

Uncapping a taste of Luxembourg

Written by CAROL POMEDAY
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<http://www.ozaukeepress.com/images/080813/beerSM.png>

National beer of European country to make American debut at festival in Belgium

“Prost.”

There will be lots of toasts and the clinking of bottles of Bofferding, a handcrafted beer from Luxembourg, this weekend in Belgium.

Bofferding is the featured beer for Luxembourg Heritage Weekend events, including Luxembourg Fest of America on Saturday and Sunday. It will help wash down the hundreds of pounds of mustreipen expected to be consumed.

Kevin Wester, director of development for the Luxembourg American Cultural Center, said he’s long enjoyed the beer brewed by Brasserie Nationale while in Luxembourg.

“Georges Lentz (chief executive officer of Brasserie and a member of the Luxembourg American Cultural Society) asked, ‘Why don’t you have Bofferding at Luxembourg Fest?’ I told him, ‘Because we can’t get it,’ and he sent it,” Wester said.

Lentz sent 1,250 bottles of Bofferding that will be served for the first time in Wisconsin Thursday, Aug. 8, at the annual dinner meeting of the Luxembourg American Cultural Society at the Belgium House restaurant.

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Last week, Wester introduced Village of Belgium President Richard Howells and Chamber of Commerce members Laura Klingelhoets and Jay Lauer to the beverage to promote the beer.

All gave the light pilsner two thumbs up.

Wester is working with Cafe Benelux and Market in Milwaukee's Third Ward to import Bofferding and distribute it to select restaurants and markets in Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota and Iowa, which have high concentrations of Luxembourg descendants.

During Luxembourg Fest, Bofferding will be sold for \$4 at the Community Park shelter to raise money for Belgium American Legion Post 412 which will staff it on Saturday and the Belgium Fire Department on Sunday. Miller beers on tap will also be available.

Bofferding beer has an expiration date on each bottle because it is unpasteurized and contains no preservatives.

Brasserie currently sells its beer under two brand names — Bofferding and Battin. In addition to the pilsner, Bofferding has a lager and seasonal Christmas and spring beers. Battin has pilsner, lager and fruit beers.

Brasserie Nationale, based in Bascharage, is the largest brewery in Luxembourg and the only one still owned and operated by Luxembourgers.

"The rest are Belgium breweries," Wester said.

Brasserie Bofferding dates back to 1764 to the Brasserie Funck-Bricher brewery in the Gundersdorf in Luxembourg City. Brasserie Nationale was formed in 1975 when Brasserie Funck-Bricher was merged with Brasserie Bofferding, which was founded in 1842 by Jean-Baptiste Bofferding in Bascharage.

After the merger, the operations were consolidated at Bascharage. In 2008, Brasserie Nationale bought Brasserie Battin and moved those beer operations to Bascharage.

Bofferding is currently exported to Belgium, France and China, so Wester is confident it will soon be available in local restaurants and markets.

Until then, it's only available as long as the 1,210 bottles last.

"So enjoy a bottle or two or three at the Fest," Wester said. "Prost."

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Image Information: holding bottles of Bofferding, the featured beer at Luxembourg Fest of America this weekend, were (from left) Kevin Wester, director of development for the Luxembourg American Cultural Center, Chamber of Commerce members Laura Klingelhoets and Jay Lauer and Belgium Village President Rich Howells. Bofferding is brewed by Brasserie Nationale, the only brewery still owned and operated by Luxembourgers in the Grand Duchy.

Photo by Sam Arendt