

WHITEWATER VALLEY WINE SOCIETY
July 2022 Tasting
Wines of Italy
Presented by Dan Farrell-Wright, Director of Wickhams

This month we welcomed Dan Farrell-Wright, who presented to us for the first time. Dan is a Director of Wickhams, an online wine merchant. They're a relatively new company, having been started during the first Covid lockdown. Since then, they have been shortlisted for two Decanter Retail Awards and they've won a Gold Trusted Service Award from Feefo. And breaking news is that they have just won the International Wine Challenge Merchant Award for Specialist Merchant England (beating runner-up Waitrose). Dan presented a selection of wines from Italy, so this was popular with most of our members!

Our tasting began with bubbles - a **Giribaldi Alta Lanka DOCG Spumante Pas Dose' Riserva 2015 Piemonte** [13.0%, £35.00]. This was no ordinary Prosecco where CO2 is injected into the wine but an absolute gem of a sparkling wine made using the traditional 'champagne' method, with 60% Pinot Noir and 40% Chardonnay. The 30 months spent on the lees with no added sugar and 5 years in bottle before release, culminate in a wine that has small but persistent bubbles, a nose of citrus and honey and crisp dry lemon on the palate, with a long and lingering finish. What a delightful way to start our evening with a sparkler that outperforms similar priced Champagnes!

Our second wine a **Giribaldi "i Risi" Gavi DOCG 2021** [13%, £18.00] had a lot to follow. This was a very pale wine with green hints made from the Cortese grape. It had a fresh and fruity nose with grassy notes, elements of apple on the palate and appropriate acidity.

We moved south for our third wine - a **Gerenti Grillo Terre Sicilians DOC 2019 Organic** [13%, £11.50]. Again, pale in colour, a light straw, hand picked grapes are fermented slowly for 15-20 days and then aged for three months and result in a wine with citrus aromas and flavours with a good level of acidity.

Our final white of the evening was a **Casals del Baroness 150+1 Branco Langhe DOC Piemonte 2019** [12.5%], £11.65] a blend of 90/10% Chardonnay and Arneis. This pale coloured, medium bodied wine had floral aromas and hints of fruit on the palate. It was soft and well balanced.

Having enjoyed the whites, we looked forward to the reds. Our first was a **Lunadoro "Pagliareto" Vino Nobile di Montepulciano DOCG 2017** [14.5%, £20.50] a Sangiovese from central Italy. This rosy-red coloured wine had been aged in barrel for 24 months and had a complex nose of mature fruit, pepper, plum jam and floral elements. In the mouth tannins were evident but sweet; there was good acidity and a long finish - a promising start!

Next followed a **Lunaria "Ruminat" Primitivo Terre Di Chieti IGP 2020 Abruzzo [Organic, Biodynamic]** [14%, £16.50] that had a bright ruby red colour and aromas of black cherries and violets. In the mouth it was soft and smooth, full of black fruits with notes of cinnamon and cloves with soft tannins. It was well balanced with fresh acidity and a long finish.

We returned to Giribaldi for our last two wines - our first was a **Giribaldi Caj Barbara d'Alba Superiore 2014** [14%, £16.67] from 100 year old vines. It was a dense red colour with a nose of berry fruits and a hint of cassis. Tannins were still evident so it was generally felt that this wine needed more time to develop and it will improve with age.

Our final treat was a **Giribaldi "Conca d'Oro" Nebbiolo d'Alba DOC 2019 [Organic]** [13.5%, £22.00] from a single vineyard. It had an intense ruby colour with aromas of rose, raspberry and vanilla. On the palate it was dry and full flavoured with hints of cinnamon and red berries. Tannins were soft and rounded, and acidity and flavour well balanced with a long finish. An ideal end to a most enjoyable tasting of wines from a new presenter!

Members of the Society extend their grateful thanks to Dan for his excellent selection of Italian wines and also for his lively and interesting presentation. We look forward to a return visit!