

**WHITEWATER VALLEY WINE SOCIETY**  
**April 2022 Tasting**  
**The Wines of Chile and Argentina**  
**Presented by Aaron Irons of Condor Wines**

This month we welcomed for the first time Aaron Irons of Condor Wines (a UK-based specialist importer from the region, including Uruguay). Condor was awarded 'Specialist Merchant of the Year (South America) by the International Wine Challenge in 2019. Aaron is Condor's Regional Wine Manager and has worked in the wine trade since 2007, after an initial career as a Secondary School Science Teacher. He then worked for several other UK wine merchants, before spending two surreal years selling fine wines to an international customer base in Dubai. He returned to the UK in Autumn 2019. Alongside his commercial experience, Aaron holds the WSET Level Diploma in Wines and Spirits. All of the wines were supplied by Auriol Wines of Hartley Wintney and their owner John Carlisle was present to sip along with our Society members.

Our first wine and only white wine was from Argentina's Uco Valley, Onofri Wines Alma Gemela White Field Blend 2020 [14%, £16.95]. It's a blend of rousanne, Marsanne and chardonnay and the grapes are grown together rather than in separate plots; dry, with green nuts, oily, melon and quite rich. An interesting wine which really needs food. We moved on to our first red, this time from Chile's Itata Valley, J. Bouchon Foye Cinsault 2020 [13.5%, £10.50]. Rich and fruity, it was smooth and guaffable; great value for money. Staying with Chile, we tasted J. Bouchon Pais Viejo 2020 from the Maule Valley [12.5%, £11.95]. This had similarities to a pinot noir, fruity and grippy in the mouth, more good value here. Our last Chilean wine was Viña Dagaz Cabernet Sauvignon 2019 from the Colchagua Valley [14.5%, £13.50]. Deep coloured and perfumed, this rich wine would suit steaks or a Sunday roast.

Excitement levels increased as we moved on to four Argentinian reds. From Mendoza we tasted Los Haroldos Estate Bonarda 2019 [13.5%, £11.95]. Deep cherry in colour, this was dry and fruity, with a hint of charcoal. More good value here too. Staying with Mendoza, next up was Alandes Concrete Tank Blend 2020 [14.5%, £15.95]. This was a blend of malbec, cabernet sauvignon and tempranillo. It's dark cherry colour led us to rich and chewy wine. Our penultimate wine was from the Uco Valley, Piedra Negra Arroyo Grande Malbec 2020 [14.5%, £14.50]. This was possibly the most popular wine of the evening. A big dark cherry wine, it showed violets and rich stewed fruit, blackberries and apples. Perhaps still a little young at the moment, try keeping a bottle back for a couple of years. Then we finished with Alandes Paradoux NV from Mendoza [14%, £21.75]. This is deliberately blended from several vintages of cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc, merlot and malbec. It gives a consistently popular style, quite rich and another good match for a steak.

By the end of the tasting the room was buzzing. We'd tasted 8 exceptionally good wines, well presented by Aaron. We hope to welcome him back again soon.

***Further information for the Whitewater Valley Wine Society and details of future tastings are available on the website [www.whitewaterwine.org.uk](http://www.whitewaterwine.org.uk).***