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Monday, Five Thirty: Drinking Killepitsch in Dusseldorf

Where: **Dusseldorf, Germany**

February 24, 2014 at 12:02 PM | by **wakeandwander**



In celebration of the most needed happy hour of the week, we're launching a new column called **"Monday, Five Thirty"** that will take a look at different vices from around the world, specifically boozes and beers unique to a destination. Last week, it was **Vana Tallinn in Estonia**, and now, we head to Germany for a taste of the little-known Killepitsch.

Unless you are visiting **Frankfurt, the German city that doesn't drink beer**, you will definitely be throwing back pints and liters with regularity

while in Deutschland. Such is the case in **Dusseldorf**, famous for **its amber-colored Altbier** and its rivalry with nearby Kolsch-producing Cologne. But the small city on the Rhine has a syrupy dark side, one that came about during an air raid in World War II.

According to **the official story**, while discussing whether or not they would live through the war, two German soldiers were hiding in a Dusseldorf air-raid shelter when they ran out of booze. One made a pledge that he would make the other a special "lip-smacker" if they made it out alive, and that he would call it **"Killepitsch,"** which roughly translates to "toss it back." Both survived and the man kept his word, opening a small shop and introducing the local spirit in the 1950s.

Made with over 90 herbs, fruits, and spices, this digestif is comparable in both taste and appearance to another German product, Jagermeister (which, for comparison's sake, is made with about 50 herbs and spices). But while Jager (35% abv) is associated with the youth here in the States and most known for inducing embarrassing antics, we found Killepitsch (42% abv) to be its big brother in a sense, a little more refined and a little more sophisticated in its taste and creation.

Of course, at 42% ABV, you can still have quite a night if you base it around Killepitsch. When in Dusseldorf, you can visit the original Killepitsch bar, **Et Kabüffke**, where you can go inside for a drink (they also have beer and wine), or you can **order a shot at the walk-up window** as a quick pick me up (seriously). It's not totally touristy -- the locals do it, too -- so don't be shy.



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