

**WHTEWATER VALLEY WINE SOCIETY**  
**October 2025 Tasting**  
**The Wines of Languedoc and Roussillon, France**  
**Presented by Alun Griffiths MW**

It was with enormous pleasure that we welcomed back Alun Griffiths to present our October tasting. Alun is a great friend of our Society and needs no introduction to many of our members. We know that his evenings with us are always informative, interesting and fun. For the benefit of our newer members who may not know Alun, he has been a Master of Wine since 1991. For many years, he was Wine Director at Berry Bros & Rudd, following which he was based in Hong Kong for several years. Back in the UK, Alun lectures on wine and has been a panel judge at the International Wine Challenge and the Decanter Wine Awards Competition. He's a regular member of the Decanter Magazine tasting panel. And he is non-Executive Chairman of Thorman Hunt, a family-run specialist wine-shipper sourcing premium artisanal wine. This month Alun presented the wines of Languedoc/Roussillon in France. He has chosen some of his favourite wines from a recent visit to the region. Prices quoted below include a substantial discount for Members.

The tasting started with a **Domaine Font Mars Picpoul de Pinet 2024** [13%, £12.70] that had a pale lemon colour. The grape, Picpoul, has largely replaced Muscadet in this region of France as it gained acknowledgement as an up-and-coming wine producing region in recent years. Picked at night and subjected to cold fermentation for two days, then pressed immediately; this wine had citrus aromas and was piercingly dry on the palate with peach, pineapple and citrus flavours and a hint of salinity.

It was followed by a **Chateau de Carraguilhes La Font Blanche 2023** [13.5%, £14.00] that had a pale gold colour. This blend of 50/30/20% Mourvèdre/Grenache Blanc/Vermentino from grapes grown on chalky/clay soils had floral notes of peach and apricot and herby elements from the garrigue, natural vegetation of the Mediterranean region. There was texture on the palate with a long finish.

The final white wine a **Le Soûla Bio Cotes Catalanes 2019** [13%, £35.00] was from a vineyard at altitude [660m] where conditions are much harsher. This hand-harvested, biodynamic wine blended, from a variety of grapes, including Macabeu/Vermentino/Sauvignon Blanc, amongst others, results in a wine of exceptional purity and complexity. It had a honey/herby and floral nose and was amazingly fresh and succulent on the palate with a long length.

The first red wine of the evening was a **Chateau de Carraguilhes Corbières Les Gougoules 2023** [13%, £14.50] grown on a limestone and pebble soil. This blend of Grenache/Syrah/Carignan had a dark-cherry red colour, a sweet floral nose and a silky ripeness and roundness on the palate - a pleasant, well-balanced wine with a hint of salinity.

Next, came a **Chateau de Negly La Cote La Clape 2022** [14%, £16.10] that had a similar colour and blended from the same grapes plus Mourvèdre, in a coastal region with granitic soils. There were complex aromas of black fruits with a hint of pepper on the nose. It had good structure and balance and a long, concentrated finish.

The third red was a **Domaine de L'Ostal Minervois la Liviniere 2019** [15%, £21.00] that had a dark, blackcurrant colour. Blended from the same grapes as the last wine and grown on south facing slopes with a limestone-based soil, this wine was full of black fruit aromas and flavours. Using only the best grapes, this wine had finesse and a remarkable freshness that will last another 10 or so years.

We returned to the Le Soûla estate for our last red wine - a **Le Soûla Bio Côtes Catalanes** [12%, £27.60] blended from 77/22/1% Syrah/Carignan/Sauvignon Blanc grapes from old vines. Fermented in old oak barrels this opaque dark-blackcurrant-coloured wine had dense, gamey aromas and flavours and proved to be a fitting conclusion to our reds.

But then came the final wine, another red but with a difference - a **Domaine Poudroux Maury 2023** [16%, £16.45/50cl]! This red wine, with a port-wine colour is made like Port but is lighter on the palate. This makes it suitable also for desserts containing chocolate! It provided a pleasant sweet note to end a most interesting tasting of excellent wines!

It was a delight and privilege to hear Alun present wine from this region of Southern France; to learn about the winemakers, the vinification methods, the terroir and of course to taste those wines under the guidance of an expert. So Alun, acknowledging your heritage, 'Diolch yn fawr iawn' and for the benefit of non-Welsh-speaking Members - 'Thank you very much'!