

WINETALK

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WINE CONNOISSEURS CLUB OF HAMILTON

July 2019

Coming Functions

July 14 Three Miners tasting re-visited
Aug 11 Linden Estate tasting
Sept 8 Pask tasting
Oct 13 Red Wines from the cellar
Nov 10 Cellar wines tasting - TBC

MID-WINTER WINES, MID-WINTER CHRISTMAS AND..... LE JOUR DE GROUNDHOG

A MID-WINTER NORTHERN HEMISPHERE CHRISTMAS

Winter has well and truly set in so to warm the cockles of our heart, fellow Wine Club member, Ann Lewis and I headed down to the Hamilton Beer and Wine Company for their Master Class: **A Mid-Winter Northern Hemisphere Christmas.**



Organised by the Red Bridge Wine Company from Wanaka, owner, larger than life AJ Thompson, presented an outstanding tasting of 8 European wines. AJ has worked in the wine industry in New Zealand since 1998 and initially set up business solely as an exporter of Central Otago Pinot Noirs. However on a cycling trip around Europe with his partner he visited several (probably hundreds), of vineyards in France, Spain, Italy and Portugal and after speaking to the owners and winemakers he realised the need for importing top quality fine European wines to New Zealand. This is now Red Bridge's main focus. He travels to Europe regularly throughout the year, meeting new winemakers, tasting new wines and producing fine photographs for his marketing campaigns.

Breathtaking photos of the vineyards, the winemakers, the beautiful wineries in the regions that have been producing wines for thousands of years and have suffered wars, famines, vine diseases yet still producing fine wines. 'Empires and kingdoms may fall but as long as man is around the noble grape will be.'

We started with two whites, an Italian Campagnola Tenute Arneces Organic Prosecco from the North East region of Italy on the Slovenian border. Very refreshing and a good start to the night but a bit too sweet for me - I prefer a more Brut Prosecco. \$23.99. Next was a Campagnola Tenute Organic Pinot Grigio 2017. First taste on the tongue was not good but it had a very pleasant long finish and we decided it was quite delicious in the end. It was lingering and a big burst of flavours, however you have to get past the nose and first touch. Pinot Gris can be so different and this was organic from the same vineyard as the Prosecco.



The next wines were the most popular of the night! Both from Spain and [Enate Estate](#). The Enate Rosado (Rosé) 2017 and the Enate Syrah 2015.

Enate Estate, nestled in the foothills of the Pyrenees, is a few hours north west of Barcelona. AJ couldn't speak highly enough of Enate. It is where art and wine are brought together. Enate have the concept of art and wine mutually enriching one another. It is a



winery, a museum, a wine shop and an art gallery. In magnificent buildings, enormous walls covered in original art and barrels sum up the great wines of Spain and all their labels are unique to each wine, painted by Spain's finest artists.



The Rosado is a single variety wine, a Cab Sav grape, with an intense fruity nose where the aromas of the grape (blueberry, raspberry and pepper) pre-dominant. Full and feisty in the mouth its balanced acidity makes it a lively subtle wine. It had a very slight fizz which dissipated. Magnificent fruit development in the mouth with a long aftertaste. It has won Gold awards all over Europe and USA and Canada. At only \$22.99 this was exceptional. The Enate Syrah 2015 was also just beautiful. Intense Picota cherry red colour parade of red berries, blue flowers with vanilla notes. This was also mid-winter magic and what a drink for the cold nights. An absolute beauty but pricey at \$49.99.



We enjoyed the Portuguese Vallegre Douro Colheita 2016. Price \$31.99. This was also delicious. Portugal has some stunning vineyards along the Douro, many of them fit for mountain goats only. Their wine industry is hundreds of years old and the winemakers are full of personality and enthusiasm and famous in the wine world. On the bucket list.

Two more Italian wines to go! Caterina Zardini Valpolicella Classica Superiore 2016 at \$31.99 and the Montefastino la Traveragna Ripasso at \$36.99 were both delicious. They are from the Valpolicella region of Italy around Verona. They were full of intensity, velvety with spiced notes and just so smooth. Delicious. Their reds are just stunning.

Then would you believe we finished off with a Sherry! We were surprised/shocked when he announced this and he copped a lot of ridicule from our tables! However, this Spanish 501 Gades Pedro Ximenez NV, from Jerez, Cadiz area, was a REAL SHERRY! It was 18% alcohol so one or two mouthfuls were sufficient (especially if driving home). Rich, syrupy and long in the mouth, tasting of honey, figs, raisins. For only \$29.99 this was amazing. Certainly not your grandmother's sherry. AJ accompanied this with a classic fruit cake his wife had made and he had brought from Wanaka. This was a perfect match with the Sherry.

What a fabulous mid-winter Christmas night and so well presented. It is interesting to taste different European wines as we are more used to 'New World Wines' and although some were quite pricey it was a pleasure to taste and hear the history and story of these wine regions. He was off to Europe the next day for more wine buying trips. What a job!

PEDRO XIMENEZ AND A CLASSIC DESSERT

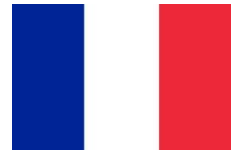
This is a very easy way to use this stunning Sherry besides drinking it of course. Grab a carton of Rum and Raisin ice cream. Put a couple of scoops in a bowl and pour PX liberally over it, like a sauce. OMG. An instant classic dessert.

LE JOUR DE GROUNDHOG

Well, after the non-arrival of the Three Miners' wines last month, our gallant Cellar Master and Secretary raced around and found six fabulous wines to taste. Presented by the Three Miner's Marketing person, Ngarita, the tasting was a great success. She was very knowledgeable, personable and took it all in her stride to talk about the Central Otago wines we replaced hers with. It was a very successful night and now.....

GROUNDHOG DAY

We will be tasting the Three Miners' wines (that turned up a couple of days later), at the tasting on 14th July, which also happens to be La Fete Nationale de France, so we will have a surprise big, bold, red Bordeaux to finish off the tasting. It is fitting to do this as French miner Jean Feraud began the wine industry in Central Otago in 1864! Vive La France. You may wear berets for the occasion and French flags are welcome. Here's a little tippie to help you celebrate France's National Day:



FRENCH GROG

For each person to be served, bring to the boil 100ml of red wine - Malbec or any red will do - with three teaspoons of sugar. Add 250mls of fresh hot coffee, preferably espresso, and continue boiling for two minutes. Serve in large cups or latte bowls.

KEEPING UP WITH WINESPEAK..... WHAT IS MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION?

Wines can also get extra flavour by going through a secondary fermentation called malolactic fermentation. In this fermentation, hard malic acid is converted to softer lactic acid, giving the wine a softer, smoother texture. Nearly all red wines undergo malolactic fermentation, (malo or ML) otherwise they would be too harsh to be pleasant drinking. In white wines, malolactic fermentation is optional; some winemakers will choose to let only part or none of the juice go through malo. Malo will often give a white wine a buttery or milky flavours.

WHAT ARE WE DRINKING?

Cellar master David Edson has changed to winter drinking....."I have changed to my 'winter wine mode' - now mostly red with the last I enjoyed being a Yalumba 2006 Cab Sav/Shiraz blend. Maybe past its best but still enjoyable. The other wine currently being drunk is a Stonecroft 2014 Sav Blanc which went down very well with Bluff Oysters and then as a base for Coromandel mussels..."

Congratulations to Judy Fitness, our Secretary, who has retired from the Health sector. Enjoy not going into work everyday Judy?

"Joe gave me a very nice Domaine Central Otago Pinot Noir 2013, grapes from a single vineyard in Bannockburn, as a combined retirement and birthday present. So we enjoyed that with Venison steaks one night. Very smooth and lovely.

I was also given an Elephant Hill Pinot Gris and Merlot to celebrate my retirement so I have been drinking them as well as a very enjoyable Nugan Estate Sangiovese with Spag Bol the other night.

All way more upmarket than my usual tippie, but one should optimise one's opportunities to celebrate life's achievements." Allelujah to that Judy.

AND REMEMBER: "Reality is an illusion which occurs due to lack of wine...."



Gay Main