

# Whitewater Valley Wine Society

**Tasting Report: January 2020**

**Rueda and Ribera, Spain**

**Presented by Tim Syrad, Wine Educator and Wine Tours  
Organiser**

Report by Barbara Jones

We started our year by welcoming back Tim Syrad. Tim is well known to many of our members as both an excellent presenter and also an organiser of great wine tours. This time, Tim presented a selection of wines from the Ribera region of Spain. Situated in the north west of the country, the Ribera is one of Spain's most prestigious wine regions. Whilst there is some white wine made, the focus is predominantly on the reds and the Tempranillo grape dominates. Through his many tours to the Ribera, Tim has access to some great wines and we tasted some of the best, unavailable on supermarket shelves.

Tim started off the tasting by introducing members to three white wines made in the region, from three different grapes. Our first was a **Sauvignon Blanc 2018 Ramon Bilbao DO Rueda** [13%, £12.00] introduced into the region by Marques de Riscal. This very pale lemon-coloured wine had a nose full of citrus aromas with perhaps a touch of lychees. Medium bodied it was clean, fresh and well balanced on the palate and an ideal accompaniment to seafood. The second wine, a **Blanco de Albillo 2018 Garcia Viadero VDT Castile y Leon** [12.55, £19.00] is produced in very small quantities [hence its price] and compared with the first wine was off-dry, reminiscent of Viognier. Again pale in colour, on the nose it was delicate and perfumed. Medium bodied, with texture and weight reflecting a couple of months on the lees, it was most pleasant – an excellent aperitif! Our final white was traditional of the region – a **Verdejo 2018 Flor de Vetus DO Rueda** [13%, £12.00]. This pale straw-coloured wine was unoaked. On the nose it was fragrant with aromas of tropical white fruit and citrus and on the palate slightly off-dry – a very pleasant, fresh wine with good acidity and a lingering finish.

In traditional Spanish style all out red wines were 100% Tempranillo but with some different nuances reflecting age, specific location and winery. Our first was a **Crianza 2015 Finca Museum DO Cigales** [14%, £13.00] that had spent some time in oak and bottle before release. This had a deep cherry red colour with a violet rim. It was an intense and complex wine with a fruit driven nose and full of dark cherry and plum flavours. It was a well-structured wine with a smooth lingering finish. Then came a Reserva from the same producer – a **Reserva 2014 Finca Museum DO Cigales** [14.5%, £17.00] that had a deep, ruby-red colour

and was full of red berry flavours and also blackcurrants and cranberries. These were echoed on the palate with some savoury spice and liquorice. It had a most pleasant long finish. Next we tasted a **Finca Azaya 2017 Yolanda Garcia VDT Castile y Leon** [14%, £19.00] that had spent fourteen months in mixed French and American oak. Compared with the previous wine it was lighter on the palate being fresh and vibrant – young, spicy and most approachable! Our evening drew to a close with two wines from the same region and producer. The first was a **Crianza 2015 Valduero DO Ribera del Duero** [14%, £25.00] with a dark damson colour after fourteen months in French and American oak. The nose was rich, plummy and vibrant and on the palate it was spicy and intense with some tannins evident – it needed food! And to end our Spanish treat we had a **Reserva 2012 Valduero DO Ribera del Duero** [14%, £33.00] that had spent a minimum of thirty months in barrel and fifteen months in bottle before release. This had a dense damson colour with a nose full of black fruit aromas. Here fruit and oak were well-balanced. This was a fine, velvety and elegant wine that would be the perfect accompaniment to a good steak.

Members extend their grateful thanks to Tim for his most interesting selection of Spanish wines from this region of Spain. It was evident that he knew the producers and region extremely well and his lively presentation was well received. We look forward to a return with wines from another region or country in the not too distant future.