

Whitewater Valley Wine Society

Tasting Report: December 2019

Rocking all over the world!

Presented by members of our Society

Report by Barbara Jones

This year Nesta organised an evening of group wine tasting focusing on wines made from classic grapes which we all know and love. The wines chosen came from all over the world and in groups we tasted, chatted and worked out which wine we were drinking and where it was produced. Seven intrepid members of our Society had selected some great Classics for us all to enjoy. The wines were tasted 'blind' and our presenters gave feedback on the group decisions and added more background to each wine in turn.

It was another full-house attendance for our Christmas function and much was expected of the wines to come. The wines were tasted in pairs so members could appreciate differences between wines from the Old World and New World.

Our first two wines were sparkling and we were not disappointed! We started with a **Cremant de Limoux Languedoc France** [12%, £13.95, selected by Gill Wright] produced by the Antech family, regarded as the most prestigious producer in the region. A blend of Chardonnay/Chenin Blanc/Mauzac 70/15/15% and aged traditionally on its lees, this was a beautifully balanced wine with elegant aromas of orchard fruit and honeyed spice. There were exotic fruits on the palate - a clean fizz with impressive depth of flavour. It was partnered by a **Lindauer Special Reserve NV Gisborne New Zealand 2017** [12%, £13.95, Paul Wright] produced from a 60/40% blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. A subtle pink in colour this wine had copious beads of small bubbles and ripe peach and nectarine aromas with a hint of dark fruit. The palate was full of creamy toast and fruit with a clean finish.

Our next wine was 100% Riesling - **Chateaux Ste Michelle Washington State USA 2018** [12%, £13.50, Paul Wright] produced from grapes gathered from lots throughout the Columbia Valley. This wine was medium dry with crisp apple flavours and subtle mineral notes. On the palate there were flavours of peach and tropical fruits with a citrus zing which gave amazing acidity. - a flavoursome and refreshing wine! It was paired with a wine from the traditional home of the grape, a **Keidrich Turmberg Riesling Rheingau Germany 2017** [12%, £21.99, Alastair Dudley] also 100%. Produced on the steep slopes of a south-west facing vineyard with an exceptional micro-climate and owned by the fourth generation of the Robert Weil family, this wine had well integrated bright, lively fruit, balanced acidity and a good body. Aromas of classic

stone fruit were complemented by lush citrus flavours and a refined minerality.

The first pair of reds was light – and made from predominantly Pinot Noir. The first was **Tanners Pinot Noir Bourgogne Maison de Bellene France 2016** [13.5%, £13.95, Nigel Downey] made by the talented Nicolas Potel. This wine had a super nose of ripe damsons and black cherries, repeated on the palate with a hint of spice with some fine tannins and freshness. Alongside, we tasted **Grace Bridge Pinot Noir Central Valley California 2016** [13.5%, £13.95, Liz Cooper] marginally different from its partner as it contains 3% Alicante Bouschet and 3% Syrah. Described as a 'charming Pinot Noir at a sensible price' this wine was full of ripe, red fruit with a touch of spice, a plump mid-palate and finish possibly helped by the drop of Syrah?

And now it was time for the full bodied reds – our first was a **Paul Mas Vinus Malbec Pays d'Oc France 2018** [13.5%, £8.25, Valerie Richardson] produced from the top five vineyards in the valleys of Languedoc. This wine had deep intense colour, aromas of jammy red fruit and a hint of liquorice. This was repeated on the palate with power and intensity, giving way to lovely soft tannins. Our evening ended with a **Hawkes Bay Left Field Malbec New Zealand 2013** [13.5%, £13.99, Peter Morrison] made from the grapes from two select parcels on the Te Awa Gimblett Gravels [left by the Ngaruroro River] that had aromas of blackberry and liquorice supported by dark chocolate. These were repeated on the palate and balanced with peppery spice backed by ripe tannins.

A big thank you goes to Nesta for her superb organisation and to our intrepid presenters for their choices of interesting wines. It was a most enjoyable occasion with opportunity to chat!