

The Belgian Bar – Authentic Belgian Pub Inside South Gate

Article by Phil Atkinson



Add: 69 Shun Cheng East Alley (inside the South Gate facing the wall on the east side)
西安顺城南路中段69号 (南门里东侧150米处)



Nightlife

On 23rd December 2010 when most of us were thinking of Christmas and the coming NYE celebrations, a new pub quietly opened on the east side of Shun Cheng Jie inside the South Gate. It has already built up a loyal following of both expats and Chinese customers.

Being Xian's only Belgian Bar it is only appropriate that they stock a wide range of Belgian beers and in this the bar does not disappoint with 20 varieties of Belgian beer in stock and plans to bring in more. Belgian beers include the well known ones such as Stella Artois, Hoegaarden, Leffe, and Lindemans; as well as a full range of Trappist beers such as Achel, Chimay, Orval, Rochefort and Westmalle. Belgian beers such as Duvel, Delirium Tremens and Tripel Karmeliet also feature. Each beer is served in its own unique glass. There are also 10 local and international beers ranging from Tsingtao through to Paulaner. Draught beer will be available mid-spring and the kitchen will be opening soon.

In terms of feel and décor, the bar

is an authentic Belgian "brown bar" with dark wooden panelling, a marble bar bench top, dark wooden bar stools and decorations imported from Belgium. There are plenty of comfy couches which are very popular and make for a relaxing evening. Music is often a sore point for bar-goers in Xian, with most bars playing dubious music far too loud. At The Belgian, the music is played at a reasonable volume that you can easily converse over.

The owner of the bar is Bart Janowski, born in Poland and raised by the world, having lived in countries as diverse as Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. Although he now calls Xian home, his other home is Melbourne, Australia. "The inspiring thing about Melbourne is that it has a very European bar culture, with many small and unique bars each with a distinct personality. I think that kind of creativity is lacking a bit in Xian so I decided to do something that would be distinctly different but also appropriate. Why a Belgian bar? Its beer is the best in the world."

Another interesting feature of the bar is their Belgian hot chocolate. Available in 3 flavours: milk, dark and white and made with imported Belgian Callebaut chocolate, real chocolate – not powder. Bart explains, "My wife Vida has trained as a chocolatier and one of the things they also learn is chocolate drinks. Hot chocolate is very popular in Belgium and it's not made from chocolate powder!" In terms of flavour, imagine taking your best imported chocolate such as Toblerone, Ritter Sport or Ferrero Rocher and melting it down into a hot, thick and delicious drink.

How would we best describe The Belgian Bar? It's undeniably a pub. It's your local pub back home. It's comfortable, relaxing, and you don't have to scream over invasive music and dice games. One thing is certain, we'll be back!

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