,

BARRY 28:08

Right.

JASON 28:08

and the knowledge also disappeared. and the few families that kept the tradition going, even, they, over time, struggled to maintain their yeast cultures. They often gravitated towards lager cultures, uh, as well, in order to produce their beers. So if it wasn't for a chance encounters, um, uh, I'll say Michael Jackson and not the singer,

BARRY 28:34

beer writer.

JASON 28:35

but the

BARRY 28:35

The beer writer,

JASON 28:36

The

BARRY 28:36

yeah.

JASON 28:36

British beer writer. So if it wasn't for a chance encounter with him coming across Saison DuPont in the 70s, this product was literally 10% of what DuPont was brewing at

BARRY 28:47

Really.

JASON 28:47

that point. And now it's about 70% of their overall portfolio. Uh, if he had not evangelized essentially Saison DuPont, we might not have seen the kind of resurrection of Saison as a, as a mass commercial style. But to claim that today's Saison DuPont is a direct descendant of what these farmers were brewing is a bit of a stretch.

BARRY 29:13

Right. So,

JASON 29:14

Yeah.

BARRY 29:15

I don't know if I'm jumping ahead. a listener to this podcast, never heard of a Saison before, never heard of a farmhouse, or heard of it, afraid of it, or not afraid of it. But, you know, I know what I like. I'm going to drink this, I'm going to drink that. Is this an acquired taste? who, who would like a farmhouse beer? I mean, I was going to say who should try think, I all three of us would agree 100%, especially when you have access to things like this. Everybody should try at some point, try these things to understand, um, whether they like it or not. But,

JASON 29:46

Yeah.

BARRY 29:46

Can you follow where I'm going

----- Breaking down the style(s) ----- 29:48

BARRY 29:48

here?

JASON 29:48

Why don't we break this down by style a little bit? Because

BARRY 29:51

Thank

JASON 29:51

I think

BARRY 29:51

you.

JASON 29:51

that might help our listeners to think about which styles are similar to beers that they might be familiar with. So, I, Brendan and I talked about this a little bit ahead of time. He's going to talk about saison and Grisette. And I'm going to talk about, I have a parallel style called, uh, biere de garde,

BARRY 30:09

Oh,

JASON 30:10

which is more French in

BARRY 30:11

yeah.

JASON 30:11

its origins.

BRENNAN 30:12

Yeah. So, I mean, so saison and Grisette, you know, we talked a little bit about kind of the, the reason for them. Um, but the name kind of is, is what it is. Saison translates to season. And so

JASON 30:24

exactly

BRENNAN 30:25

it was

JASON 30:25

French. Saison, saison.

BRENNAN 30:27

And it was, so it was brewed for the saison, which were the seasonal field workers, right? So they had to have something for them to drink. Let's just call it what it is. It's saison. Um, and a lot of them had, you know, very unique, you know, yeast and other grains that were available to the farm at that time. So a lot of the more rustic examples would, would have used wheat and oats and spelt, you know, kind of what they had with their native yeast. And they would have had their own version of a saison. and, you know, some of the examples, you know, we talked a little bit about Saison DuPont, and kind of it being, you know, the importance that it has. You know, the yeast for that one is, is believed to be kind of a red wine yeast. Um, and it can also, similar to the Norwegian strain, handle a very high range of fermentation temperatures,

BARRY 31:14

Oh,

BRENNAN 31:15

which

BARRY 31:15

great.

BRENNAN 31:15

is, which is kind of unique.

JASON 31:16

yeah, it's a really weird beer because it's fermented in kind of tall, uh, rectangular fermenters. And this has no scientific basis at all. It's just what fit in their brewery.

BRENNAN 31:30

True to the farmhouse So

BARRY 31:30

the beer fits the equipment Right Manures

BRENNAN 31:32

We just make it, make it work, make it work, but you know, there's some other styles that, you know, a lot of these, we at, at York, outside of DuPont, which is like, de Blaugies, we have quite a few of their offerings, like La Moneuse, Darbyste, Vermontoise, we talked about, uhm, Saison D'Epeautre, uhm, we also have some of the more weirder examples, so if you really want to get your freak on, uhm, you can go ahead and get anything that Fantôme.

BARRY 31:57

I was gonna, I was wondering if we're going there, Fantôme.

JASON 32:00

Oh, yeah.

BRENNAN 32:01

Dany Prignon and Fantôme makes some pretty wild

BARRY 32:06

And Tom, Tom is, uh, Thomas Keim, we've talked about him a lot, the owner at Yoerg, is going to be bringing in some of the less wild versions of Fantome, which I understand exist, but we've had some of their, with white chocolate,

BRENNAN 32:18

yeah.

BARRY 32:18

we've had some pretty bizarre,

BRENNAN 32:20

The

BARRY 32:20

with

BRENNAN 32:20

green

BARRY 32:20

pepper.

BRENNAN 32:20

one?

BARRY 32:21

Oh, the, the Mountain Dew, uh, that, the, the Mountain Dew colored, which we would open and the entire bar would go, what just happened here, you can smell it? Entire bar?

JASON 32:32

Exactly.

BARRY 32:32

Uh, anyway, but

JASON 32:33

could

BARRY 32:33

yeah.

JASON 32:33

also have a, uh, advertisement for Dany. Dany been trying to sell the brewery for years,

BARRY 32:38

Oh.

JASON 32:38

so if you're interested in buying a saison brewery

BRENNAN 32:41
for

JASON 32:42
sale.

BRENNAN 32:42
There

BARRY 32:42
go. Wow.

BRENNAN 32:42
you

BARRY 32:43
Where is, where is it?

JASON 32:44
In, uh, Soy, Belgium.

BARRY 32:46
Okay.

BRENNAN 32:47
I don't have enough money.

BARRY 32:48
Ha ha.

BRENNAN 32:49
Well, we also have, like, Pipaix, which is, is unique, it's kind of a steam beer style.

BARRY 32:54
P-P-P-A-I-P-A-I-X? P-P-A-I-P-A-I-X?

JASON 32:56
Yes.

BARRY 32:56
P-P-A-I-X? Yep.

BRENNAN 32:57

P-P-A-I-X. Uh, it also has some very distinct anise to it, so they're all, like, super unique, which is kind of why I said they're a little bit of the blue cheese, so, like, somebody who likes one of these may not like another one.

JASON 33:08

Exactly.

BRENNAN 33:09

but I think that if you are a fan of anything from Belgium, so if you are a fan of any Belgian beer, it's worth any of these saisons, because you will find that there's a lot of Belgian characteristics to these.

BARRY 33:22

I would agree, I would agree with that, and, and I, that's exactly what I was looking for, A lot of people might discover Belgian beers through something like New Belgium,

JASON 33:30

mm-hmm,

BARRY 33:30

um, and sort of an American style of Belgian beers. that isn't how I discovered it, but once I discovered that, at first, I was like, wait a minute, I don't like this. Then all of a sudden, it's like, wait a minute, I do. And it's a whole new world of beers opened up. So, I, I, I like the way that you described that. If you've had Belgian, Belgian beers, if, if you knew that they were Belgian beers and you like them,

JASON 33:50

yeah.

BARRY 33:50

then I think, yes, if you try this, you're going to recognize, and begin, and if you appreciate it, you can begin to go further.

JASON 33:57

Exactly. I think if you if you palate that you you for sure, dry

BARRY 34:05

this-

JASON 34:05

beer,

BARRY 34:05

Yes.

JASON 34:06

you know,

BARRY 34:06

Champagne-y.

JASON 34:07

Yeah,

BARRY 34:07

Yeah.

JASON 34:08

champagne-y, so a vinous,

BARRY 34:09

Yeah.

JASON 34:09

right,

BARRY 34:10

Yeah.

JASON 34:10

character in your beer, then saison is gonna be right up your alley. Most of the yeasts, you know, we keep throwing around this word attenuation, Brennan described it before, but when you're fermenting, you have an initial gravity, you have a final gravity, and the closer you are to one as your final gravity, the less sugar you have, and the drier the character, the more of that sect champagne type of character that you're going to have. Uh, in your beer, and saison yeasts tend to really ferment the daylights out of the sugar. You end up with an extremely dry product with the modern yeast, that DuPont yeast is just a, if you can get it to go all the way through, it often stalls out. You need to throw some French Cezanne yeast in to kind of kick it back into gear, but if you can get it to go to terminal gravity, wow, that is just a workhorse that gets you very close to one as your terminal gravity.

BARRY 35:07

Nice. uh, thanks Brendan bringing us through, those styles DuPont up through Fantôme. Jason, what do you got?

----- Bière de Garde ----- 35:14

JASON 35:14

Yeah, so on the biere de garde side, this is certainly more on the, the France side of the border. The region of Flanders was one kingdom at one point. So both the Belgian and French sides were part of the same kingdom at, at one point. And that's why there's some similarity, uh, between these beers. These beers. The Northern part of Flanders now Dutch speaking, uh, across border, you farmhouses on both sides. So they were really sharing the tradition on, and the beer de gard is essentially like the French version of, what would be a farmhouse beer, except the difference. The difference here is you're a little bit closer to the sea. And you have, uh, a maltier, richer beer as kind of your general examples of Bière de Garde. So, they were in the past, certainly, um, lower in alcohol than they are today. And again, the provision for farm workers, the name tells you everything you need to So, Bière de Garde essentially means beer for storing. So you would make this at, uh, the time of the year when you could easily ferment, but then you would store it until the next season, bring it out, and it would be your provision for your workers for, for the next

BARRY 36:31

Okay,

JASON 36:32

season,

BARRY 36:32

all right.

JASON 36:32

right? It's very much like, uh, lager in German means to store "garde" in French also means to store.

BARRY 36:39

never made that connection with the word lager. I

JASON 36:40

Yeah.

BARRY 36:40

never really

JASON 36:41

I

BARRY 36:41

thought about what that meant.

JASON 36:42

Yeah.

BARRY 36:42

Yeah.

JASON 36:42

Yeah. So, uh, to some extent, modern Bière de Garde, it's a question, is it a marketing gimmick or is it an actual style? So in France today, uh, so Bière de Garde kind of came back into fashion in the seventies, French brewers who wanted to differentiate themselves from the lager brewers. So if you know, uh, France, you know, Kronenbourg in the, uh, Strasbourg

BARRY 37:05

Right.

JASON 37:05

area. Like this is one of the major breweries, they brew lagers. Uh, if you wanted to differentiate yourself with a special beer, then historically you would brew something more akin to these amber beers that would have been like, uh, the Bière de Garde. Now they would have been much lower alcohol than they are today. Today they're generally in that six to seven ish range. Um, but your yeast choice is really interesting. Often the modern ones are brewed with a lager yeast in the past. You would not have had the temperature control. So I would have been with an ale yeast. So some really nice examples, but they're hard to find in the U S of, uh, uh, Bière de Garde include, uh, Jenlain. I actually brought one of these back from, uh, the trip that I took to visit some friends in Strasbourg back at the beginning of the year, shared it with, uh, Tom and Brennan that evening. And, uh, it's a very really nice beer that has a surprisingly dry finish given how sweet it was, but it uses, uh, Alsatian hops and they have, uh, they're, they're known for their very spicy character. So it balances out that sweetness with a dry finish and a nice kind of spicy floral, uh, hoppy note to it.

BARRY 38:19

I will point out that, um, I live two blocks away.

JASON 38:22

I know.

BARRY 38:23

Jason.

JASON 38:23

Sorry. Sorry,

BARRY 38:24

I

JASON 38:24

Barry.

BARRY 38:24

do not remember this particular tasting and I

JASON 38:26

Yeah.

BARRY 38:26

was not invited.

JASON 38:27

I think it was a day Brennan was brewing that I'm.

BARRY 38:29

Okay. All right. All right. I forgive you.

JASON 38:31

Sorry. Sorry. Something

BRENNAN 38:33

to do during the day.

JASON 38:34

Yeah. Uh, year and years ago, I had a Castellan in Strasbourg, which is akin to Jenlain. Uh, they're both from the same region. Uh, either, uh, I'm trying to remember whether it's Pas de Calais or Nord in France. I'm pretty sure these are both Pas de Calais, that they're in the part that's a little bit closer to Belgium and not quite as close to the sea of

BARRY 38:59

Okay.

JASON 38:59

France. Uh, but it's, it's very similar. It's, it's malty. It's, it's amber in color. Uh, recently here at, uh, Yoerg's we've had Kerel, uh, and actually, uh, and not Carole,

BARRY 39:11

The

JASON 39:11

the, uh,

BARRY 39:12

purse.

JASON 39:12

co-owner, but, uh, Kerel, K-E-R-E-L.

BARRY 39:15

Yes, Kerel. Yes, I always pronounce it that way.

JASON 39:18

Yep. And, uh,

BARRY 39:19

That's

JASON 39:19

they...

BARRY 39:19

right, I forgot

JASON 39:20

Yeah,

BARRY 39:20

about...

JASON 39:21

they make a really excellent Bière de Garde. I think right now we have the saison.

BARRY 39:25

Right, the saison,

JASON 39:25

Yeah.

BARRY 39:25

yeah.

JASON 39:26

Uh, but they make an excellent Bière de Garde that's in the amber style. And a U. S. example that, uh, I, I think you can actually... can, you can find this at a, uh, local grocery store. Is, uh, uh, Domaine DuPage made by Two

BARRY 39:41

it.

JASON 39:41
Brothers Brewing

BARRY 39:41
Yes.

JASON 39:42
in Illinois.

BARRY 39:43
Yep. Yep. also, if you go further west, there's, uh, an American... Well, it's not Viere de Gard, but Tank 7 is the one that you see.

JASON 39:50
Yeah, Boulevard. That's, uh, that's a excellent farmhouse saison. Yeah. Yeah.

BARRY 39:55
So I know I'm straying from the Viere de Gard,

JASON 39:58
Yeah.

BARRY 39:58
uh, sitting, uh, uh, kind uh, tower-like in the middle of the table that we are sitting at, where we have all of our taster glasses and my recording equipment, is a bottle Bière de Garde that we have had at Yoerg. I think I have the last remaining but we are going to be getting it. Tom has assured me that we will get this in the future. Something that we started a couple months Yeah. Um, we have a, a, a Bière de Garde, uh, from Moisson.

JASON 40:24
Yeah.

BARRY 40:25
Uh, and I'd have to look at the bottle. Brennan has it right now because he's popped it open because we're going to try it here. It's a beer that I've fallen in love with.

JASON 40:33
Yeah.

BARRY 40:33
And, I know that the two of you can talk more like there's these three right here, right, that are, that are empty.

JASON 40:38

Yeah . No, this is from the south of France. So this is really interesting. This is a modern craft brewery in the south of France that's really adopted this style. And it's not surprising, right? I mean, the south of France, if you've ever been there is fertile wheat fields all over the place. So this is not surprising that you'd see this type of a beautiful farmhouse beer. And they classify this as more in the Bière de Garde

BARRY 41:04

Right.

JASON 41:04

style, but it's more of the blonde Bière de Garde.

BARRY 41:07

Right. You were, you were mentioning, you, you were talking Amber and I was having a cognitive dissonance because this particular beer. And now, especially as Brennan has poured it is a much uh, to color and cloudiness to, uh, to um, DuPont.

BRENNAN 41:22

Well, do you know why, Barry?

BARRY 41:23

In Vermontoise version. I do not. Please tell me.

BRENNAN 41:26

Because I believe, if I remember correctly, this is also made for spelt.

JASON 41:32

Yes.

BARRY 41:33

There you go. I should have picked up on that right away.

BRENNAN 41:36

Strong blonde ale. Strong.

BARRY 41:39

is interesting because when I think a strong blonde, I think like a triple this, this is not, this is, this has the, those characteristics we've

JASON 41:46

Right.

BARRY 41:46
been

JASON 41:46
Wh

BARRY 41:46
talking about, the cloudiness. I would, would not be surprised if this is spelt because I can, I can taste being a baker. I mean, uh, I can understand some of those differences between grains and this is definitely in the, in

BRENNAN 42:00
I think

BARRY 42:01
that dirt.

BRENNAN 42:01
they, I think they find this as well a little bit because it definitely has a little less haze than mine did.

BARRY 42:06
I was going to say, you mean, you know, I clarified

BRENNAN 42:08
Yeah.

BARRY 42:08
it?

BRENNAN 42:09
Yep. Yep. I don't know what, m they use isinglass or it's not quite that

JASON 42:14
So if we could read French, we should just look for épeautre that's spelt.

BARRY 42:18
I'm going to look, I'm going to look it up here. Let's see.

JASON 42:19
How Yes. So Brennan just confirmed for me because he's the only one who's young enough who can read this bottle without

BARRY 42:28

that,

JASON 42:29

uh, th use épeautre, which is spelt in French.

BRENNAN 42:34

Let's see something about, uh, Houblons Le Vieux.

JASON 42:38

That's,

BARRY 42:38

Houblons

JASON 42:38

uh,

BARRY 42:39

is hops.

JASON 42:39

That's hops.

BRENNAN 42:41

Ah, here's the other thing that I was thinking of, too. So this, so it's a spelt, it's spelt, but it also used Barbe Rouge, which Barbe Rouge is a really, really cool French hop.

JASON 42:52

Exactly, this is Alsatian.

BRENNAN 42:53

Yeah, so this is a, this is a neat, a neat hop. Now I might remember this. Jason, we had this one time.

JASON 42:58

We have, we have. So Barbe Rouge from Alsace, Alsatian hops have always been considered kind of like the luxury hops of France, and it makes sense. So Alsace is on the border with Germany, so this is, also the Rhine is right there. This is some of the best grape growing region in the world, so you have absolutely fantastic

climate there for all of these agricultural products. So you have great hops, great grapes, you know, it's just really fantastic agricultural region.

BRENNAN 43:31

Yeah, so this is kind of a cool, you know, berry as you, as you drink it. The, the spelt is going to be earthy and very kind of rustic, but then the Barbe Rouge is going to have almost like a triple berry kind of

JASON 43:42
thing

BRENNAN 43:43
going on in the, the taste and the aroma. It's actually a hop I've been meaning to play around with at home, but I haven't quite gotten around to it yet,

JASON 43:50
exactly, exactly.

BARRY 43:52
Uh, traditional blonde, beer to guard, pure French artisan and independent malts, French hops, Barbe Rouge and Triskel, house yeast mix with lager, kveik, K-V-.

BRENNAN 44:05
There it is, kveik.

BARRY 44:06
Kveik.

BRENNAN 44:07
Norway.

BARRY 44:08
Kveik and saison strains. Long lagering in Wienkelwagen, Wurard, 100% voyage, Bettelünn,

BRENNAN 44:18
Yeah, basically they just said you should drink it.

BARRY 44:20
Yes. So this, I believe this includes everything that we've talked about in this entire podcast. It's in this.

BRENNAN 44:26
It kind of does.

BARRY 44:28
Kveik. Kveik.

BRENNAN 44:30

Spelt.

BARRY 44:30

Spelt and

JASON 44:32

saison yeast.

BRENNAN 44:33

Saison. Cool hops that aren't traditionally used. This was,

BARRY 44:38

This is just delicious.

BRENNAN 44:39

That's

----- Best beer temp for drinking ----- 44:39

BRENNAN 44:39

one of those, that's interesting, you know, sidebar we didn't mean to get into, but is the temperature of things in which you

BARRY 44:46

Oh,

BRENNAN 44:46

drink it.

BARRY 44:46

thank you for

BRENNAN 44:46

Most

BARRY 44:47

bringing that.

BRENNAN 44:48

Americans want their beer as cold as you can

BARRY 44:50

Yeah.

BRENNAN 44:50

get it.

BARRY 44:50

Yeah.

BRENNAN 44:50

Um, for certain styles. Yeah, absolutely. Give me a Miller Lite. I want that thing as close to freezing. Yeah.

JASON 44:58

Yeah.

BRENNAN 44:58

Because I'm trying to drink it fast,

BARRY 45:00

Yeah.

BRENNAN 45:00

you know? Whereas like some of these beers have so many little nuances that like you don't really pick up on until they're 50 to 54 degrees, um, especially beers that have some hops and some, some depth to them.

BARRY 45:14

Yeah.

BRENNAN 45:15

you really got to give it a chance to warm up. And some of them are cool too. Like that's another reason why I think, you know, buying a, you know, Jason and I like to buy a seven 50 and split it

BARRY 45:24

Right.

BRENNAN 45:24

because

BARRY 45:24

Yes.

BRENNAN 45:24

over time it warms up and then your experience of that beer changes over time. And

JASON 45:29

does.

BRENNAN 45:29

certainly this, this beer is one of those.

BARRY 45:32

Beers like this particular one get more complex over time and taste different and are, are great all the way

BRENNAN 45:38

it's

BARRY 45:38

through.

BRENNAN 45:39

because they didn't, they were designed when refrigeration wasn't a thing,

BARRY 45:42

Exactly.

BRENNAN 45:42

you know?

BARRY 45:43

You wouldn't be, you would never be getting a beer like super high refrigerated cold.

JASON 45:49

Right.

BARRY 45:49

You'd

JASON 45:49

Right.

BARRY 45:50

be getting it, you know, maybe, know, above room temperature, cold to room temperature to outdoor temperature.

JASON 45:56

Right. I mean, the definition of room temperature has changed

BARRY 46:00

Who's

JASON 46:01

in my-

BARRY 46:01

room and where? Exactly.

JASON 46:02

Modern situations where we have, uh, you know, air conditioning and we also have heating, right? So, uh, this is the same argument made about red wine that, uh, really does apply to a lot of the farmhouse beers when we're talking about room temperature. If you're thinking about room temperature in the north of France-

BARRY 46:23

Right.

JASON 46:24

...time. Room temperature there is, like, 55,

BARRY 46:27

Right.

JASON 46:27

right? So,

BRENNAN 46:29

It's beautiful.

JASON 46:29

yeah,

BARRY 46:30

I

JASON 46:30

right?

BARRY 46:30

know.

JASON 46:30

Fantastic. So, so this is not surprising that, uh, beers that are emulating styles from that era, or beers that would have been brewed in that era, their optimum taste profile, their optimum aroma profile are going to be occurring somewhere in that, uh, mid 40s to lower 50s range. Yeah. ... only one range. Yeah.

BARRY 46:53

Al right. So, we've been talking about Moisson Dorée from La Mapolon, um, a Bière de Garde, I'll put a link in the, in the show notes, and hopefully by the time this drops or soon thereafter, this is a beer that will again be available, for purchase that you are going to highly recommend you do. And if you do buy it and do not like it... Cork it. Tell Tom to put it back in the fridge. I'll buy it from you. I will f-

BRENNAN 47:21

Walk it to two blocks, the beer

BARRY 47:22

Paul and, uh, I will, uh, I will compensate you, uh,

BRENNAN 47:26

with a

BARRY 47:26

for

BRENNAN 47:26

pizza.

BARRY 47:27

them. I will have a pizza waiting for you at the time. All sidetracked completely. I'm sorry about that, but we had this bottle. I wanted to open it. I've been wanting to drink it for months. So, um, we're there with that. Jason, we're, we, uh, sidebarred into Bière de Garde as...

JASON 47:43

Yeah.

BARRY 47:43

As, as a style, but more particularly geographically, why something's called a Bière de Garde? Where are um, in your journey through, through the style?

JASON 47:52

Yeah

----- Bière de Mars ----- 47:52

JASON 47:52

. So, you at, at the end of the Bière de Garde today has taken on many guises, right? It is stylistically difficult to define because it really became a beer that the craft brewers in France, you know, kind of going through the same type of, uh, process of differentiating themselves from the big guys back in the seventies wanting to make something special. Um, you know, more or less calling everything, uh, Bière de Garde, but traditionally you did have seasonal beers as well in France. So, one of the interesting things is you had something called, uh, a bière de Mars and very much like a German Märzen. The difference is, is that, uh, where Märzens were made to be drank in the fall, the bière de Mars were made to be drank in the spring. So, this was a beer where you would use the newest harvest of your hops and your grains in the fall To make essentially your best beer of the year. And then you would guard it, you would provision it over winter, and then break it out in the spring.

BARRY 49:02

Mm-hmm.

JASON 49:03

Similarly, you had bière de Noël, right?

BARRY 49:06

Oh,

JASON 49:06

So

BARRY 49:06

yeah,

JASON 49:06

beers for Christmas,

BARRY 49:07

yeah

JASON 49:07

uh, in Belgium, we've had some really excellent examples here over the years, but they've generally been more in the, uh, so this is also interesting. The Belgian style of Christmas beers is really inspired by Scotch ales, Scottish beers. They are some whoppers. These can be eight to 12% and, uh, the bière de Noël would not have been, uh, in that tradition in the past. These really didn't start occurring until the early part of the 20th century. So the bière de Noël as a Christmas beer in France in that era certainly would have been more like today's 6.5% Amber Bière de Gardes. So a really versatile style. And I, I think just a reminder to everyone that, the U. S. is very much driven by stylistic guidelines for tasting and in Germany, France, Belgium,

England to a lesser extent, beers were more about, uh, the name of a region. The, the words in the language that actually had a, a meaning like alt just means old as opposed to a style.

BARRY 50:22

Right, a style.

JASON 50:23

Right, in German, uh, same with Biere de Garde. Biere de Garde just meant beers that were going to be stored, and not necessarily a style, and at the end of the day, if you like it, drink it.

BARRY 50:37

Well, and, and, it just leads me to, okay, you're, we, at the people that are sitting in this, in this room, in Yoerg, in St. Paul, Minnesota, we live in the U. S., we brew in the U. S., we drink in the U. S., what are we talking about in terms of Farmhouse Ales, bière de garde, how are we brewing these here, we've talked a little bit about this, I think what we're trying to do, is to bring an element of this terroir-based style into something that we can enjoy as American beer drinkers in the pubs of America. how are we brewing these, Brennan, you've brewed one.

JASON 51:14

yeah, yeah, Brennan and I have both brewed

BARRY 51:16

Yeah,

JASON 51:17

these.

BARRY 51:17

I was going to say, Jason, I know you've brewed one as well.

JASON 51:19

Interesting thing is, the conversations we had about, about how to do this, and how to bring that terroir to it, so I really want to kind of let Brennan, like, kind of talk about the process that

BARRY 51:29

Yeah,

JASON 51:29

we

BARRY 51:29

yeah.

JASON 51:29

went through.

BRENNAN 51:30

Yeah

----- Modern farmhouse beer brewing techniques ----- 51:30

BRENNAN 51:30

, the first thing, to me was, was finding the ingredients, right, was getting to kind of the base malt, which to me had to have spelt. Like, I wanted to get spelt in there, I wanted to get something rustic, um, something sort of like wheat, um, and building from there. And so I chose a very non-traditional hop variety, u, for different purposes. But the, the cool thing is that, like, we can emulate, really, any kind of condition that we need. just with all the technology that we have in our homebrewing equipment and, and all that stuff, is I can really dial in a temperature range. So I can hold something at any temperature I want. Which, in the olden, you know, when they were brewing these on the farmhouse in France, or in Belgium, they didn't have that ability. They were kind of at the, you know.

BARRY 52:15

The mercy of

JASON 52:15

The

BARRY 52:15

the weather.

BRENNAN 52:16

The

JASON 52:16

element.

BRENNAN 52:16

mercy of the, right. We also don't have to worry about infections. You know, we have much better sanitation and much better cleaning. So, uh, we get a little, maybe a, probably a little bit more, uh, consistent and repeatable product. Which, you know, would have been not quite the same. I mean, it's important to remember, too, that most of Europe was bombed flat in World War II. And so a lot of what we know about some of these historical styles is gone.

BARRY 52:41

Right.

BRENNAN 52:41

And so we are kind of guessing. Which, it's okay. Because some of those beers probably

BARRY 52:47

good.

BRENNAN 52:47

weren't very Um, so.

BARRY 52:49

But the great, but the great, I mean, I don't want to interrupt here. But you talk about spelt. Where's spelt? Do we have local sources of spelt or malt made from spelt?

BRENNAN 52:58

Um, I haven't found Minnesotan spelt.

BARRY 53:01

Okay.

BRENNAN 53:01

I found some Minnesotan grain, which might be another episode. Um, but, you know, you know, spelt you know, readily available through most, um, home brewing

BARRY 53:10

Okay.

BRENNAN 53:11

places

BARRY 53:11

Okay.

BRENNAN 53:11

and, and commercial brewing suppliers. but it's more, I wanted the rustic earthiness. The kind of the spicy from it and combining the rye. Rye also kind of gives it a little bit of that too. and then the important piece is the yeast. And the, the yeast blend that I used on my saison, um, was a mix of Dupont, which is, you know, kind of the titan of the strain. and I believe the French, uh, strain as

JASON 53:38

Ah,

BRENNAN 53:38

well.

JASON 53:39
did you use

BRENNAN 53:39
Uh,

JASON 53:39
the Saisonstein?

BRENNAN 53:40
Saisonstein,

JASON 53:41
Yes.

BRENNAN 53:41
yeah.

JASON 53:42
Okay.

BRENNAN 53:42
So it's, it's a mix of, of, I think what is the Dupont and the belle strain? So the belle, like, like B-E-L-L-E, the bell.

JASON 53:50
In French, belle.

BRENNAN 53:51
Yeah. Um, and,

BARRY 53:54
the

BRENNAN 53:54
and,

BARRY 53:54
Disney Belle.

BRENNAN 53:54
And this is, this is Jason Thomas actually. But the Dupont strain likes um, stall out at a certain point and it gets picky about how much sugar it wants to eat. So then you just kind of either,

you get the, the saison stein, which is a, u, yeast blend, which already has that French strain with it, or you just pitch the French strain on top of Um, and it really comes out in a, a very saison, Belgian sort of flavor profile. Um, I bottle conditioned this one, which is um, traditional to style. Um.

JASON 54:29

Absolutely.

BRENNAN 54:30

You know, so I, every, it's all in bottles. So I didn't force carb it.

BARRY 54:33

So me, yeah. So meaning you bottle with, with some of the elements that, so it's continuing to.

BRENNAN 54:39

Uh, yep. With a, basically a sugar drop. So you put a sugar drop in there to give it a little bit more to, to, to eat, to carbonate, but it's sealed. So all that CO2 goes back in the solution and gives you the, the effervescence. We're all burping like crazy up here. So,

BARRY 54:51

uh,

BRENNAN 54:52

certain saisons.

BARRY 54:53

A number of times we've turned away from the microphone.

BRENNAN 54:55

Certain saisons are very effervescent, and,

BARRY 54:58

Ha, ha.

BRENNAN 54:58

um, mine is no much. yeah, and then the cool thing about that is that it, um, not only works as kind of a preservative and that it, it scrubs out any residual oxygen, um, left in solution, uh, but it also makes that beer, you know, living. So it continues to, to shape itself change profiles while it's in the bottle, uh, which, which I think is kind of cool. Another, another reason I did it too. Exa.

JASON 55:22

I mean, that's, that's a big part of this, right, is that a lot of the commercial product you're getting... ..it's been centrifuged. There isn't a drop of yeast left.

BARRY 55:31

Right,

JASON 55:31

There's not a living product anymore,

BARRY 55:33

right,

JASON 55:34

but if you're getting a corked bottle of Belgian French beer, there's most likely some live yeast still in that product.

BARRY 55:43

yeah.

JASON 55:43

It's bottle conditioned. It is a evolving, living organism still, and that beer is going to change over time.

BARRY 55:52

For good or for ill.

JASON 55:53

good or for ill.

BARRY 55:54

For

JASON 55:54

Yes, yes, exactly.

BARRY 55:55

Yep.

are we ready to

JASON 55:58

I think we are.

BARRY 55:59

Wow. I have to say I've gone through a journey in my mind through this episode, especially since we've had so many tasters here. Uh, yeah.

JASON 56:09

not supposed to say that, Barry.

BARRY 56:10

Uh, I know, I know. Um, I'm not, uh,

BRENNAN 56:13

Just wait till the beard and well.

BARRY 56:16

I know. I was going to say, look for, I don't know if it's going to be episode six, episode seven, but look for the beard and well episode because we're going to be talking about that. But anyway, I've loved this journey through, uh, farmhouse styles. and, and now that I say that, I, I feel like I should be using a different word, we've talked about, uh, of some of the saisons and and Bière de Garde that, that might be available. It's your local liquor store. and what is available at, at Yoerg's. bring some friends. If you're interested in this, come, come try them, uh, go to your local liquor store, can pick up, uh, some, some tank seven from, from Boulevard Brewing. and you try it and that at all interests you, uh, branch out and come get some of these more traditional versions of, of, of this style.

JASON 57:01

exactly. That's your gateway.

----- Show outro ----- 57:02

BARRY 57:02

Exactly. It was for, it was for me, for sure. this, so, um, we love that some people have been listening to this podcast, I can't, I have to bring that up, several people today, I, I did a before we recorded this, and several people came in and asked me when the next podcast episode was going to be, going to drop, which kind of floored me, it was really nice for that, for that to happen, so keep your feedback coming, whether it's, uh, stopping into Yoerg and talking to us, whether you, uh, email me at the email address that's in the show notes, however you want to do a comment on the in Apple or wherever you get the podcast, bring up suggestions, what would you like to hear about, you've kind of gotten a sense, uh, even if you're just listening to this one episode, you've gotten a sense of how we talk about beer on Malted North, what do you want to hear about? I know that we've got some people that are very interested becoming on, and we've, uh, we've kind of cajoled them into becoming on, an I

----- Featured song: "Drama in Real Life" Todd Harper ----- 57:53

BARRY 57:53

think in the next few episodes, we're going to bring on some brewers and beer culture related people to, to talk about what they know about beer, so that you don't have to listen just to the three of us, um, as interesting as we are.

Exactly.

BRENNAN 58:07
to own

BARRY 58:07
and as you're listening to us about at the end of this podcast, you're probably, actually, I know you're listening to Todd Harper and Severin Behnen's "Drama in Real Life". An original tango written by Todd Harper, dear friend of mine going back 30 years. And Severin Behnen, the two of them recorded together 30 years ago, hadn't seen each other in 20 years, got together a week ago as of this recording and played this tune for the very first time together. First time Severin have ever seen the notation for this particular piece. and so a really special way to end this episode of Malted North.

REFERENCES AND LINKS

- [Yoerg Brewing Company](https://yoergbeer.com/) – podcast recording host and purveyor of brews discussed) [https://yoergbeer.com/]
- [Brasserie Dupont](https://www.brasserie-dupont.com/en/) – brewer of Saison DuPont and originator of DuPont yeast strain [https://www.brasserie-dupont.com/en/]
- [Wooden Ship Brewing](https://www.woodenshipbrewing.com/) – Minneapolis brewery, taproom (brewer of Basil Lemongrass Saison discussed) [https://www.woodenshipbrewing.com/]
- [Scandinavian yeast cultivation article](https://medievalmeadandbeer.wordpress.com/2019/05/04/scandinavian-yeast-logs-yeastrings/) – "magic rings" [https://medievalmeadandbeer.wordpress.com/2019/05/04/scandinavian-yeast-logs-yeastrings/]
- [Brasserie de Blaugies](https://brasserie-deblaugies.com/) – brewer of mentioned saisons: Vermontoise, La Moneuse, etc. [https://brasserie-deblaugies.com/]
- [Jenlain](https://beerandbrewing.com/dictionary/nKyyXk4S9i/) (Bière de Garde) -- description and brewery [https://beerandbrewing.com/dictionary/nKyyXk4S9i/]
- [Brasserie Fantôme](https://www.fantome.be/) – brewer of Fantôme saisons [https://www.fantome.be/]
- [VBDCK Brewery](https://vbdck.be/pages/brewery) – brewer of Kerel Saison and Biere de Garde [https://vbdck.be/pages/brewery]
- [Two Brothers Brewing](https://www.twobrothersbrewing.com/home) – brewer of Domaine Dupage "French country ale" [https://www.twobrothersbrewing.com/home]
- [Boulevard Brewing Company](https://www.boulevard.com/) – brewer of Tank 7 Saison [https://www.boulevard.com/]
- [La Malpolon](https://www.facebook.com/lamalpolon/) – brewer of Moisson Dorée bière de garde [https://www.facebook.com/lamalpolon/]

- bière de Mars – French/Belgian spring beer style/tradition: [Brewing Dictionary article](https://beerandbrewing.com/dictionary/ZslhOxHunD/) [https://beerandbrewing.com/dictionary/ZslhOxHunD/] | [Legends of Beer article](https://www.legendsofbeer.com/beer-styles/belgianbeer/biere-de-mars/) [https://www.legendsofbeer.com/beer-styles/belgianbeer/biere-de-mars/]

FEATURED OUTRO MUSIC

"Drama in Real Life" by Todd Harper

Performed by Todd Harper (piano) and Severin Behnen (accordion), recorded 8/20/2025 at the Eagles Club Aerie 33, Maria Avenue in St. Paul; recorded and mixed by Barry Madore. Used by permission of the artists.

[Todd Harper Bandcamp page](https://toddharper.bandcamp.com/) [https://toddharper.bandcamp.com/]

[Severin Behnen \(accordion\) Bandcamp page](https://severinbehenen.bandcamp.com/album/standard-demolition)

[https://severinbehenen.bandcamp.com/album/standard-demolition]