

THE BEER DEMYSTIFIER *NEW YORK CITY FILES* 2009-2010

BREWERY PROFILE

Anheuser-Busch InBev

[Global Corporate Mass Producer](#)

HQ: Belgium

The world's largest beer manufacturing corporation following the recent merger of Anheuser-Busch of St. Louis and InBev – based in Belgium but with a significant Brazilian financial and operating input.

Such as is the size of this giant, just the former Anheuser-Busch brands alone account for almost one in two beers sold in the U.S. being a product of this company. While most mass-produced light lagers have their malted barley quota padded out with cheap corn, Anheuser-Busch InBev uses rice in Budweiser.



Budweiser's highly-publicised "beechwood aging process" is a marketing manipulation of part of the brewing process, where sterile beechwood chips, boiled in sodium bicarbonate for several hours to remove any flavoring possibility, are added to the maturation tanks to aid yeast action and clarity. Twelve giant beer factories are operated by Anheuser-Busch InBev in the U.S.A., including Newark, NJ, Merrimack, NH, and Baldwinsville, NY.

And take for instance Stella Artois, a boring, mass-produced European lager. This pale yellow beverage is very widespread due to InBev's relentless marketing and advertising hype – and it's not even cheap. What good is it to the local economy (remember your local craft brewers) and to your own drinking experience if you choose something like this over fresh, flavorsome, microbrewed beer? In the U.K., Stella Artois is commonly nicknamed "The Wife Beater" by drinkers – something the global giant is desperately trying to sweep under the carpet.

'**Stealth micro**' brands (beers that appear to be craft brewed, bearing the name of a fictitious brewery registered by the corporation in order to deliberately distance true brewer and product) created by Anheuser-Busch are *Wild Blue (Blueberry Lager)*, purporting to be from "Blue Dawg Brewing Co.", *Landshark Lager*, badged as "Margaritaville Brewing Co.", *Wild Hop Lager* (containing no wild hops), and *Stone Mill Pale Ale*. The latter pair are certified organic as the corporation is trying to muscle in on the fast growing market for organic products, robbing valuable shelf and tap space from genuine craft brewers of organic beers such as Wolaver's, Peak, and Orlio. Faux names used on these are "Green Valley Brewing Co." and "Crooked Creek Brewing Co."

Giving credit where credit is due, some traditional beers of quality such as Spaten Optimator – and the Spaten Brewery itself – have survived corporate ownership unscathed. Anheuser-Busch InBev is the world's biggest recycler of aluminum cans. Also, they operate an informative basic beer education website, herestobeer.com, which includes beer and food pairing suggestions. The website is commendably neutral and does not promote Anheuser-Busch InBev's products over others (at least at the time of writing).

Anheuser-Busch InBev has a stake in other large brewers worldwide, including [Grupo Modelo](#) (q.v.). Aside from the brands listed below, the company also makes modern distractions from proper beer such as Bacardi malternatives.

On the former InBev part of the marriage, the pre-merger Belgian-based juggernaut had butchered many traditional regional breweries in the name of rationalization, including Boddington's (the former 'Cream of Manchester' now comes from a giant beer factories in Wales, Scotland, and England). The brewery at Hoegaarden was also slated for closure but was reprieved to brew a proportion of its hometown beer due to production troubles at InBev's big beer factory at Jupille. Hoegaarden (the beer and the brewery) was founded by Pierre Celis in his hometown in 1966 to revive the style of authentic Belgian craft witbiers, a far cry from the industrial mass production machinery now in place. InBev was formed by the merger of Interbrew and South American giant AmBev. Interbrew itself was born out of a 1980s merger of Belgium's two largest national brewers, Piedbouv and Artois.

It is very hard to go anywhere in the world and not be confronted with an Anheuser-Busch InBev beer, they have a massive portfolio globally.

Ratings

Each beer has been given a rating from one to five which should be interpreted as follows.

* Bland, one-dimensional, or tasting of cheap adjuncts – unenjoyable. Not recommended.

** Nothing special but may be worth trying if nothing better is available.

*** Good, recommended.

**** Great, highly recommended.

***** Exceptionally good, very highly recommended.

Ratings are based on personal taste although, in certain instances, outside evaluations have been used when a particular beer has not been sampled by the author/webmaster.

{S} after the beer name denotes seasonal availability.

• Domestic

Busch N.A. (0.5%) * < - LOW ALCOHOL BEER - >

O'Doul's Amber (0.5%) * < - LOW ALCOHOL BEER - >

O'Doul's Premium (0.5%) * < - LOW ALCOHOL BEER - >

Rock Green Light (3.7%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - >

Bud Ice Light (4.1%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - >

Bare Knuckle Stout (4.2%) ** < - DRY STOUT - > – A dark and thin featherweight Guinness competitor.

Bud Light (4.2%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - > – Very pale yellow fluid which is as close to water as Rockaway Beach, so much so that describing taste characteristics proves impossible. For people that don't like the taste of beer.



Bud Light Lime (4.2%) * < - FRUIT BEER - > – As above but with added lime flavoring. Refreshing but pointless unless there's a global fruit juice shortage.

Busch Light (4.2%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - >

Michelob Ultra (4.2%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - > – Allegedly this is as far away as you can possibly get from detecting any discernable taste in an actual 'beer'.

Natural Light (4.2%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - > – Inspid, totally tasteless gassy swill residing at the extreme bottom of the quality ladder. Popular with binge drinkers at college frat parties.

Budweiser Select (4.3%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - >

Michelob Light (4.3%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - > – Crisp, thin, and virtually flavorless. Why bother?

Redbridge (4.3%) ** < - SPECIALTY BEER - > – A mild gluten-free beer, suitable for Celiacs. Brewed with sorghum, hopped with Cascade and Hallertau.

Tequiza (4.5%) * < - FRUIT BEER - > – A pale yellow, tropical-themed fruit potion which is both watery and sickly at the same time.

Busch Beer (4.6%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Rolling Rock Extra Pale (4.6%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - > – Brewed with rice and corn adjuncts, watery and tasteless.

Landshark Lager (4.7%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - > – A wet, toothless fish.

Mackeson XXX Stout (4.9%) ***** < - SWEET STOUT / MILK STOUT - > – Very dark with sweet malt, chocolate, and coffee on the palate. An English brand brewed under contract in Cincinnati.



Michelob Honey Lager (4.9%) * * * < - STANDARD LAGER - > – A sweet golden lager, creamy and almost sugary. Decent.

Michelob Märzen (4.9%) * * < - OKTOBERFEST / MARZEN - >

Anheuser World Lager (aka World Select) (5.0%) * * < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Bud Dry (5.0%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Budweiser (5.0%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - > – The ubiquitous rice lager that tends to give American beer a stereotypical bad name throughout the world. Little on the palate apart from the crisp CO2 bite. Now marketed as the ‘Great American Lager’, but with this the great eagle (see the company’s logo) is actually more like a great auk (with my apologies to any ornithologists reading this). The not-so-great Belgian-Brazilian owned lager...



Michelob (5.0%) * * < - STANDARD LAGER - > – All-malt lager, better than its adjunct-laden stablemates but still uninteresting and bland. A bit of sweet malt flavor is there, but it’s very tame.

Michelob Bavarian Style Wheat (5.0% est'd) * * * < - GERMAN WEISSBIER / HEFEWEIZEN - > – An uncomplicated hefeweizen which is easy to drink.

Michelob Black and Tan (5.0%) * * (blend of more than one style)

Michelob Ultra Amber (5.0%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Wild Hop Lager (5.0%) * * < - VIENNA LAGER - > – Organic lager that contains as many wild hops as there are mentions of Anheuser-Busch on the label.

Michelob Amber Bock (5.2%) * * < - TRADITIONAL / DUNKLER BOCK - > – Dark traditional bock, quite shallow for the style.

Michelob Pale Ale (5.2%) * * < - AMERICAN PALE ALE - > – Meek ale with weak caramel notes, somewhat watery and under hopped.

Shock Top Belgian White (aka Spring Heat Spiced Wheat) (5.2%) * * < - BELGIAN WITBIER - > – A mild witbier, insipid for the style.

Budweiser American Ale (5.3%) * * * < - AMERICAN AMBER ALE - > – Brewed with Cascade hops, this is a fairly worthy attempt at this style of beer - though a little watery. Easy to drink.

Sun Dog Amber Wheat (5.3%) * * * < - AMERICAN PALE WHEAT ALE - > – A mild tasting wheat ale with a little citrus and caramel on the palate.

Beach Bum Blonde Ale {S} (5.4%) * * < - BLONDE ALE - > – A wimpy, forgettable ale with precious little to offer the palate.

Bud Ice (5.5%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Jack’s Pumpkin Spice Ale {S} (5.5%) * * < - PUMPKIN BEER - >

Stone Mill Organic Pale Ale (5.5%) * * < - ENGLISH PALE ALE - > – Uninspiring organic beer that Anheuser-Busch conveniently forgot to put their name on.

Whitbread Pale Ale (5.7%) * * < - ENGLISH PALE ALE - > – With so many great craft-brewed alternatives available, who needs this uninteresting English (in name only) brand mass-produced in Cincinnati by a Belgian global giant?

Busch Ice (5.9%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - >

King Cobra (5.9%) * < - PREMIUM LAGER - > – Uncouth, venomous fluid dominated by rancid cooked corn notes.

Michelob Porter (5.9%) * * * < - ROBUST PORTER - > – Light bodied, all-malt dark ale with a little sweetness and hints of coffee.

Natural Ice (5.9%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Winter’s Bourbon Cask Ale {S} (6.0%) * * < - OLD ALE / WINTER WARMER - > – Never cask-conditioned, despite the confusing name. Mildly woody, inoffensive.

Demon’s HopYard IPA {S} (6.4%) * * * < - AMERICAN IPA - > – A half-decent IPA that appears occasionally. Moderately citrusy.

Bud Extra (aka B to the E) (6.6%) * < - SPECIALTY BEER - > – A loathsome canned herbal potion, barely recognizable as beer.

Wild Blue {S} (8.0%) ** < - FRUIT BEER - > – Blueberry lager from the fictional ‘Blue Dawg Brewery’, in reality an Anheuser-Busch ‘stealth-micro’ scam.

Hurricane (8.1%) ** < - PREMIUM LAGER - > – It blows.

Brew Master’s Private Reserve {S} (8.5%) **** < - PREMIUM LAGER - > – A decent all-malt strong lager, hard to find.

Michelob Celebrate Chocolate {S} (8.5%) ** < -DARK AMERICAN OR EURO LAGER - >

Michelob Oak Aged Dark Vanilla {S} (10.0%) ** < - WOOD-AGED BEER - >

- **Brewed in Argentina**

Quilmes (4.9%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - >

- **Brewed in Belgium**

Hoegaarden Original White Ale (4.9%) *** < - BELGIAN WITBIER - > – Cloudy witbier with coriander notes. While half decent, Hoegaarden’s success largely rides on hype. The brand is mass-produced in more than one location, and is usually overpriced.

3 Horses Lager (5.0%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Belle Vue Kriek (5.1%) ** < - FRUIT LAMBIC (SOOR) - > Cherry.

Belle Vue Gueuze (5.2%) ** < - GUEUZE (SOOR) - >

Belle Vue Framboise (5.2%) *** < - FRUIT LAMBIC (SOOR) - > – Sweet raspberry notes dominate.

Stella Artois (5.2%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - > – An ordinary, mass-produced European lager favored by those with unadventurous palates. Hopefully the hype bubble driving sales of this overrated global brand will burst soon when the hordes of beer-blinkered people wake up to the vast choice of craft brews out there. There’s a moderate refreshing crispness and subtle Saaz hops on the palate, but that is little reassurance with this brand which is plugged in some markets as ‘reassuringly expensive’. The ‘Anno 1366’ reference on the Stella Artois logo slyly refers to the earliest record of brewing at Leuven – the beer itself has only been around since 1926.

Leffe Brune (6.5%) **** < - BELGIAN DARK ALE - > – Pleasant mid-brown, malty sweet beer.

Leffe Blonde (6.6%) *** < - BELGIAN PALE ALE - > – A moderately enjoyable but overrated (and overpriced) Belgian pale ale.

- **Brewed in Bolivia**

Paceña Centenario (5.2%) *** < - STANDARD LAGER - > – Light golden lager, crisp and clean with subtle hop nuances. Brewed 12,000 feet above sea level.

- **Brewed in Brazil**

Sambadoro (4.0%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Brahma (4.6%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Skol (4.7%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Bohemia (5.0%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - >

- **Brewed in Canada**

Labatt Nordic (0.5%) * < - LOW ALCOHOL BEER - >

Labatt Blue Light (4.0%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - > – Illegal Butt Bath (anagram).



Labatt Blue (5.0%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - > – Blue. Blah. Bland.

Labatt Canadian Ale (5.0%) ** < - AMERICAN PALE ALE - >

Labatt Ice (5.6%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Labatt Maximum Ice (7.1%) ** < - PREMIUM LAGER - >

- **Brewed in China**

Yinpu Black Rice Beer (4.6%) ** < - SCHWARZBIER - >

Harbin Lager (5.5%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - > – Chinese for just another ordinary industrial lager.

- **Brewed in the Czech Republic**

Kisz Bier Classic Czech Dark (4.5% estimated) *** < - MUNICH DUNKEL - > – Dark brown dunkel, medium-bodied and a little bready.

Kisz Bier Classic Czech Lager (4.8% estimated) ** < - BOHEMIAN PILSNER - >

Staropramen (5.0%) ** < - BOHEMIAN PILSNER - > – Mean Parrots (anagram).

- **Brewed in England**

Mackeson Stout (3.0%) **** < - SWEET STOUT / MILK STOUT - > – Very dark, sweet, with coffee notes. Do not confuse with the domestic-brewed Mackeson XXX.

Bass (4.4% and 5.0% variants) ** < - ENGLISH PALE ALE - > – A fresh cask of Bass brewed and drunk in Burton-on-Trent is good. A processed export keg made in a huge Lancashire fizz factory is another matter. Although the name is a major part of England's rich brewing heritage, the tame, processed ale that is today's Bass is overrated. With so many good quality, craft-brewed pale ale alternatives available, this brand is rendered superfluous.

- **Brewed in Germany**

Beck's Alkoholfrei (0.3%) * < - LOW ALCOHOL BEER - >

Haake Beck Non Alcoholic (0.5%) * < - LOW ALCOHOL BEER - >

St. Pauli N.A. (0.5%) * < - LOW ALCOHOL BEER - >

Beck's Premier Light (2.3%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - >

Beck's Light (3.8%) * < - LIGHT LAGER - >

Beck's Dark (4.8%) ** < - MUNICH DUNKEL - >

Beck's Beer (4.8%) ** < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Diebels Alt (4.8%) *** < - ALTBIER / STICKE - > – Amber altbier, dry on the palate with a clean, hoppy aroma.

St. Pauli Girl Special Dark (4.8%) ** < - MUNICH DUNKEL - >

Dinkel Acker CD Pils (4.9%) *** < - GERMAN PILSNER - > – A session pilsner, decent.

Gilde Pilsener (4.9%) *** < - GERMAN PILSNER - > – Spicy noble hops come through in this refreshing lager.

St. Pauli Girl Bier (4.9%) ** < - GERMAN PILSNER - >

Beck's Oktoberfest {S} (5.0%) *** < - OKTOBERFEST / MARZEN - > – A sweetish märzen, not unpleasant.



Löwenbräu Premium Dark (5.0%) * * * < - MUNICH DUNKEL - > – Mid-brown session beer, pleasant and a little malty.

Spaten Pils (5.0%) * * * < - GERMAN PILSNER - > – A standard pilsner with a little hop grassiness.

Lindener Spezial (5.1%) * * < - STANDARD LAGER - >

Spaten Premium Lager (aka Münchner Hell) (5.2%) * * * < - MUNICH HELLES - > – Golden, crisp lager from a historic brewery swallowed up by the big corporation.

Franziskaner Club Weisse (5.0%) * * * < - GERMAN WEISSBIER / HEFEWEIZEN - > – The filtered version of Hefe Weisse.

Franziskaner Hefe Weisse (5.0%) * * * * < - GERMAN WEISSBIER / HEFEWEIZEN - > – Cloudy gold-orange hefeweizen with banana, clove, and phenolic notes.

Franziskaner Hefe Weisse Dunkel (5.0%) * * * * < - DUNKELWEIZEN - > – A dark brown, smooth dunkelweizen.

Löwenbräu Original (5.2%) * * < - MUNICH HELLES - >

Dinkel Acker Dark (5.5%) * * * < - MUNICH DUNKEL - > – Mid-brown dunkel with some sweetness.

Spaten Oktoberfest Ur-Märzen {S} (5.9%) * * * < - OKTOBERFEST / MARZEN - > – Orange-brown, light-to-medium-bodied märzen.

Löwenbräu Oktoberfest {S} (6.0%) * * * < - OKTOBERFEST / MARZEN - > – A pale yellow, rather tame märzen.

Spaten Maibock {S} (6.5%) * * * < - MAIBOCK / HELLES BOCK - > – Malty, straw-colored spring lager, draft only.

Spaten Premium Bock (6.5%) * * * < - TRADITIONAL / DUNKLER BOCK - > – Golden with some sweet caramel character.

Spaten Optimator (7.2%) * * * * < - DOPPELBOCK / EISBOCK - > – Dark brown doppelbock with a big malt profile and a smooth caramel and fruit sweetness.

- **Brewed in Russia**

Tinkov Royal Russian Pilsner (5.0%) * * < - GERMAN PILSNER - >

- **Brewed in Scotland**

Tennents Lager (4.4%) * * < - STANDARD LAGER - > – Gannets Relent (anagram). What Scottish lager louts drink.

- **Brewed in South Korea**

OB Blue (aka OB Lager) (4.5%) * < - STANDARD LAGER - >

- **Brewed in Wales (some also from England and Scotland)**

Boddingtons Pub Ale (4.7%) * * < - ENGLISH PALE ALE - > – Nitrogenated, mildly bitter pasteurized liquid bearing the name of a historic but now-dead Manchester brewery, ruthlessly closed by InBev despite much protest. Now mostly brewed at a modern factory complex in the South Wales industrial belt, though some may come from a similar 'fizz factories' in northern England and over the Scottish border in Glasgow. Smooth and creamy, insipid and often metallic.

SEE BEER MENUS FOR AVAILABILITY (EXTERNAL LINK)

<http://www.beermenus.com/breweries/anheuser-busch-inbev>

This page is written by Alex Hall, and is updated to August 2009.



Franziskaner
WEISSBIER



LÖWENBRÄU
Tradition seit 1823



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