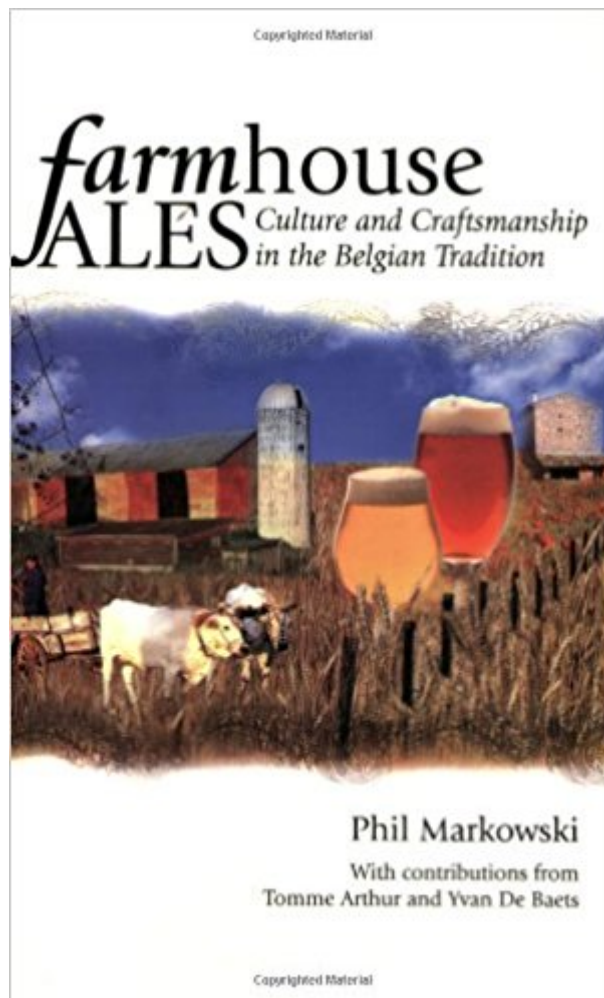




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Farmhouse Ales: Culture And Craftsmanship In The Belgian Tradition



Synopsis

Farmhouse Ales defines the results of years of evolution, refinement, of simple rustic ales in modern and historical terms, while guiding today's brewers toward credible and enjoyable reproductions of these old world classics.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Phil Markowski

Phil Markowski, Southampton Publick House's brewmaster and brewer of the highly acclaimed Southampton Publick House Saison Deluxe writes the book of farmhouse ales. He is assisted by Lost Abbey's brewmaster Tomme Arthur and Brasserie de la Senne's founder and brewmaster Yvan De Baets. Markowski introduces farmhouse ales with a discussion on the history and current status of the beer and a brief discussion on style. He devotes about a third of the Book to Biere de Garde, the farmhouse ale of northern France and nearly half to the Belgian farmhouse ale, Saison. Both sections give an overview of the style, discuss brewing the style and provide sample recipes. While the book is packed with practical experience it will probably appeal more to the fan of farmhouse ales than to the novice home brewer. While there is more meat on beer making traditions, experienced homebrewers should be able to take the information in this this book and improve their farmhouse ales.

Being a homebrewer and drinking Belgian beer led me to this book. I'm always interested in learning more about tradition and regions of whatever I might try to brew up, and this book was fascinatingly helpful, especially the section on Saison. Yes, the book has recipes and guides for any spice additions you might use, and info on water, yeast and hop value. This is NOT a book for a beginner brewer, but is a welcome companion for an intermediate level homebrewer, or if you are historically curious. Knowledge is good. Published in 2004, I did find myself amused where the author Yvan De Baets "A History of Saison" section states "Authentic saisons, along with traditional lambic beers, are certainly the most fascinating styles of old beers that still exists in Belgium. Unfortunately, they are part of a family of beers that is endangered since they no longer appeal to the tastes of the consumers who have become used to sweet and simplified flavors; therefore we absolutely must support or revive them in their authentic version or they shall become extinct." In 2013, I can say that the state of saisons and lambic ale is more popular than ever, because of homebrewers and the American craft beer movement. These styles are no longer in danger of becoming extinct. Cheers!

I must admit, I did not read all of the material on bier de garde, and concentrated on the material on saison. That material seemed to be well put together.

Good reference on the history of Belgian saisons and French bieres du garde and the current traditions of farmhouse ales from the region. I just started making saisons this past spring and thought I'd like to learn more. I bought this book at the same time I bought one of Michael Jackson's books on Belgian beer. Jackson's books just blow everything else out of the water. So if they hadn't arrived at the same time and I didn't devour them both immediately, I probably would have given this one more stars. It's very good at what it describes and I did learn a lot. I haven't tried any recipes, but I have a feeling they are one of the strongest parts of the book.

A great overview of the history and place of saison and bier de garde. It does start to show its age a bit by not addressing the massive explosion in popularity of saison in the US at all. But if you're looking for something to give you a really solid foundation for creating your own saison or bier de garde recipe, this is an excellent choice.

If you have plans to make biere de garde or saison and you want to learn more about the history and brewing of those styles this book is an indispensable resource. Very well written, provides plenty of information on the styles and several recipes to get you started. Professional brewers and

home brewers would both benefit from this book.

This book was a great read, covering both biere de garde and saison. The author does a wonderful establishing the history behind the styles and changes that have occurred over the years. The great thing is author does is make the reader aware that these are not hard and fast styles like a stout but something that is up to the brewers whims and varies in flavor and complexion. I now have a bunch of ideas for things I want to brew, if only I had enough time.

I found this book to be fun and informative to read. I am an avid homebrewer that loves to experiment. This book gives a useful account about how the beers of rural Belgium came to be. In particular, the author explores how culture and geography combined to create the beers of the region. For me the best chapter was "A Word on Style". The quote "Perhaps no other family of beers can frustrate the style police like farmhouse ales..." gives an idea of the attitude of this book. The point is made that "style" is sometimes over defined and stifles creativity. The point is to make good beer. The book does not set out to prescribe what a farmhouse ale should be. Rather it describes the history of the farmhouse ales and their modern successors. The book does give some recipes and suggestions, but makes the point that these are starting points for experimentation. As a brewer who views style very broadly and loves to learn new techniques and experiment, I greatly enjoyed this book. I recommend it to anyone who enjoys beer and brewing.

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