

Whitewater Valley Wine Society

Tasting Report: March 2016

New Latitude Wines

Presented by Richard Bost, Amethyst Wine

Report by Barbara Jones

New Latitude Wines are wines which bring together the New World and the Old World - with an exotic touch; a heading east to some countries with a wine-making tradition that goes back centuries. To present the tasting, we welcomed back Richard Bost of Amethyst Wine. Richard is a leading provider of wine education services in the UK and he is qualified to the Wine & Spirit Education Trust Diploma level. He's absolutely passionate about wine and his knowledge of wine stretches back over 40 years. He has two mottoes in life: "A day without wine is like a day without sunshine" and "Life is too short to drink bad wine". Back in 2013, Richard brought us a splendid tasting of wines from Brazil. This tasting included wines from four countries – Japan, Thailand, India and China.

The evening started with a white wine from Japan, latitude 35-45 N. This **Sol Lucet 2014** [Japan] [11.5%, £13.00] available from M & S is made from the pink-skinned Koshu grape in the Kusambon Winery in Yamanashi Prefecture at low altitude in volcanic soil. In the glass it was almost colourless, like water and on the nose it was extremely delicate with just a hint of flowers. In the mouth the first sensation was its dryness with a bite of cooking apples. Not a lot to recommend it other than novelty value? Our second white wine **Monsoon Valley Blended White 2014** [Thailand] [12%, £ 8.45] available from www.slurp.co.uk had more to offer from the start – a little more lemon/lime colour and definite hints of honey/honeysuckle on the nose. There was immediate sweetness on the palate reminiscent of a Chenin Blanc – not surprising as it was a blend of Chenin, Colombard and Malaga Blanc. This quite pleasant wine grown 13 N at an altitude of 200m was made by Kathrin Puft and was awarded a Silver Medal at the Decanter World Wine awards and would be an excellent accompaniment to a green Thai curry! Our last white wine was from the Nandi Hills in Southern India, latitude 10-22 N and grown at an altitude of 920m – **Grover Zampa Art Collection Sauvignon Blanc 2015** [India] [13.5%, £10.99]. This wine had a pale lemon colour with subtle grassy notes on the nose fairly typical of some Sauvignon Blanc. This continued onto the palate being dry, light and delicate and even elegant – quite acceptable and available from www.characterwines.co.uk.

We returned to Thailand for our first red wine of the evening – a **Monsoon Valley Blended Red 2014** [Thailand] [13%, £8.45] that was a 60/40% blend of Pokdum and Shiraz. This was Pinot Noir in style by colour with the slightest hint of pepper on the nose. It had light cranberry and raspberry fruit in the mouth and would be quite suitable as a lunchtime red to accompany cold meats/quiche and salad. Our next wine **Changyu Cabernet d'Est 2011** [China] [12.5%, £13.95] came from central China at latitude 38 N and grown at 1100m. This wine had a dark plum colour and on the nose was full of red berry fruit and oaky pencil-box shavings, reminiscent of reds from the Loire. Dry at first on the palate it developed in the glass to become a smooth wine with light tannins, blackcurrant flavours and hints of oak. Tasted blind it could have come from the Loire Valley and was most acceptable! The next two reds were even better – The **Grover Zampa La Reserve 2013** [India] [14%, £12.99] was a 70/30% blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz and had the grapes' characteristic deep black cherry colour. On the nose there was a powerful bouquet of luscious ripe fruits with a hint of spice and complexity. In the mouth this was full of blueberries and blackcurrants with vanilla notes and hints of smooth oak – a well-balanced wine that should last another three to four years. The final wine – a **Grover Zampa VA Reserve Collection 2013** [India] [14%, £15.99], named after the tennis player Vijay Amritraj was a 60/30/10% blend of Shiraz/Cabernet Sauvignon/Viognier that had a dense dark blackcurrant colour. The nose was full of rich fruit and on the palate it was full bodied with medium tannins – a wine with some promise as it will improve and get more complex with age! Our grateful thanks go to Richard for his illustrated and informative presentation. We enjoyed his selection of wines and were especially impressed with the reds! Rest of the wine world – beware!