

## A Hidden Secret in Kew

Most breweries publicise their existence but not this little Brewery. Walking along Sandy Coombe Road passing Kew Brewery without noticing it is not a difficult thing to do as there is no signage outside; it is only a look through the window that lets you know you really have arrived. But although the Brewery might be playing hide and seek, the flavours of many of their beers do not hide behind any bushel with lots of taste and aroma as a small group from London's Tasting Panel were to find out.

Kew is a 6 barrel plant in an old shop that is long and thin with most of the Brewing equipment at the rear but they have managed to squeeze in two fermenters and two conditioning tanks. Dave Scott set the Brewery up in 2015. James Sheepwash, who helped out later that year for a few weeks, bringing his expertise from Stag Brewery. Before starting the brewery, Dave sensibly got some experience at some other breweries including Weird Beard in Hanwell. Now Dave would like to find something bigger to cope with demand but, as always in London, price is an issue.

All Kew's beers are unfiltered, unpasteurised and unfinned making them suitable for vegetarians. The beers come in three formats, cask, keykeg and bottles, which are bottled conditioned (and hand bottled). After conditioning, the cask beer is kept for seven days before it is released and the bottles, ten days. Like most smaller breweries, the yeast used is mostly dried. But small doesn't mean being parsimonious with the ingredients; the pale malt is always Maris Otter although it is generally more expensive than other pale malts. 'I still think it gives me better results' said Dave. Similarly, with an eye on flavour, whole hops are used in the copper but pellets for the dry hopping. 'I stick to British hops and in particular, like to try the newer British hops'.

Dave's experimentation with new British hops comes to the fore with Pagoda, the best seller. There are currently seven different varieties, each with a different British hop blends but there are no secrecy on the codes - read and enjoy the labours of a British Brewer supporting British hops!



- Pagoda 1 - Fusion : a blend of experimental hops
- Pagoda 2 - UK Cascade
- Pagoda 3- Jester
- Pagoda 4- Instone a wild hop
- Pagoda 5- Olicana and UK Cascade
- Pagoda 6- Pilot and Pioneer
- Pagoda 7- Minstrel and CF132 (experimental hop)

The beers are delivered locally by Dave, which in itself is a story as Dave didn't learn to drive until he set up the brewery. His outlets, not surprisingly, are within a few miles of the brewery and include the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew! You can find a list of his outlets on the website: [www.kewbrewery.co.uk](http://www.kewbrewery.co.uk).

Some beer goes through a wholesaler and his beers are featured on some bottled beer websites including Craft Metropolis and Ales by Mail so if you can't find them in your local, you can buy them online.

In addition to Pagoda, Kew has a number of regular beers, many with an unusual twist. The current range includes Botanic (with juniper), Kew Green (& Black), with cacao nibs; Richmond Rye, Sandycombe Gold (named after a local street), Petersham Porter, Nightshade (a porter with chillis) and Sheep in Wolf's Clothing (a saison style beer). The following are the London Tasting Panel's tasting notes on the beers.

## Tasting Notes

### Botanic - 3.8%

Pale brown beer with added juniper. There are hints of chocolate, grapefruit and unripe apricots in aroma and flavour when a little toffee provides some sweetness. Peppery dry bitter finish.

Malts: Pale, Crystal, Chocolate; hops: UK Cascade, Challenger. First Gold

### Kew Green (& Black) - 3.9%

Smooth chocolate milk stout (lactose added) with chocolate notes throughout. There is a slight sour character on the nose and a little cherry in the sweet flavour leading to a bitterish coffee finish. The beer contains four malts, oats and wheat alongside cocoa nibs.



### Pagoda No.5 - 4.2%

One in series of amber fruity beers with a fixed malt blend but a varying hop recipe. This one used Olicana and UK Cascade. The malts are Pale, Caragold, Caramalt and English Munich.

Peppery hops on taste and aftertaste. The hoppiness is balanced by sweet digestive biscuits and fruit (tropical and citrus), which are also in the aroma. The bitterness grows on drinking with a little dryness.

### Petersham Porter - 4.3%

An easy drinking black porter with a chocolate and fruity aroma. The taste is of black treacle, coffee, and prunes with a little smokiness. Finish is dry and roasty.

Malts: Pale, Crystal, Brown, Chocolate, Black; hops: Phoenix, Northdown, First Gold.

### Richmond Rye - 4.4%

Dark gold beer with typical tart rye aroma. The tart fruity rye character is present in the flavour with earthy hops, orange and a honey sweetness. Dry spicy hoppy finish.

Malts: Pale, Caragold, Crystal Rye, Pale Rye; hops: Admiral, Archer. Boadicea

### Sandycombe Gold - 4.4%

Smooth crisp golden ale with sweet biscuit and hints of cassis. The aftertaste starts sweetish but then a lingering dryness develops.

Malts: Pale, Caragold; hops: Northdown, Target, Brambling Cross

### Nightshade - 5%

A chilli porter with cacao nibs added to provide a smooth balance. Earthy hops, chocolate and fruit on the palate. The chilli heat builds on drinking developing a more mocha character with orange and a hint of black treacle. The finish is of dry roasted chocolate and a lingering heat.

Malts: Pale, Crystal, Brown, Chocolate, Black; hops: Phoenix, Northdown, First Gold



### Fruitbat - 5.5%

A one off fruit beer. Strawberry on the nose with blackcurrant and orange in the flavour with some honey and earthy hops. A dry spicy finish with a little bitterness.

Hops: Brambling Cross, Endeavour, Minstrel and UK Bullion.

### Sheep in Wolf's Clothing - 6.8%

Creamy, rich, complex dark golden Saison style beer with bubblegum and sweet malt in the aroma and flavour. The flavour has a little tangerine which is also present in the dry peppery finish.

Malts: Pale, Caragold, Munich. Wheat, Torried Wheat; hops: UK Chinook, Fusion and Jester.