

**WHITEWATER VALLEY WINE SOCIETY**  
**June 2022 Tasting**  
**A Tasting of Sparkling Wines**  
**Presented by Robert Bouflower of Tanners Wine Merchants**

It's been four years since we last welcomed Robert Bouflower to present to us. We had a great time on that occasion, so we had no hesitation in giving him the opportunity to talk to us again. 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. We expect the sun to be shining in June, so we chose a summer theme of sparkling wines and strawberries for our evening. Robert selected 8 of Tanner's top sparkling wines, all of which demonstrated their own individual style and character and all of which were excellent value for money. Countries featured included France, Italy, Spain, England and Australia. And as well as the usual bread and cheese, there were some strawberries to enjoy with the wines!

Our first fizz of the evening was a **Tanners Cava Brut Catalunya Spain [traditional method]** [12%, £10.95]. Whilst members slowly sniffed and tasted this first wine Robert described the process of production from the pressing of the three grape varieties used through to bottling, secondary fermentation and added dosage. This pale coloured bubbly had a lively, fine mousse and a creamy, biscuity flavour on the palate. It had style and finesse beyond its price and was most acceptable [far better than a cheap Champagne]!

It rather overshadowed the second wine, an **Amori Prosecco Spumante Extra Dry Veneto Italy** [11%, £10.50]. Pale in colour with limey hints the Glera grapes are pressed in large tanks, so production is on a large scale with bottles filled from taps. This was a floral experience on the nose with hints of apples and peaches in the mouth - a pleasant easy-going sparkler.

Next we tasted a **La Grande Marque Samur Brut Loire France** [12.5%, £12.95] that was a pale gold colour. Drier than the previous wine, this predominantly Chenin-based wine with a small percentage of Cabernet Franc was light-bodied and smooth and rounded in the mouth; it was elegant and crisp with a refreshing finish.

The first half of our tasting ended with a **Cremant d'Alsace, Blanc de Blanca Brut Dopff and Irion France** [12%, £15.95]. This wine had light fizz and aromas of apple, quince, fine herbs and light spices whilst the palate had good acidity and a clean finish.

We remained in France for our next wine, a **Blanquette de Limoux Brut, Chateau Rives-Blanques 2019 Cepie France** [12.5%, £17.50] that was again pale in colour. This 0% dosage wine made from hand-harvested grapes of low yields still follows the oldest sparkling wine production methods. It had a soft mousse and was refreshingly dry on the palate, with hints of apple lingering.

Our sixth wine jumped hemispheres, a **Sunnycliff Estate Sparkling Brut NV Victoria Australia** [11%, £11.50]. This blend of 60/40% Chardonnay/Pinot Noir was very pale in colour and was generally understated being light in taste and alcohol with little length.

For our penultimate wine we returned to France for a **Cremant de Bourgogne Brut Cave de Vire Burgundy France** [12%, £17.50] that was a blend of 85% Pinot Noir and 15% Gamay. This pale golden-coloured wine had floral notes on the nose and citrusy and yeasty elements on the palate - some good champagne-like characteristics; a quite full and flavoursome wine from an excellent quality-minded cooperative in the south of the region.

The evening concluded with some English fizz, **Ashling Park Estate Brut English Quality Sparkling Wine** [12%, £33.00]. Produced from a base wine that is 8 years old this pale coloured wine had hints of lemon, red apples and baked bread on the nose; it was well-balanced with stone-fruit flavours, some spice and fresh acidity in the mouth ending in a persistent crisp finish. This rich toasty, champagne-like fizz by Dermot Sugrue, enhanced by Liz's strawberries was a fitting end to a most enjoyable and interesting evening. Red wine drinking members missed a treat!

Our grateful thanks go to Robert for his selection of mostly affordable bubbly and enhancing our knowledge and understanding of sparkling wine.