

Whitewater Valley Wine Society

Tasting Report: December 2016

Society Members' Choices

Presented by WVWS members

Report by Barbara Jones

We have many wine enthusiasts within our Society and it's always good to taste wines which are recommended by them. That's why at Christmas time, we open the floor to our members. Eight braved their way to the front to introduce a wine of their choice. Our master of ceremonies for the evening was our very own Val Richardson who worked tirelessly to put this evening together for us. Our volunteers are named alongside the wine they chose.

The tasting started with a great fizz – **Chapel Down Vintage Reserve Brut 2015, Kent, England** – Matthew Denton [12%, £22, Waitrose] that is one of the best-selling English sparkling wines. It was crisp and dry and perfect for any celebration; a blend of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Meunier, it had elegant aromas of citrus fruit, red apple and freshly baked bread with hints of hawthorn and lemongrass on the palate. Acidity was lively and the string of bubbles persistent. It was followed by a **Snake and Herring, High and Dry Riesling 2015, Western Australia** – Richard Ford [12.5%, £16, M & S]. Produced from 20 year old vines this wine had great flavour and intensity. It was bone dry and floral, with mineral tones and on the palate there lingered ripe limey citrus and juicy greengage fruit; a delicate yet powerful wine that would be a good accompaniment to seafood. Next we had a **Domaine Ferret, Pouilly-Fuisse 2014, Burgundy, France** - Liz Cooper [13%, £23, Taurus Wines]. This Chardonnay had great balance between weight and freshness. It was full of fruity notes with hints of spice and a long finish. It should age gracefully. Our final white wine was a **Herdade de Esporao Resevation 2015 Alentejo, Portugal** – Tony Wallis [14%, £10, The Wine Society]. Blended from three indigenous grape varieties this was a clear straw coloured wine with green notes. It was well balanced with good fruit depth and a creamy texture, some minerality and a fresh and long finish.

The second half of the tasting began with a **Clos du Bois Pinot Noir 2014, California, USA** – Paul Wright [13.5%, £11, Majestic]. Classic Pinot Noir in colour this was a wine full of cherries, dried roses and nutmeg with hints of earthy forest floor. On the palate there were flavours of sweet cherry and cranberry with hints of smoky oak – a rich and luscious experience! Our next wine took us to the Middle East for a **Coteaux les Cedres 2009 Bekka Valley, Lebanon** – Peter Morrison/Jan Sellwood [13.5%, £20, Watlington Fine Wines]. This blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot with a hint of Carmenere and

Tempranillo resulted in a full-bodied wine that had firm, silky tannins and a long finish. It was a rich, well-balanced wine full of dried dark fruits with hints of cream and spice. For our seventh wine we hopped to the Balkans for **"Aemilia" 2013, Tikves, Macedonia** – Alastair Dudley [13%, £9, Waitrose] that was a unique blend of Shiraz and the local grape Vranec with a touch of Petit Verdot. This highly concentrated wine with deep plummy and blueberry fruit was opulent on the palate with a long and spicy finish. Our journey ended with a return to Portugal for a **"Stones and Bones", Diogo Sepulveda 2013 Lisbon** – Terry Holdsworth [14%, £9, Laithwaites]. This wine was named after an unusual discovery of a cache of dinosaur fossil bones, uncovered in a recent renovation at the vineyard. The wine maker Diogo set out to make a 'dinosaur' wine and succeeded! It was a sumptuous, intense blend of Touriga Nacional with Tinta Roriz [Tempranillo], Syrah and Alicante Bouschet, produced in a modernised way and resulting in a rich and fruity red wine that would be excellent with barbecued meat or a slowly cooked casserole. It won the Gold Medal in the Portugal Wine Trophy 2015 and was a wonderful way to end a most pleasant tasting of interesting wines.

The Society is most grateful to the members who agreed to take part this evening and sharing some of their wine discoveries with us.