

Whitewater Valley Wine Society

Tasting Report: January 2015

Presented by Rebecca Dixon, Reby Taylor Wines

The Emilia Romagna wines of Italy

Report by Barbara Jones

Rebecca is clearly a vibrant woman who is passionate about wine! Her love of wine began when she was in her mid-twenties and, as she admits herself, she was soon attending wine courses and tastings in a quest to become a true 'wine nerd'! Rebecca's career has seen her working in hospitality, with extensive travel in France, Spain and Italy, where she immersed herself in the food and wine culture. She's also worked as a wine advisor for an independent wine merchant and as a sommelier at the nearby Four Seasons Hotel in Hampshire. Her current project is her most exciting yet – and that was the focus for our tasting this month. For the last four years, she's been making her own wine in an organic winery in the hills of the Emilia Romagna region of Italy. Starting as a volunteer, Rebecca has progressed to assistant winemaker and proud producer of her own wine label. In parallel with this venture, Rebecca has travelled to Australia, where she has worked with the wonderful Mitchell Winery in Clare Valley. She's also worked in New Zealand at the well-known Saint Clair winery. Since returning to England, Rebecca has completed her Advanced Level Wine and Spirits Exam, for which she was recently been awarded the Patrick Sandman Scholarship for achievement by the Vintner's Company – she says this is a great surprise and a tremendous honour! She is also delighted to have become an Associate Judge for International Wine Challenge.

The tasting started with the unusual grape Pignoletto, [indigenous to the region of Italy centred on Bologna and Modena] – expressed three ways - the first in fizz form – **Gradizzolo, Ber Sot, Vino Frizzante 2013** [12%, E8]. This was an easy drinking wine with a subtle nose that was crisp and lively on the palate. Then in still form – **Gradizzolo, Ber Sot 1933, Vintage 2013** [13%, E12] – it again had a subtle nose but this time with a hint of green apples and lime both on the nose and in the mouth. The final version of Pignoletto, similar to Grechetto de Todi from Umbria **Erioli 'Badianum' Colli Bolognesi Classico Pignoletto DOCG, 2010** [14%, E15-17] was more golden in colour with a hint of honey on the nose from time in oak barrels. Once again the flavour of apples and limes was subtle but the wine was well balanced masking the high alcohol content. None of these wines is currently available to buy in the UK, hence the prices being quoted in Euros; wines priced in GBP are available from Vini Italiani, South Kensington – www.italianwines.com

Our first red wine of the evening was a fizz – **Tenuta Pederzana – ‘Il Grasperossa’ Lambrusco [NV]** [12%, £15.00] made from the grape Lambrusco Grasperossa. This was deep red in colour and lively in the mouth; medium dry on the palate with a good tannic structure; served slightly chilled at around 12/13C it would be a good accompaniment to an Italian meat platter. The next three wines were red and all medium bodied masking high alcohol content. For the first we returned to **Gradizzolo – Naigarten, 2012** [15%, E10]. The opaque deep black cherry red wine made from the grape Negrettino, had hints of prunes and jam on the nose. It was soft, fruity and approachable, well balanced with good structure. It is for drinking now and does not age well. The next red, from close to the east coast was a **Leone Conti, Arcolao, 2011** [15.5%, £22.00] made from the grape Centesimino. Another dark black cherry coloured wine this had an unusual floral nose and seemed remarkably light and approachable on the palate but would benefit from being drunk with regional dishes to appreciate fully. The reds ended with a **Conde, Sangiovese di Romagna Reserva, 2008** [14%, £25.00] barrelled in a mixture of old and new oak and made from 34 year old vines with wild yeast. This densely coloured wine was full of red berry fruits on the palate and had smooth, light tannins – ‘the best of the best’! The evening ended with a sweet treat - **Tregenda Riserva, Vendemmia Tardiva Di Albana DOCG [NV]** [10.5%, £33.00/50cl]. This had a definite gold colour with marmalade flavours predominating; a delightful way to end a most interesting tasting presented with illuminating video illustrations and wonderful enthusiasm; our grateful thanks to Rebecca!