

Canopy, a family affair

The only thing that is hiding its light under a bushel with Canopy Brewery is the awning outside!

This small brewery reflects all that is good about brewing in London: enthusiasm, a commitment to quality and not taking yourself too seriously for there is nothing pompous about Canopy.

The London Tasting Panel spent an afternoon talking to Estelle, who founded the brewery with her husband, Matthew, in 2014. Estelle was previously an Event Manager for a design agency and Matthew's background was IT. Both were home brewers and the original intention was that Estelle would brew and Matthew would continue to work but that quickly changed. Within a year of setting up they brought in a brewer, Charles, who is ex London Beer Factory and started to enlarge the brewery from the original 4 barrel plant.

Initially, Estelle and Matthew reinvested everything into the new kit. When they decided there was a market, they upgraded. These days, the brew length is three times as large with seven fermenting/storage vessels and a small canning line. Estelle commented 'We started with a manual bottling line but then went into cans. Unfortunately, we decided that we just couldn't keep both a can and bottle range'. The designs on the cans are particularly distinctive. Three artists were commissioned to come up with a design based on the game, 'Consequences' so each can has one third of each design. Cans count for 30% of their volume with 60% keg and 10% cask.



Their best selling cask beer was Brockwell IPA but Estelle explained 'We had to stop brewing it as a cask beer as we couldn't get the price we needed to make a profit on it'.

Unfortunately, not the first time a brewer has commented on the trade price for cask beer.

At the moment, Canopy's core range is Sunray Pale Ale, Champion Kolsch and Snapper IPA plus they do two specials a month, which at the time of the visit included Lloper Everyday Oyster Stout (using real oysters) and the nutty, full bodied Amaretti

Imperial Stout. They had also just finished Leap!, a green hop pale ale using hops from Brixton Hop Growers, which are grown locally. This is the third year they have worked with the Growers to produce 10 barrels of a green hop beer (for beer descriptions see the London regional website: www.london.camra.org.uk). All the beer uses use dried yeast, normally either USA 05 or Nottingham (for the Kolsch) and whole hops in the boil.

Most of the beer is delivered directly, mostly in south London and their Tap Room provides a regular outlet. To keep everything on the go, there are four people in the brewery, a part time driver and bar staff for the Tap Room. Managing the brewery, Tap Room plus three children, Estelle and Mathew certainly have their hands full!

Their Tap Room is open five days a week: Wednesday-Friday 5-11pm; Saturday 12-11pm; Sunday 12-10pm. Children are welcome and dogs are allowed in the outside area (where the awning is).

Tasting Notes

Leap Green Hop 3.8%

Pale ale, produced once a year with green hops from Brixton Hop Farmers; mainly Primadonna a with a little Centennial and Cascade. Refreshing, easy drinking beer with a little malty sweetness some light fruit hoppiness. There is a developing dry spiciness. Cans

Sunray 4.2%

Dark gold beer with dominant grapefruit and some tropical notes overlaid with some floral hops and a sweet biscuit. There is a long bitter finish. The aroma is fruity. Centennial, Chinnock hops. Cask, keg and cans.

Champion Kolsch 4.5%

Conditioned for 5-6 weeks, this is Canopy's take on the Cologne beer. Malty sweet nose. Flavour starts lemony and sweet, becoming more bitter before fading in the short dry finish with biscuit and spicy hoppy notes. Celeia, Bobeck and Perle hops; Vienna malt.

Snapper 4.8%

Described as an East Coast IPA, this is a refreshing, summer style yellow beer with a smooth mouthfeel. Mango, lemon, green pine notes lead to a dry bitterish aftertaste with hints of tobacco/smokiness. Mosaic, Simcoe and Amarillo hops; Golden Promise malt and oats; cask, keg and cans.



Hoots and Shoots Sloe Porter 5%

Black ruby porter brewed with sloes. The aroma is of fruit and roast with the roast notes present in the flavour coming across as black treacle and dark chocolate. A tart, fruity character balances the sweetness. Aftertaste is dry and roasty. Maris Otter, Carafa, Chocolate, Black malts and flaked wheat; East Kent Goldings and Cluster hops.

Llopper Everyday Oyster Stout 5%

Made with The Oystermen, using 200 Essex oysters in every batch. Smoky, dry nose with hints of coffee. Taste is of liquorice, cocoa and damsons, which fade slightly in the lingering dry roasty finish.

Belgian Red Ale with sour cherries 5.5%

An autumn special using Belgian yeast and cherry puree. Strong cherry aroma and flavour with a slightly tart flavour throughout. Easy drinking, low bitterness and dryish.

Brockwell IPA 5.6%

This is Canopy's best seller. Rich golden ale with a creamy mouthfeel and sweet caramel, strong citrus and piney hops, which become more earthy in the bitter finish with digestive biscuits. Aroma is of fruit, hops and malt. Citra and Cascade hops. Keg and cans.

Three Streets 7.5%

Dark brown, smooth strong old ale in the Scotch Ale in style, with sweet caramel and spicy Christmas pudding nose. Complex flavours of raisins, plums and dark chocolate. Warming, sweet, spicy finish. Brewed once a year.

Vienna, Special B, Cara Dark, Munich, Chocolate and Oats; Warrior, East Kent Golding hops.

Amaretti Imperial Stout 9%

Produced for Christmas, the aroma is boozy and a combination of vanilla, raisin and nuts. It's a well balanced, rich beer; the sweet black toffee complemented by the black cherry fruit. The long, dark fruity finish is sweet and satisfying.

Maris Otter, Cara, Munich, Cara, Carafa 3, Chocolate, Oats; Warrior hops

