



Hear, hear for beer here

Danish gypsy brews invade Alberta

DON TSE

At least theoretically, Beer Here is a Danish brewing company. That's the country where its brewer, Christian Skovdal Andersen, lives. In reality, Beer Here is homeless. Or, to put it more nicely, Andersen is a "gypsy brewer," using the facilities and equipment of other breweries located all over the world.

Gypsy brewing is quite popular these days. It allows creative brewers to make beers without investing loads of cash in expensive equipment. And it helps the host breweries turn excess capacity into additional revenue. Beer Here is the latest gypsy brewer to offer its products in Alberta. Others come from Mikkeller and Evil Twin, which, interestingly enough, are also Danish.

One of the benefits of being a gypsy brewer is you can make dozens of different beers. But so far, only these four Beer Here beers are available in Alberta:

· **Wicked Wheat Ale** — Of the four Beer Here beers available in Alberta, this one is my favourite. Golden in colour and with an impressive foam stand, it's as visually appealing as it is delicious. It has an intoxicating aroma reminiscent of apricots accompanied by a hint of citrus. A nice, fruity hop flavour accompanies a firm maltiness. Wheat adds a light spiciness for complexity without being obtrusive. Wicked Wheat is brewed by Andersen

BOOZE


in Belgium at the De Proef brewery.

· **Executioner IPA** — Among craft beer lovers, IPA might be the most popular style of beer. Executioner IPA, also made at the De Proef brewery, is quite a bit sweeter than most. While there is some hop bitterness to provide balance, it's quite malty with a notable caramel sweetness.

· **Nordic Rye Ale** — Rye is not very common in beer since barley and, to a lesser extent, wheat are the preferred grains. But rye adds a spiciness that cannot be obtained from other grains. The Nordic is dark brown and its flavour is balanced to the sweet side, with a nice spiciness and a touch of oak, though the beer is not barrel-aged. It's brewed at the Nøgne brewery, located in Copenhagen, Denmark.

· **SoD Baltic Porter** — SoD, like Wicked Wheat and Executioner, is made in Belgium at the De Proef brewery. In truth, I think SoD is a bit thin to fit squarely into the Baltic porter style category — they should be robust and sweet. That said, this is a delicious beer. There are gentle toast and cookie aromas and flavours that add complexity to a gently sweet beer, while a hint of smoky bitterness in the finish balances things off.

Wicked Wheat, Executioner and SoD are available only on draft, so ask for them at your favourite beer bar. Nordic Rye is available in bottles at better liquor stores.

 **Comment on this story**
at ffwdweekly.com