MAIN ROOM

Seven generations

The brewery has been in the hands of the Bosteels family for over 200 years and seven generations. Their forefather, Evarist Bosteels, established the brewery in 1791. After that came Jozef, who had three sons: Frans - for thirteen years the Mayor of Buggenhout - Martinand Lodewijk, of whom the first two learnt the brewer's trade. Leon Bosteels, Martin's son, later took over the helm, after which in 1938 Antoine Bosteels carried on the brewing dynasty as Leon's son.

During his 50-year reign he built the brewery up with Bosteels Pils, which he also sold for the first time outside the Dendermonde are in Ghent, Antwerp and Brussels. The grandfather and namesake of our host he was for his part elected Mayor of Buggenhout three times. The brewery is currently under the management of Antoine (7th generation)

BREWING

KETTLE ROOM

The actual brewing begins in the brewhouse where the fermentable sugars from the malted grain particles together with proteins, minerals, amino acids, etc are dissolved in the warm brew-water in a traditional copper kettle.

When the conversion of the sugars is complete, the brewer pumps the sugar solution or wort to the mash tun with the object of removing husks and other undisolved components.

From the mash tun a clear liquid then runs off to the wort kettle. In order to sterilise the liquid, the wort is then heated to boiling point. What remains in the mash tun is known as trub.

THE HETING ROOM

Adding the hops gives us the typical bitterness and the pleasant hoppy aroma. After around 90 minutes boiling the wort is ready for cooling and pitching (addition of the yeast). We transfer the hot sugar solution to the wort cooler via the whirlpool. The whirlpool removes the deposited proteins. We then cool the wort to 20 °C (68 °F) for top-fermented beers and 12 °C (54 °F) for bottom-fermented ones. After that we aerate it and add fresh yeast to start the fermentation going.

FERMENTATION AND CONDITIONING

Each of Bosteels beers has its own character and is fermented in cylindroconical tanks at a temperature of between 23 and 27 °C (73-81 °F). Fermentation lasts for approximately 5 to 6 days depending on the quantity of fermentable sugar. When the beer has fermented out, conditioning or maturing begins. Newly fermented beers are still immature and do not yet have their full flavor and aroma. It does them good to rest for a while at the lowest possible temperature  
(-3 °C / 27 °F). For top-fermented beers this goes on for 4 weeks.

BOTTLING

After thorough inspection, the washed and rinsed sterile bottles are ready to begin a new life. The filling rate is 20,000 bottles an hour. Just a crown cork and a label with the best before date and the beer is ready for you to sample it.

REFERMENTATION – THE WARM ROOM

Just before bottling Tripel Karmeliet, sugar and fresh yeast are added. After this, the filled bottles are stored for 2 to 3 weeks in the refermentation room at a constant temperature of 22 °C (72 °F). The yeast will convert the sugar present into carbon dioxide gas to give the beer its sparkling saturation. The yeast present will attach itself to the bottom of the bottle.