



Romancing the Foam No. 99



For their 25th anniversary, New Belgium Brewing collaborated with five other leading craft brewers to brew 5 variations on New Belgium's signature Fat Tire Amber Ale. They released the collaborative 12-pack in June 2016. It includes 2 bottles developed by each of the collaborators plus two bottles brewed to the original Fat Tire recipe.

The collaborating brewers include Portland, Maine's Allagash Brewing Company; Boulder, Colorado's Avery Brewing Company; Portland, Oregon's Hopworks Urban Brewery; Paso Robles, California's Firestone Walker Brewing Company; and Cincinnati, Ohio's Rhinegeist Brewery. Each brewery does its own take on Fat Tire, keeping close to the original

grain bill but by changing the yeast and hops, they brew very different beers. The result is a seminar in beer with five very drinkable lessons in how small changes can make big differences in beer.

Fat Tire Amber is the base beer for this collaborative 12-pack and is New Belgium's signature beer. It pays homage to the co-founder's bike trip through Europe that ignited the desire to brew professionally. Fat Tire with 5.2% alcohol by volume, 22 International Bittering Units and 160 calories is an easy beer to drink. Fat Tire decants brilliant medium amber with a 2" moderately persistent, lacy off-white foam stand. Toasty biscuit aromas rise from the glass seasoned with light spices and fruit. Biscuit comes forward on the tongue lightly sweetened with caramel and seasoned with spicy herbal hops. A mild earthy hop bitterness marks the finish, introducing a pleasant lingering biscuit flavor. This well balanced and refreshing beer has a medium body and carbonation. I rate Fat Tire 80 out of 100 (good).





New Belgium Brewing collaborated with Portland Maine's Allagash Brewing to make Fat Tire and Friends Fat Funk Ale (5.6% alcohol by volume). They started with a Belgian house yeast from the West Flanders, Belgium brewer De Dolle and then added *Brettanomyces Allagagensis* during bottle conditioning for added funk. The beer pours hazy copper amber as continual streams of bubbles rapidly rising from the bottom of the glass refresh a 3" persistent white foam cap. Aromas wafting from the glass include hints of wet horse blanket and over ripe fruit, citrus, pear, pepper, light grains and hops. It has a lemony tart palate with biscuit, light fruit, pear, spices and herbs, lightly sweet malts, and a mild to moderate finishing bitterness. The bitterness, tartness, light funk and mild sweetness all balance. Fat Funk ale has an exquisite luscious texture with a medium body and mild creaminess that really makes this beer. I rate Fat Funk ale 85.

New Belgium Brewing joined with California's Firestone Walker to brew Fat Tire and Friends Fat Hoppy Ale (6% alcohol by volume). The two brewers took the basic Fat Tire Amber recipe, gave it a healthy dose of assertive American hops and then fermented it with lager yeast. Fat Hoppy Ale pours brilliant amber gold (SRM 9) under a lacy 1/2" off white foam cap continually refreshed by steams of bubbles rising from the bottom of the glass. Aromas are tropical fruit, citrus spice and faint bread crumb with a touch of resin. Medium high to high hop tropical fruit flavors lead the palate seasoned by medium hop bitterness. Malt flavors are medium low. Fat Hoppy Ale has a clean fermentation character with no discernible yeast flavors. The body is medium light and the carbonation is medium high. This is a smooth, well balanced, easy to drink beer. I rate Fat Hoppy Ale 90.





New Belgium collaborated with Cincinnati Ohio's Rhinegeist Brewery to brew Fat Tire and Friends Fat Pale Ale (6% alcohol by volume). With this beer New Belgium and Rhinegeist transform Fat Tire Amber into a Belgian Pale Ale. The beer pours bright to brilliant amber under persistent and lacy 1" light cream foam cap. Continuous streams of bubbles rise from the bottom of the glass moderately fast. The aromas include a trace of dank, tropical fruit, citrus, orange, slightly bruised fruit and slightly over ripe fruit. The palate starts with tropical fruit, melon and pear with some background tartness emerging in the finish. Mild malt sweetness balances the tart. This beer has an interesting palate with fruit flavors from the yeast blending with fruit flavors from the hops. Fat Pale Ale has a medium full body and very soft medium to medium high carbonation. Everything balances nicely with nothing out of

place resulting in a a full flavored, interesting, easy to drink beer. I rate this beer 85.

New Belgium Brewing joined forces with Portland Oregon's Hopworks Urban Brewery to create Fat Tire and Friends Fat Sour Apple Ale. They brewed this beer with the addition of Lactobacillus and apple juice to the Fat Tire recipe. Fat Tire and Friends Fat Sour Apple Ale pours brilliant copper gold with rapidly rising bubbles under an off white 2" persistent rocky and lacy foam cap. Apple and lemon aromas predominate supported by a variety of fruit. It has a big Granny Smith sour apple palate followed by traces of stone fruit and a light background malt and a mild bitter finish. Mild malty sweetness combined with the apple evokes an apple turnover. It has a light spritzy almost wine like texture and is a very refreshing drink. I rate Fat Tire and Friends Sour Apple Ale 83.

New Belgium Brewing collaborated with Boulder Colorado's Avery Brewing to create Fat Tire and





Friends Fat Wild Ale (6.2% alcohol by volume). Using New Belgium's Fat Tire as a base, they brewed this with *Brettanomyces Bruxellensis Drie*, a wild yeast strain that produces a slight tartness and big tropical fruit flavors and aromas. The very pretty beer pours a brilliant copper to cherry amber (SRM 17) with moderately fast rising bubbles under a 1" cream colored foam cap that is moderately persistent. The aromas rising from the glass include tropical fruit, citrus, lemon, mild funk, bruised and over ripe fruit. The palate is fruity and lightly tart leading to a slightly astringent finish quickly followed by a lingering juicy hop bitterness. A tropical fruit cocktail of flavors fills the mouth seasoned by a restrained tartness and funk with a moderate hop bitterness. Nothing is overbearing or overstated with an interesting and very refreshing four way balance between malt, tart, funk and bitter. Fat Wild Ale captures the creamy rich *Brettanomyces* texture. I rate Fat Wild Ale 86.

The Fat Tire and Friends Collaborative 12-Pack is an incredible lesson in what different yeasts do to the same basic grain bill. It is an interesting idea and can teach a lot to anyone interested in beer, especially servers, distributors, retailers and home brewers. If you see a Fat Tire and Friends 12-Pack buy one or two. I bought mine at Liquor Boy a couple of weeks ago and they still had a few left.