

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

BREWERY PROFILE

Dark Star

Ansty, U.K. (England)

A winner of countless awards for their high quality cask beers, Dark Star was founded in 1994 in the cellar of The Evening Star, Brighton, on a tiny 1 ¼ barrel plant (meaning there were only 7 firkins from each brew). They expanded in 2001 to a full sized microbrewery in converted farm buildings, but are again brewing to capacity so shipments to the US are now sadly infrequent. Brewmaster Rob Jones was formerly with Pitfield Brewery in London, during his tenure there he won the coveted Supreme Champion Beer of Britain award at the Great British Beer Festival for his Dark Star recipe – the beer (now Dark Star Original) that the brewery takes its name from. In a later comparative side-by-side judging of all Supreme Champion winners, Dark Star Original was crowned 'Champion of Champions' – an accolade that is impossible to beat. Dark Star Brewery will be moving to a new brewing facility in Partridge Green, near Horsham, in 2010 to facilitate further expansion.

Importer: [The Shelton Brothers](#)

Distributor: Union Beer Distributors, tel. 1 718 497 2407.



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.

Hophead (3.8%) ***** < - ENGLISH BITTER - > – An extremely clean-drinking, full-bodied, pale gold bitter with a strong floral aroma and elderflower notes. There is a clean, refreshing hoppiness on the palate, making this the ultimate 'quaffing' beer. Cask only.

Over The Moon (3.8%) ***** < - ENGLISH DARK MILD - > – A dark chestnut-hued session beer with well-balanced caramel, dough, and chocolate on the palate, and a little grapefruit on the finish. Cask only.

Best Bitter (4.0%) ***** < - ENGLISH BEST BITTER - > – A traditional Sussex style bitter brewed with Maris Otter, crystal, and chocolate malts and East Kent Golding hops. There's a delightfully floral aroma from the addition of full flower aromatic hops late in the boil, while the taste is balanced and enticing for a session. Cask only.

Old Chestnut (4.0%) ***** < - OLD ALE / WINTER WARMER - > – Dark and mellow with a restrained Golding hop bitterness and a smooth chocolate malt profile. Very drinkable. Cask only.

Espresso (4.2%) ***** < - DRY STOUT - > – A coffee stout brewed with roasted barley malt and Challenger hops, plus freshly ground espresso coffee beans added to the copper for a few minutes after the boil. Dark and roasty with a pleasant coffee aroma.

Golden Gate {S} (4.5%) ***** < - ENGLISH PALE ALE - > – A superb golden ale brewed with Maris Otter, Munich, and brown malts, and liberally hopped with Amarillo and Cluster. Cask only, September release. Cask only.

American Pale Ale {S} (4.7%) ***** < - AMERICAN PALE ALE - > – Maris Otter pale malt, Chinook and Centennial hops, and an American yeast strain combine for a crisp, golden, highly refreshing British take on an American craft-brewed pale ale. An exceptionally delicious brew. Cask only; spring release.

Summer Meltdown {S} (4.8%) ***** < - HERB, SPICE, OR VEGETABLE BEER - > – A pale golden, summery ale flavored with Chinese stem ginger and other spices - delicious and very thirst quenching. Cask only.

Sunburst {S} (4.8%) ***** < - ENGLISH PALE ALE - > – A hint of sweetness leads to a fruitiness and tangy hops plentiful on the tongue. A very clean-tasting, refreshing summer beer that is dangerously drinkable. Brewed with Challenger hops in the boil, with Cascade and Styrian Goldings added as late hops.

Festival (5.0%) ***** < - EXTRA SPECIAL BITTER (ESB) - > – This is a chestnut-colored brew with a smooth, malty mouthfeel. Cask only.

Original (5.0%) ***** < - OLD ALE / WINTER WARMER - > – The Supreme Champion, dark, strong and bitter with a complex, deep malt flavor with moderate hops balancing perfectly. Cask only.

Critical Mass {S} (7.8%) ***** < - OLD ALE / WINTER WARMER - > – Strong, very full-bodied winter ale brewed just once every year. Dark roasted barley malts are balanced well by the fruity astringency of Challenger and East Kent Golding hops. Matured for several months, and only available cask-conditioned.

Imperial Stout {S} (10.5%) ***** < - RUSSIAN IMPERIAL STOUT - > – Incredibly dark, smooth, rich, and powerful beer matured for several months. Bottles are year dated.

SEE BEER MENUS FOR AVAILABILITY (EXTERNAL LINK)

<http://www.beermenus.com/breweries/dark-star-brewing-company>



Photos: The guest malt shoveller at Dark Star Brewery depicted here (and also in the brewery's cask store room) is none other than Captain Sensible of The Damned!

THE GOTHAM
IMBIBER
New York City's Online
Grassroots Beer Resource
www.gotham-imbiber.com

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

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