

WHITEWATER VALLEY WINE SOCIETY
March 2026 Tasting
The Wines of Ukraine
Presented by Svitlana Tsybak

Late last year, Chairperson Keith Cooper and Member Alastair Dudley were privileged to attend a tasting of Ukrainian wines, presented by Svitlana Tsybak, CEO of the Ukrainian Wine Company UK. It's fair to say that the wines they tasted very much exceeded their expectations. Several amazing wines, both whites and reds were tasted in the mix of indigenous and international grape varieties. They were impressed by Svitlana's passion and enthusiasm for wine and also by her exceptional knowledge so she was invited to bring the wines of Ukraine to our Society, thus helping to promote and share Ukraine's culture, history and bravery of its people through its wines; wines selected come from small and medium-sized wineries and prices quoted concessionary for Society Members. The Society is proud to be supporting Ukrainian winemakers at what is a difficult time for their country.

Our first wine of the evening was a **Carpathian Sekt Chersigi Brut 2024 Grande Vallée Zakarpattia Ukraine** [11.5%, £15.00] and fittingly a sparkling wine of the Chersigi grape variety [origin Hungary]. This pale-straw-coloured wine had a fruity floral aroma, generous fizz and a refreshing acidity. Produced using the Charmat method of second fermentation in large tanks [like Prosecco but better?] it had a pleasant lightness and was a promising start to our tasting!

And then we had another bubbly! This was a **Rose Brut 'Methode Traditionnelle' 2023 Grande Vallée Odesa Ukraine** [12%, £19.00], pink in colour from the 3-4 hours of 100% Pinot Noir skin contact. A minimum of 12 months was spent 'sur lees' in bottle, similar to champagne. This wine had delicate berry-fruit aromas with a light, refreshing taste and balanced acidity. For most members it was the preferred sparkling wine.

Our next white wine was an **Artania White 2024 Beykush Winery Mykolaiv Ukraine** [13.5%, £15.00] situated on the Black Sea coast, west of Crimea; a winery with which our Presenter has work connections. This wine had a pale-lemon colour and unusually was a blend of many white grapes - Chardonnay/Rkatsiteli/Chenin Blanc/Sauvignon Blanc/Riesling/Timarasso. The grapes are vinified separately, then blended to create a balanced mineral-driven wine with tropical fruit aromas.

The white wines ended with a **Sukholimansky 2024 BIOLOGIST Kyiv Ukraine** [11.5%, £17.50] that had a light-gold colour. This is a wine vinified from a rare indigenous grape variety from the Odesa region, grown according to biodynamic principles. It had aromas of dried white berries and meadow herbs and on the palate there was a good balance of acidity and flavours with a long finish. Both were pleasant, interesting and a little different?

Our first 'non-white' wine was an **Amphora Rkatsiteli [Orange] 2024 Beykush Winery Mykolaiv Ukraine** [13.5%, £20.00] a wine fermented in Spanish ceramic amphorae which allows oxygen to penetrate into the wine giving it a 'glint' of orange colour. The Rkatsiteli grape is of Georgian origin and exudes some complex aromas of honey, dried fruit, apricots and citrus notes. In the mouth there was texture, balanced acidity and a slight bitterness on the finish - certainly different; liked by some but not others?

Our first red wine was an **Artania Red 2023 Beykush Winery Mykolayiv Ukraine** [13.0%, £ 17.50] that had a dark-cherry colour. This was a blended wine made usually from Merlot/Tempranillo/Pinot Noir/Cabernet Sauvignon and sometime Rubin. On the nose there were hints of red and dark fruits combined with spicy, earthy notes, tobacco and pepper. These were replicated on the palate with a medium-body-feel not unlike Pinot Noir. It was a very pleasant, fresh and juicy wine with well-balanced fruit and structure.

Next came an **Odesa Black VIP 2021 Villa Tinta Odesa [Bessarabia subregion] Ukraine** [13%, £16.50] that had a very dark, dense black-cherry colour; a blend of local grape varieties. This was a complex wine with rich aromas of dark fruit, spices, pepper with notes of vanilla and leather from being aged in French oak. It was full-bodied, velvety with a silky finish - delightful!

And to end it all, there was a **Saperavi Reserve 2023 Grande Vallée Odesa Ukraine** [14%, £19.00] that had a colour similar to the previous wine and similar aromas. It was a bold, well-structured, fruit-driven wine with a balanced, smooth and rounded palate, soft tannins and a long finish. Another delightful red wine and the preference of some with others opting for the elegance of the former? Both will be well-remembered by those present!

The Society extends its heartfelt thanks to Svitlana for her enthusiastic and knowledgeable presentation of the wines of Ukraine and for her most interesting selection of wines; a first Ukraine wine-tasting for most members present, enriching the knowledge of some serious wine-lovers.