

Whitewater Valley Wine Society

Tasting Report: November 2017

Hidden Corners of Italy

Presented by Wine Educator Quentin Sadler

Report by Barbara Jones

As we near the end of our 30th anniversary year, it was very appropriate that we welcomed back Quentin Sadler to present to us. Long standing members will know Quentin well as he has presented to us on several occasions since the Society was founded back in 1987, although his last visit to us was back in 2006! Quentin is a member of the Association of Wine Educators, the UK group of independent, professional wine educators. He has spent over 30 years in the wine trade. In that time, he has done most things including managing wine shops, selling to the trade, hotels and restaurants, buying, marketing, wine writing and (what we like best) a lot of tasting! But most importantly to us, we know he has a huge passion for wine and loves sharing his knowledge gained through extensive travel to the wine regions of the world. He enjoys presenting to wine clubs, especially our own Whitewater Valley, because he knows we appreciate his tastings so much. For this tasting Quentin chose wines from Italy's 'hidden corners'! [Wines priced in Euros were bought at the vineyards and are not available in the UK]

Our first wine of the evening was a **2016 Pagadebit DOC Romagna, Poderi dal Nespoli, Emilia Romagna** [12%, £9.99] known locally as the debt-payer because of its generous yields of the main grape Bambino Bianco. Blended with 15% Sauvignon Blanc the wine had a pale lemon colour and subtle fruit on the nose. On the palate it was fresh and savoury with hints of white peach.

Our second wine was also white, a **2016 Fontevicchia DOC Verdicchio di Castello de Jesi Classico Superiore, Casal Farneto, Marche** [12.5%, E10]. A little more straw-coloured than the first wine, the Verdicchio had more fruit on the nose with hints of honey and cream. On the palate it was slightly off-dry with a touch of minerality and grass – rather 'chabliesque'.

Our final white wine was a **2016 Bocara DOC Gambellara, Cavazza, Veneto** [12.5%, £15.95] that was 100% Garganega and though still a pale colour it had hints of peach blossom, almond and baked apples on the nose and moderate acidity and freshness on the palate. All whites were light, pleasant and highly quaffable!

We now looked forwards to the reds and started with a **2016 Neale DOC Cannonau di Sardegna, Cantine Orgosolo, Sardinia** [14.5%, E15] made from Italian Grenache. It had a medium density cherry-red colour with hints of fruit and smoke on the nose. Not oaked it was fresh, soft and juicy in the mouth with medium tannins.

Next came a **2015 Coldibetto Etrusco Gamay Trasimeno DOC Gamay Trasimeno, Coldibetto, Umbria** [14%, E25] and despite its name, it was another Grenache and was again un-oaked. It had a dense cherry-red colour and subtle fruit on the nose. There were medium tannins and a dry metallic edge on the palate.

It was followed by a **2014 Tonos DOC Rosso Conero, Casal Farneto, Marche** [14%, E8] made from 100% Montepulciano grapes. It had a dense black-cherry colour with aromas of fruit and smoky chocolate. Our first oaked red had more rounded tannins and was rich and complex on the palate and was excellent value for money! Strangely, it had been made primarily to accompany fish dishes!

Our penultimate wine was a **2012 Lessona DOC Lessona, Tenute Sella, Piemonte** [13%, £25.50] that had a slightly brownish edge to its more translucent red colour, hinting at its greater age. On the nose there were hints of vegetable and smoke and there was a lightness in the palate reminiscent of Barolo – not surprising that it was an 85/15% blend of Nebbiolo and Vespolino and hence its price!

The evening ended with a **2007 Vigna Camarato DOC Falerno del Massico Rosso Riserva, Villa Matilde, Campania** [14%, £37.00] that had a dense blackcurrant colour. This 80/20% blend of Aglianico and Piedirasso had a subtle nose of berry fruits and hints of spice and smoke. On the palate there were earthy tones and warmth, elegant structure and great balance – what a way to end a tasting!

The excellent attendance at the tasting was an indication of members' expectations of Quentin's return after 10 years and they were not disappointed. His easy and relaxed style and impassioned comments kept his audience attentive and surprisingly quiet! Our grateful thanks to him for a superb evening, sampling wines most of us will never have the opportunity of tasting again. We look forward to his return in the not too distant future.