

Whitewater Valley Wine Society

Tasting Report: April 2018

The wines of Spain

Presented by Robert Bouflower of Tanners Wine Merchant

Report by Barbara Jones

Robert is a Director at Tanners Wine Merchants, a long established retailer, well known to many of our members. The business can trace its roots in Shrewsbury back to the mid-19th century. Considering that the fame of Spain revolves around Tempranillo, it is remarkable that the breadth of styles of wine is so varied and this was reflected in the evening's tasting. Robert is Private House Sales Director at Tanners. Prior to wine, Robert's life was sheep, sheep and a few more sheep having been a shepherd since the age of 12! An honourable third from Royal Holloway for his zoology degree put paid to a lifetime ambition of being the next David Attenborough. He has been in the wine trade for over 25 years. For ten years, he ran a specialist Spanish wine importing business in Cornwall, (convenient, he says, for nowhere but the beach!). Having a distinction in his WSET Diploma, he joined Tanners as a Director back in 2005.

Our evening of Spanish wines started with four white wines, all of which were very pale in colour. Our first a **Paniza Viura, Carinena 2017** [12.5%, £6.90], produced in a cooperative, had hints of green in the colour and a subtle fruity nose with lemony characters. On the palate it was clean and fresh and because of a little residual sugar it was just off-dry – good balanced acidity.

Our next wine – a **Basa Blanco, Rueda, Telmo Rodriguez 2016** [13.5%, £9.95] produced from a Verdejo/Viura blend 90/10% had hints of lemon in the colour and a nose reminiscent of peaches and plums. This was an aromatic wine with character, rounded and fruity on the palate.

It was followed by a **Lager de Cervera Albarino, Rias Baixas 2016** [12.5%, £15.50] which again had hints of lemon in the colour. This was full of intense aromas of stone fruit, had well integrated acidity and a clean and dry, persistent finish. This wine will age well and possibly take on some petrol notes.

Our final white was a **Capellania, Rioja, Marques de Murrieta 2012** [13.5%, £18.95] that had hints of lemon in the colour and a little oak on the nose from 15 months in two different barrels. This gave the Viura a

different twist – that of sherry, resulting in a stylish, smoky, rich and creamy flavour on the palate and good acidity.

Our first red of the evening was a **Prado Rey Tinto Roble, Ribera del Duero 2016** [13%, £11.20] that had a deep black cherry colour despite its relatively young age and made from predominantly Tempranillo with a little Mazuelo and Cabernet. After only four months in oak it is a 'lightish' wine that is bright, fresh and juicy on the palate, with ripe tannins and a long finish. It needs drinking within two years but is a pleasant, easy drinking wine.

Next up was a **Tanners Spanish Reserva, La Mancha 2012** [13.5%, £8.90]. Deep red in colour, with hints of vanilla on the nose from 18 months in American Oak, on the palate, this is wonderfully silky and velvety and full of rich blackcurrant fruits from the Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend. Good value for money!

Our penultimate wine was an **Aldonia, Rioja 2015** [15%, £12.90], a blend of Granacha and Tempranillo 90/10%. Deep red in colour and having 12 months in oak barrels, this wine was rich and rounded and more Chateauneuf-Du-Pape in style than the previous two reds. This was a more intense and complex wine full of red berry fruits with a mocha, caramel and balsamic background. It had a long, mineral finish.

Our evening ended with a **Vina Arana Reserva, Rioja, La Rioja Alta 2009** [13.8%, £19.95] from one of the top wineries, sourcing its grapes from the top vineyards of the region. A blend of predominantly Tempranillo [85%] with some Graciano and Manzuelo and three years in oak barrels this wine can be regarded as a Gran Reserva. It is a complex red that has mature, spicy and leathery notes and 'legendary length' – an ideal match for next year's Easter roast lamb!

Our most grateful thanks go to Robert for an excellent, enthusiastic and informative tasting with some interesting digressions! We very much enjoyed the Tanners' sample of Spanish wines. Members hope to see him again in the not too distant future!