



Bottling the Trappist way

Recently, as final piece on a building program, the new bottling plant and adjoining sales offices were put into use by the Brothers Trappists of Westmalle. The result is astonishing : 'a state of the art' unit with the most modern bottling equipment (45.000 bottles per hour) on the market available, situated in a building specially designed for this purpose.

These are the words of Brother Benedikt who is gifted architecturally himself : 'We did not want any new bottling plant whatsoever. We opted for a sound design by a noted architect, Paul Van Aerschot, highlighting build and colour and also integration in the entire abbey premises. Furthermore we wanted to improve considerably the working conditions of our co-workers. As our production is limited, we wish, so as to speak ,to invest 'to the inside' and this way cultivate the inner self.'

When visiting the building, the best is through the gangway above (see picture), one can notice the ample incidence of light as well as the mufflers. When taking photographs, the bottling plant was not working, though I could well imagine how nice it would be to work here,

having maximum outdoors light and a minimum of noise nuisance.

Jan Adriaensen, production manager says : ' the bottling equipment is meant for 33 cl-bottles, but is completely adaptable to 25cl.

The 75 cl-bottles are outplaced for the time being, we examine this year after year

Completely new and unique in our bottling plant is the automatic check on strange and lacking bottles in the returning crates, so that we can find out which beer traders are having problems.'

Also the beer traders will be delighted with this new investment as on the logistic level it will be much easier to collect the beer in demand. The warehouse is subterranean so as not to destroy the scenery.

The new offices and meeting hall before the bottling plant overlook the grand scenery in front of the abbey, leading to the 'Antwerpse Steenweg'. (Antwerp Road).

The little tower has been preserved, though has no function yet. Perhaps it could be a pull-in for Beer Passion Magazine ?

(BV)



picture : Brother Benedikt and Jan Adriaensen are proud of their accomplishment.