

The RARE BEER CLUB

BRASSERIE DE SILLY
SILLY, WALLONIA, BELGIUM

PINOT NOIR BARREL AGED SCOTCH SILLY 2019

We've managed to secure a very special release from Belgium's historic Brasserie de Silly, whose long-standing brewing heritage dates back six generations. The brewery was founded all the way back in 1850, in the small village of Silly, 25 miles southwest of Brussels. The brewery, founded by Marcelin Hypolite Mynbrughen (truly a good name), was originally called Cense de la Tour. Marcelin's first beer, Saison Silly, was created from his own malted harvest of barley, and this saison was the beginning of many great Belgian classics ahead.

In 1900, Mynbrughen's grandson Adelin received a silver medal for the brewery at the Paris World Exhibition.



And it was during World War I, with the aid of Scottish soldiers stationed in Silly, that the brewery's Scotch Silly beer was born. In 1950, in addition to the brewery's existing top-fermented ales, a pilsner was added, and distributed by the brewery's own set of cafes. A series of beers under the Enghein label—including Enghein Blonde, Enghein Brune and Enghein Noël—served to further extend the lineup starting in 1975.

Blanche de Silly, which may be familiar to many of you (it's a world-class witbier), was launched back in 1990. Brasserie de Silly, in the time since then, has also introduced new releases like Abbaye de Forest (a recognized "abbey"

beer) and the organic Silly Pils BIO. Brasserie de Silly remains family-owned and their traditional, high-quality techniques and ingredients remain of the utmost importance, as demand for this Belgian brewery's classic beers continue to grow worldwide. As the brewery puts it: "Brewing at Brasserie de Silly has not changed substantially since 1850—the process is still very traditional."

PINOT NOIR BARREL AGED SCOTCH SILLY 2019

This special release from Brasserie de Silly, a limited barrel-aged offering of the brewery's famous Scotch Silly ale,

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SPECIFICATIONS

Style	Strong Scotch Ale aged in Pinot Noir barrels
Alcohol By Volume	10.0%
Serving Temperature	45–52° F
Suggested Glassware	Tulip, Goblet, Thistle, or Pinot Glass

gets aged in a particular type of barrel – the variety of which varies each year. Previous years have seen the likes of Bourbon-, Bordeaux-, Chardonnay-, and Cognac-barrel-aged versions. But this one, aged in Pinot Noir barrels, was something special. It combines the rich, caramelly impact of its Scotch Silly base with fruity, vinous counterpoints from that residual barrel character.

Availability of this incredible Scotch ale is very limited. We originally featured this 2019 Pinot Noir version in 2020, and it has not been distributed in the US for at least the past 18 months. When the opportunity presented itself to acquire an aged allocation from the remaining 2019 bottles – which would be limited to Rare Beer Club members – we jumped at the chance. This is a very rare beer indeed.

For fellow fans of Pinot Noir, there's a lot of familiar elements to dig into in this release, as bright red fruit and plum emerge immediately from the aromatics. Plus, the initial pour itself is a vibrant, deep garnet, with golden-brown edges and an off-white edging of resilient foam. There's also some firm, engaging oak presence

here as well, with notes of vanilla and almond and toast throughout—even a nudge of structure from tannins. But that delicious base beer is still never forgotten, and rounding out the barrel complexity is a velvety, caramelized base of the Scotch Silly, adding mellowing notes of sweeter caramel, leather, and generous toffee.

The aromatics here are generous in fruit and barrel elements, with tempered cherry and deep berry notes mixing with that oaky interior of Pinot Noir barrels: lightly charred but mellowed by those above vanilla-almond notes. The nose of this Pinot-influenced Scotch ale is smooth and super-friendly. But do allow things some time to warm up in your glass to better bring out those more subtle contributions from the barrel.

This special edition from Brasserie de Silly is incredibly easy-drinking for the amount of stuff going on here— with smooth texture, an effervescent underpinning of bubbles, and just a touch of warming, vinous alcohol making everything feel a bit more lean. Even beyond the dense aromatics, the flavor takes that cherry/red-fruit scale

and seems to expand it in a huge way, bringing in notes of strawberries, fruit leather, candied oranges, and rich dates.

Trying to identify and dig into the various barrel contributions of barrel-aged beers like these can challenge one's taste buds. Attempting to discern the fruity secondary notes of the Pinot barrels versus this ale's fruity esters tends to instead have us just enjoying the fact that certain central notes here approximate a caramel apple, and that some things work well for a reason. So many of Scotch Silly's core notes intertwine well with the barrel-aged sections here, and a ton of complexity's coming through from those barrels. A highly memorable special release.

PAIRING & AGING NOTES:

“Living Beer, Living Ale” is one of Brasserie de Silly's calling cards—and combining bottle-conditioning with 10% ABV suggests this one's built to develop over the years, and it shows. This beer has matured gracefully and is drinking exceptionally well. The combo of red fruit and caramel has us going with pairings involving spicy roasted pork.

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The RARE BEER CLUB



SCHLOSS EGGENBERG
VORCHDORF, AUSTRIA

SAMICHLAUS CLASSIC 2023

The history of Brauerei Schloss Eggenberg is steeped in centuries of brewing tradition, rooted in its picturesque location in the Salzkammergut region of northern Austria. Its story dates back to at least the 10th century, with records suggesting brewing activities were already taking place on the site during this time. The brewery as it stands today is intricately tied to Schloss Eggenberg, a castle that has become synonymous with its legacy.

Early brewing records indicate that the area around Schloss Eggenberg was known for producing beer, likely catering to local communities



and religious establishments, dating back to the 10th century. The Eggenberg Castle, which houses the brewery, was constructed in its current form in the 14th century. It served as a focal point of the region, blending aristocratic heritage with practical agricultural and brewing functions. The current iteration of the brewery came into prominence in 1681 when it was purchased by the Stöhr family. The family began a legacy of brewing excellence that continues today, now under the stewardship of the ninth generation.

By the 19th century, Schloss Eggenberg had grown into one of Austria's most

respected breweries. It embraced modernization while retaining its commitment to traditional brewing methods, particularly the art of lagering, for which it became internationally recognized. The brewery has garnered acclaim for producing unique, high-quality beers such as the iconic Samichlaus, one of the strongest lagers in the world. First brewed in Switzerland and later adopted by Schloss Eggenberg, Samichlaus is a prime example of the brewery's ability to innovate while

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SPECIFICATIONS

Style	Strong Doppelbock
Alcohol By Volume	14%
Serving Temperature	52–59° F
Suggested Glassware	Snifter, Tulip, or Teku Glass

respecting tradition.

Today, Schloss Eggenberg is Austria's third-largest independent brewery, exporting its beers to over 40 countries worldwide. Its range of products, from traditional lagers like Hopfenkönig to specialty brews like Samichlaus, represents the pinnacle of Austrian brewing. The brewery remains a family-owned and operated establishment, celebrated for its artisanal approach and commitment to quality. With a history spanning more than a millennium, Schloss Eggenberg seamlessly blends ancient brewing traditions with modern expertise, cementing its place as a cornerstone of Austria's brewing heritage. The Rare Beer Club was allocated the only portion of the 2023 Samichlaus Classic bottled in 750ml bottles.

SAMICHLAUS CLASSIC 2023

To ring in the holiday season, the Rare Beer Club has obtained the 2023 vintage 750ml bottling of Schloss Eggenberg's Samichlaus Classic. This world-famous beer gets brewed once a year on December 6th (the day of St. Nicholas), then gets matured for ten months before being bottled. At 14% ABV, it's one of the strongest lagers in the world. Bottles can be cellared for years, and vintage examples can be perfect

for celebrating a special occasion. We found this 2023 bottling of Samichlaus to be one of our best experiences ever with this classic.

Samichlaus Classic pours a deep, rich amber to mahogany color with ruby highlights when held to the light. The beer forms a modest, tan head that is retained nicely, then dissipates to a rim around the inside of the glass. It leaves minimal lacing but showcases its dense, high-alcohol nature. The nose is intensely rich and complex, with an initial wave of caramelized sugar and toffee. Notes of dark fruits such as raisins, prunes, and figs emerge, accompanied by a hint of molasses. Subtle undertones of toasted nuts, brown bread, and a whisper of chocolate balance the sweetness. A warming, almost brandy-like aroma lingers, contributing to its luxurious depth.

Samichlaus greets the palate with a bold sweetness that mirrors its aroma—layers of caramel, toffee, and dark molasses dominate. These are followed by ripe dark fruit flavors of dates, cherries, and figs, which add a fruity complexity. As it warms, notes of vanilla, toasted oak, and a touch of sherry-like oxidation appear, enhancing the beer's depth. The alcohol is warming but well-integrated, reminiscent of a fine

liqueur or dessert wine. The body is full and velvety, with a syrupy, almost decadent texture. Despite its high ABV (14%), the beer's smooth carbonation provides just enough lift to keep it from feeling overly heavy. The finish is long and warm, with lingering notes of caramel, dried fruit, and delicate malt.

Samichlaus Classic is a masterpiece of balance and complexity, perfect for sipping and savoring on a cold evening. It's an ideal candidate for pairing with rich desserts like chocolate cake or crème brûlée, or even enjoyed on its own as a contemplative after-dinner drink. With its ability to age gracefully, this beer only grows more complex over time, developing deeper sherry-like qualities and even smoother integration of flavors.

AGING & PAIRING NOTES:

Schloss Eggenberg Samichlaus Classic drinks very well now and will continue to age gracefully for years to come. The brewery suggests pairing with hearty dishes and desserts, or with chocolate, or as an after-dinner drink all on its own.