



La Feuillée Micro Brewery

Jon Now this officially is a micro brewery or a craft brewery.

Rod Yup

Jon But it looks quite a big organisation

Rod We do...last year we brewed about 700 hectolitres, so 700 hecto...a hectolitre is hundred litres so 700 times a hundred

Jon That's about what?

Rod I'll give you an idea, Coreff in Carhaix - everyone knows Coreff - they would be about twenty thousand hectolitres. Tri Martolod in Concarneau would be about four or five thousand hectolitres, Brit which is another big one is thirty thousand - so it gives you an idea of where we are. We're quite small but there are breweries that do 200 hectolitres.

Jon So what's the advantage of being small?

Rod Well... uh, I'm not sure there are advantages as such in that sense. It's just.... it's like anything, if you're huge the thing about any product is distribution and so the problem here in France is there aren't any pubs as we know pubs and so you can't have kegs down at this pub here and this pub here and so you have to be able to get your beer out, and so, it, it, the distribution is...so the big guys are all in the supermarkets. The Coreff and the Brit and the Lancelot and of course the bad beers like Kronenbourg aren't real beers are they? So as you grow you have to distribute so, also there's a correlation between how much you want to grow and how big you want to get and do you want to become this huge machine that you've got to feed or do you want to stay the same. I don't know about the advantages of being small but it means you're very flexible. We brew special brews for.... - we have a customer in Spain who has a special brew two or three times a year. A bar in Nantes. We've got all sorts of Caves at Lyon, Toulouse, Paris...and sometimes they have a special...so we can just do..... This is what's called a five-barrel system, you know the whole beer system is British based... the Germans or the Belgians... I don't want to say...but, you know in terms of sizes and this is a five-barrel system - so a barrel is 167 litres and so we brew approximately a thousand litre brew a time.

Jon So in front of us then we can see the very large metal vat.

Rod That's the Inox, stainless steel - and that's two brews in there - that's 2,200 litres.

Jon Two separate brews in the same vat.

Rod We'll put two brews in that, yeah. So that's a much more modern system. The ones that, that are wooden - the wood is on the outside of course it's all inox on the inside apart from the copper which is the, the boiler. And so they're a thousand litres and this is two thousand litres. This is the.... that's the kind of old style system the thousand litre so the fermentation isn't sealed, it's open in a sense and so not pressurised. This is a much more modern system where you, you do your two brews you put it in with the yeast, you shut it and it goes under its own pressure, because obviously the, the fermentation produces

CO2 that produces the pressure and so the advantage of that is that you don't have to do a secondary fermentation for the gas in the bottle. It saturates itself, whereas in the old classic – as the home-brewers know – you do your brew and then you leave it rest for a while and then you bottle it or put it in kegs with a little bit of sugar for the secondary fermentation for the gas so when you open the bottle it's not flat. So in modern days they don't do that – they just saturate it with CO2.

Jon So the proof is in the tasting then Rod? Is there any chance of us tasting one of the brews that you've been making today?

Rod Sure this is...

Jon It's very clear.

Rod This is Melhus (?) it's ombré

Jon Very tasty. OK, now, right we're in central Brittany, so where would this be distributed?

Rod Here? Let's think, there's many places. We have it on kegs in various bars. In bottles in places I think Gamme Vert – shops per se. It's more bars, crêperies, organic shops because we do four organic beers.

Jon Bio co-ops for example?

Rod Yeah.

Jon The one in Carhaix.

Rod Bio co-op in Carhaix. Brest. The beer Caves in Rosporden or Concarneau. When the season starts which is sort of after Easter, we find it really difficult to keep up with demand, because there are a lot of Fest Noz's – huge amount of demand in that sense plus all the bottle sales. We are... we don't want to be dictated to by the big Intermarchés and LeClercs of the world that you have to do that – and if it's sitting on the shelf you have to take it back and yeah all that sort of very sort of draconian sort of.. and plus there's slash the price down to almost so you're making a couple of centimes a bottle.

Jon So it's not worth it.

Rod It's not worth it.

