

Health charity hits at brewery's 12% beer

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Health campaigners have criticised a Scottish brewery for launching what it claims is the UK's strongest beer, at 12 per cent alcohol by volume.

BrewDog, the Aberdeenshire microbrewery, says its new beer, called Tokyo, is inspired by a 1980s arcade game played in Japan. Described as "intergalactic fantastic oak-aged stout", Tokyo is brewed with specialist malts, jasmine and cranberries before ageing on toasted French oak chips.

But Jack Law, chief executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland, a charity promoting responsible drinking, said he was disappointed that such a strong drink was being produced when health and social problems relating to alcohol were increasing.

"What justification can there possibly be to bring an extra strong beer on to the market? Super-strength drinks are often favoured by young people and problem drinkers – is this really who the brewery wants to target?"

A 330ml bottle of beer would normally have about 1.5 units, but Tokyo has about four units – the recommended daily limit for a man and more than the limit for a woman, Mr Law said.

James Watt, managing director of BrewDog, is philosophical in the face of such objections.

"Everything in moderation, including moderation itself. What logically follows is that you must, from time to time, have excess – this beer is for those times."

Retailing at £4 (\$7.9), Tokyo costs £1 a unit of alcohol, compared with 3.8 units for £1 with conventional beers, Mr Watt says.

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