

## WHITEWATER VALLEY WINE SOCIETY

November 2022 Tasting

Australian versus Old World Wines

Presented by Robbie Rugman of Cambridge Wine Merchants

This month we tasted wines from Cambridge Wine Merchants, a merchant we've not previously featured at the Society. Cambridge Wine Merchants was established in 1993 by two friends, Hal Wilson and Brett Turner. They started with one shop in Cambridge and have grown to become one of the biggest independent wine merchants in the UK. They keep a look out for funky one-offs and proper wine made by real people. They source many of their products from independent, family-run wineries. Our presenter was Robbie Rugman, who some may recall presented Gallo wines to us a few years back. Robbie has been with Cambridge Wine Merchants since the end of 2021. On his second visit Robbie compared wines from Australia and the Old World. He focused on four varietals - Riesling, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Grenache/Mourvedre.

Our first varietal of the tasting was Riesling and our first wine was a **Dr. Bernkastler Badstube Riesling Kabinett 2021 Pauly Bergweller Mosel Germany** [9%, £17.99]. This pale coloured wine with lemony/limes hints had a juicy pineapple flavour with crystalline mineral tones from the land's slaty soils. It was an easy drinking, elegant wine with optimal combination of sweetness, acidity and minerality. Its partner was a **Robert Oakley Signature Riesling 2020 Great Southern Australia** [12%, £13.99] that was similarly pale in colour but evidently drier in the mouth with notes of citrus zest. It was crisp, fresh and pure with well balanced acidity and good body - the preferred Riesling!

The next varietal was Chardonnay and our first was a **Bourgogne Chardonnay 2018 Domaine Fournillon Chablis France** [12.5%, £13.99]. The Kimmeridge Clay soils of the area contribute to its freshness, minerality and fruit-forward flavours that also have accents of butter and honey giving a creamy finish - a fine and elegant wine. It was partnered with a **Flametree Chardonnay 2020 Margaret River Australia** [13%, £17.49] that had classic grapefruit, peach and pear notes on the nose and noticeably more body than the previous wine in the mouth with creamy, elegant balance between oak, fruit and acidity. It also had lemony, slightly spicy notes on the palate. This wine, typical of the Margaret River area was preferred by members present!

Our first red varietal was Pinot Noir with the first wine being a **La Croix Gratiot Les Zazous Pinot Noir 2019 IGP Pays d'Oc Languedoc-Roussillon** [13.5%, £15.99]. This had a medium red colour that was more opaque than usual with an elegant aromatic nose of rose, violets and red cherries. Medium to full bodied, the tannins had a sharp edge in the mouth that then softened to give a lingering cherry finish. Alongside, its partner was a **Three Lions Pinot Noir 2021 Plantagenet Great Southern Western Australia** [14%, £16.99] that was more typically translucent colour wise. It had notes of red cherries and savoury spice on the nose and in the mouth it was complex, smooth with medium body and subtle elements of nutmeg and cloves. Once again the Australian wine was preferred!

Our final varietal was Grenache partnered with a Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre blend. The first was 100% Grenache - a **Willunga 100 Grenache 2020 McLaren Vale Australia** [14.5%, £14.99] that was not unlike the second Pinot Noir in colour. The nose had hints of cherry, raspberry, spice and dried herbs. On the medium bodied palate there were gritty tannins, elements of sweet plum and strawberry fruit with a dry finish. Its partner was a **Rasteau Gramiller 2020 Domaine Gramiller 2020 Southern Rhône** [14%, £15.99] a blended wine with a complex nose of baked plums, blackberry and garrigue herbs. This classic Cotes du Rhône was a medium bodied wine with well balanced fruit and acidity - juicy and fresh with fine tannins...moreish! This time the vote was finely split!

Members present enjoyed a delightful tasting of interesting Australian and Old World wines that challenged the tastebuds. Their grateful thanks go to Robbie for his selection of wines and his easy, relaxed presentation and friendly interaction with those present.