

The RARE BEER CLUB

BRASSERIE FANTÔME SOY, BELGIUM

SKRIP'S BIG BREW

Nestled about an hour south of Liège, within the enchanting Ardennes Forest, lies the quaint village of Soy, home to some of Belgium’s most fascinating beers. This picturesque locale is the proud residence of Brasserie Fantôme, led by the passionate Dany Prignon. While Fantôme’s brews enjoy a devoted following in both the U.S. and Europe, they remain a hidden gem within Belgium itself.

At Brasserie Fantôme, brewing is an art of innovation, highlighted by their adventurous use of spices, herbs,



fruits, vegetables, and flowers to craft their unique Saisons. These unexpected combinations give Fantôme beers their signature character and flavor. The brewery is committed to sourcing ingredients locally, and their recipes evolve constantly, ensuring each year delivers something new and delightful for even the most discerning beer enthusiasts.

Founded in 1988 by Dany Prignon, Fantôme is a testament to the boundless creativity that defines Belgian brewing. The brewery’s “ghost”

logo is inspired by a local legend from the nearby town of La Roche-en-Ardenne, where the haunting tale of Countess Berthe de la Roche, said to wander the castle ruins, has been passed down for generations.

A visit to Fantôme’s small but efficient 6.5-barrel brewing system, largely built from equipment originally used at Brasserie d’Achoffe, leaves a lasting impression. Dany and his dedicated team hand-bottle

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SPECIFICATIONS

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| <p>Style Saison Brewed with Cayenne and Strawberry Tea</p> <p>Brewed in Collaboration with Phresh Flavours and Skrip</p> <p>Alcohol By Volume 6.5%</p> <p>Serving Temperature 45–52° F</p> <p>Suggested Glassware Tulip, Teku, or Goblet</p> |
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each brew using a somewhat old-school apparatus, with every beer housed in 750ml bottles sealed with both cork and cap, or in draft kegs ready to be tapped. The brewery's production schedule is determined by the inspiration of its master brewer, with batches brewed once or twice a week when the creative spark strikes.

Fantôme is also known for its limited-edition and special brews, created based on Dany's inventive ideas and the availability of seasonal ingredients. To learn more about the brewery, brush up on your French and visit www.fantome.be.

SKRIP'S BIG BREW

The Fantôme Skrip's Big Brew was crafted in collaboration with adventurous New Jersey-based brewing company Phresh Phlavors along with Dany's friend Nick Sarlo, known as Skrip. This attractive

saison pours a rich copper red, with a noticeable chill haze and a nice amber head, which it retains well, leaving a trace of lacing with every sip. It's a gorgeous looking beer that would liven up any picnic or meal outside in the sunshine.

This one comes through as a classic Belgian Saison nose, with fruity esters, clove, and coriander notes that mix with the assertive cayenne aroma we were promised, all backed by pale malt elements. As it comes up to the higher end of the serving temperature range, subtle strawberry notes present themselves that never become too sweet or cloying.

The first sip brings the cayenne heat, a heat that lasts through the sip and into the finish. It's definitely a spice heat, as opposed to an alcohol burn. Beyond that, the Belgian elements from the nose are very much present in the tasting. Fruity esters, herbal

notes, and strawberry, while subtle, balance perfectly. The cayenne is present from start to finish, aligning with the bracing dryness at the tail end. And be aware, there is no sweetness despite the strawberry note; this one is dry and tart.

In our tasting of the Skrip's Big Brew, we described it as "sour adjacent". It's a Saison for sure, but there's definitely a lactic acidity present that makes it a wonderful springtime beer.

AGING & PAIRING NOTES:

Enjoy this one now or mature it for up to two years – but keep an eye on it. We're inclined to enjoy it more sooner than later since it's drinking really well now. Pair it with a spicy arugula salad with fresh mozzarella and balsamic dressing, ceviche, or even fish tacos!

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The RARE BEER CLUB

TWO BROTHERS BREWING COMPANY
WARRENVILLE, IL

BARREL AGED NORTHWIND

Two Brothers Brewing Company is a family-owned brewery based in Warrenville, Illinois, just outside of Chicago. The company was founded by brothers Jim and Jason Ebel, who first opened The Brewer's Coop, a homebrewing and home winemaking shop. Both were avid homebrewers and for years they dreamed of starting their own brewery. Jason further honed his brewing skills at Tabernash Brewery in Denver, Colorado, and gained additional experience at Mickey Finn's in Libertyville, Illinois.



All along, the brothers continued to talk about turning their dream into a reality. Eventually, after driving their families a bit crazy with talk of their plans, they decided to take the plunge and open a brewpub. But, lacking financing and restaurant experience, they determined that starting a brewery was a better option. During this time, Jim earned his law degree, and Jason completed his brewing degree at the renowned Siebel Institute in Chicago—an ideal combination for launching a new business. In 1996, they officially

opened the brewery with the goal of bringing fresh, high-quality beer to the Chicagoland area.

Two Brothers' guiding philosophy, "Craft With A Conscience," is rooted in their family's farming background and their commitment to giving back to their community and the environment. Their grandfather, a dairy farmer, passed down bulk milk tanks that the brothers repurposed as the brewery's original fermenters. The brewery remains dedicated to sustainable practices, including donating spent
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| SPECIFICATIONS | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Style | Imperial Stout aged in Two Brothers Artisan Spirits Bourbon Barrels |
| Alcohol By Volume | 11% |
| Serving Temperature | 48–55° F |
| Suggested Glassware | Tulip, Pint |

grain to local farms, using local and American-made ingredients whenever possible, and prioritizing exceptional customer service and top-quality brewing supplies. Their commitment to sustainability is further reflected in their use of recyclable packaging, the fact that the Two Brothers Roundhouse in Aurora is powered entirely by renewable energy, and their ongoing efforts to conserve water and improve energy efficiency throughout the brewing process.

In nearly 30 years of operation, Two Brothers Brewing has expanded significantly. The brewery now operates from a 40,000-square-foot facility, featuring a 50-barrel brewing system and 3,000 barrels of fermentor space, with distribution reaching over a dozen states. If you're visiting the Chicago area, be sure to check out Two Brothers' establishments—Two Brothers Tap House in Warrenville and Two Brothers Roundhouse in Aurora—located just 20 minutes apart. For the latest news, hours of operation, and tour information, visit their website at twobrothersbrewing.com.

BARREL AGED NORTHWIND

Two Brothers Barrel Aged Northwind starts with the brewery's beloved Northwind Imperial Stout and revs it up by aging it in bourbon barrels. And they're not just any bourbon barrels, they originally held Two Brothers' own Artisan Spirits Roundhouse Small Batch Bourbon! The brew spends 12 months in those barrels, developing a rich, slightly sweet warmth, before it's canned and delivered to you.

The Barrel Aged Northwind pours deep and dark, but not as viscous as you'd expect, and develops a nice dark tan head that dissipates fairly quickly, as we expect given the elevated alcohol level. On the nose, you get a sweet bourbon aroma, with a slightly musty wood note and smoke from the barrel. Big roasted elements backed by caramel malt come through, too.

This one delivers a perfect balance of bourbon and stout flavor, the barrel tastes enhancing and enriching the malt without overpowering it or disappearing

into the background. Big roasted notes you'd want from an imperial stout along with chocolate, vanilla, and caramel give way to barrel char and bracing bitterness in the finish.

This is an outstanding beer, perfectly balanced with a velvety mouthfeel and a nice finish that belies the 11% ABV; this is one you'll want to get extras of. Exclusively available at Two Brothers' locations and through the Rare Beer Club.

AGING & PAIRING NOTES:

Enjoy some now and keep some more for up to five years, pair it with smoked brisket or Texas pulled pork, and thank yourself for stocking up. This was the hit of one of our most recent tasting panels, and one we think you'll love.