

WHITEWATER VALLEY WINE SOCIETY
July 2025 Tasting
From the Carpathians to Hook - A Slovak Wine Journey
Presented by Lucia Dovalova, Director, The Naughty Grape

Earlier this year, members Alastair Dudley and Keith Cooper [Chairperson] were invited to visit the Slovakian Embassy in London, which was hosting a wine tasting of wines from Slovakia. It's fair to say that the wines they tasted very much exceeded their expectations, and included stunning bubbly, amazing whites and reds, with a mix of indigenous and international varieties. And then they met Lucia Dovalova, Director of The Naughty Grape, which retails wines from Slovakia in the UK. Her passion and enthusiasm for wine is remarkable and her knowledge exceptional. She was very excited about bringing the wines of Slovakia to the Whitewater Valley Wine Society. So this month, we were all in for a real treat.....

And that treat started with a carbonated sparkling, welcome wine - **Ostrovic SAGA 2022**, Tokaj [11%, £22.95] made from the Furmint grape variety. It was light and fresh with a delicate sparkling texture, with fresh citrus notes.

Many members preferred it to what came next, made in the traditional method, a **Terra Parma SEKT Rizling Rynsky 2022 Small Carpathians** [13%, £29.50]. This sparkling wine was off-dry with slightly tart petrol notes, and hints of brioche, apples and herbs. This certainly had more fizz than the previous wine!

The first still, white wine was a late harvested **Vino Matysak BRESLAVA 2022 Small Carpathians** [13%, £19.90] that had a greenish yellow colour. There were aromas of tropical fruit and grapefruit with the latter more evident on the palate, accompanied by mango and lychees. It was well-balanced and had a lingering, clean after-taste.

The final white wine was a **Tokaj Malik RONAVA 2016 Tokaj** [12.5%, £23.50], a blend of Furmint and Lipovina grapes. This gold coloured wine had aromas of vanilla, tobacco and stone fruits, the latter continuing onto the palate that was dry and rounded with some acidity on the finish.

The first red wine of the tasting was of the Blaufrankisch grape variety, a **Vino Matysak FRANKOVKA MODRA 2017 Small Carpathians** [13.55, £24.95] from a historic 60-year-old vineyard, was not dissimilar in colour and texture to a Pinot Noir. This wine had a rich bouquet of ripe stone fruit and cherries with hints of tobacco leaf and fine chocolate. On the palate it was full-bodied, warm and juicy with a lingering, roasted coffee finish.

The following red wine was served chilled - a **Martin Pomfy ZWEGELTREBE BIO 2022 Small Carpathians** [12%, £22.50] that was similar in colour and texture to the previous wine. Produced with minimal intervention this wine was fruity with notes of fresh berries and stone fruit. It had a velvety taste and an earthy, fresh finish. It should last for another 5 years.

Our third red wine was a **ViaJur DUNAJ 2022 Classic Small Carpathians** [13.5%, £23.50] that had an opaque, dark ink colour and had aromas of ripe plums and dark chocolate. In the mouth it was rich and full with pleasant tannins. There was a long after-taste and an elegant and persistent finish.

The final red was a **Terra Parna VINTRO CUVÉE 2017** [14%, £28.50] a 3 grape blend of St. Laurent, Blauer Portugese and Alibernet that was full and fresh, despite its age and should last another 20 years! Impressive and amazing....

Our final wine needed a fresh glass for a **Chateau Grand Bari Tokaj Selection 5-Putnovy 2017 Tokaj** [11%, £39.95, 50cl] that had a delightful amber colour. This sweet dessert wine, made from Furmint, Lipovina and Yellow Muscat had a full rich taste of dried plums and honey and a long finish. It has endless ageing potential! It was a delightful end to a fascinating and enjoyable tasting!

Members extend their grateful thanks to Lucia and Darren for the Society's introduction to the wines of Slovakia. Though beyond the price-range of usual supermarket wines, the wines tasted showed the varied range of wines being produced, their potential for ageing and their excellent quality, in fact, good value for money!