

## No frills, bells or whistles!

There are breweries that you visit and you think 'these people are nice' so it is a great delight that, although there may be some new faces, a visit some three years later confirms that East London Brewery's niceness remains.



East London Brewery (ELB) is one of the older London Brewers that have sprung up over the last few years. Last time the London Tasting Panel visited, the brewery was struggling to keep up with demand despite having no sales people. Stuart, the co owner of the Brewery with his wife, Claire, put this down to producing reliable, quality beer. This continuing demand has led to them extending into the unit next door and increasing their staffing levels including Hannah, whose approach and welcome was delightful. However, she did refuse to have her photo taken so I'm afraid this lovely lady, who is a dedicated ambassador for ELB, will remain an enigma to many but her credentials are sound, including having

worked at CAMRA London's only National Pub of the Year, the Harp, in Covent Garden.

The Brewery now has a 10 barrel brew length with 6 fermenters, usually brewing five days a week. Most of the beer is cask, with 30% bottled and 4% keg. Their bottled beer range has grown steadily and the brewery supplies a number of restaurants and off licenses including Oddbins, M&S and a number of specialist stores. Most of the range is bottled in Cumbria but there are two that are still produced in house and are bottled conditioned, Orchid Mild and Quadrant. Their key keg range is also done in house as is their 20 litre bag in boxes.

The first beer that ELB produced was their Pale Ale (4%ABV). This was quickly added to, including Foundation Bitter (4.2%ABV); the dark ruby brown, Nightwatchman (4.5%) and one of the very few regularly brewed milds in London, Orchid, which has some vanilla added, making it a little different.

Hannah describes ELB's ethos as no frills; producing classic beer encompassing a whole range of styles from simplicity to complex. To quote Hannah 'We make great beer, we don't need bells and whistles!'. The London Tasting Panel thought they would to test out her words and so tried their seven regular beers. The panel was split over their favourite but the two that just fractionally came out on top were the rich flavoured Quadrant Stout (5.8% ABV) and the Pale, for its easy drinkability.



## Tasting notes

**Orchid Vanilla Mild 3.6% ABV:** Reminiscent of vanilla floats, with delicate vanilla on nose and flavour. Some fruity overtones coupled with a cocoa dark roast character that is also present in the finish. The gritty mouthfeel comes from the dark roast malt. The malt blend includes Maris Otter, Munich, Oats, and Amber and the hops are both British (Challenger and Brambling Cross). The beer is available in cask and bottle and one of the very few milds that is regularly brewed in London.

**Pale Ale 4.0% ABV:** An amber coloured best bitter with a flavour of spicy hops, bitter lemon, tropical fruits and a little biscuit that are there in the aftertaste, which is dry. The aroma is of hops and caramel. There are four hops used including from Slovenia: Pilgrim, Brewers Gold, Styrian Goldings and Bobek.

**Foundation Bitter 4.2% ABV:** The first beer produced by ELB, this is a well balanced brown best bitter with a fresh green fruity hop aroma that is in the flavour with some caramelised pineapple and malty toffee. Short bitter finish with a hint of marmalade. The beer used two New Zealand hops (Green Bullet and Pacific Gem), East Kent Goldings and Bobek.

**Nightwatchman 4.5% ABV:** Dark ruby brown complex best bitter. Peach, caramelised fruit, treacly toffee all balanced by bitter, nutty and roasted malt notes. Slightly dry aftertaste. The hops were Magnum, Bobek, WGV and Brewers Gold. The malts include Caramalt, Crystal and Black.

**Jamboree 4.8% ABV:** A golden coloured strong bitter. The aroma is of grassy and woody hops but the hops in the flavour are of spice coupled with a little kiwi and sweet biscuit. Long bitter dry finish with a hint of malt. The malts include some lager and wheat and the hops are Target, Northdown and Brambling Cross.

**Cowcatcher 4.8% ABV:** Described by ELB as an American Pale Ale, this fruity hoppy golden ale has a honey sweetness and a rich mouthfeel. The fruit was of mango with hints of passionfruit, which lingers in the finish with a building dry bitterness on drinking. The malts include Vienna, Munich and Cara Pils and three American hops (Columbus, Citra and Simcoe).

**Quadrant 5.8% ABV:** Devised through a collaboration brew with National Homebrew Competition champions, Graeme Coates and Tom Dobson, this Oatmeal Stout has a smooth, rich mouthfeel. The flavour is of liquorice, mocha and caramelised fruit and the aroma is of Garibaldi biscuits with coffee. A dry, slightly roasty bitter finish lingers. Besides oats, there is roast barley, crystal and chocolate malts and two British hops (Challenger & Fuggles).

For more information on the brewery, where to find their beers or to buy them online, visit: [www.eastlondonbrewing.com](http://www.eastlondonbrewing.com).

