

The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



'Moreson Wines – South Africa' Presented by Linda Mellor, LM Fine Wines Ltd

22 February 2012

A very interesting presentation from Linda who has been a wine importer for many years and had some fascinating stories about small scale importing and the wine trade

Welcome aperitif

Cono Sur Riesling Bio Bio Valley 2010, Chile

'Proper' Riesling nose, reasonably rich colour. Classic full-bodied Riesling, citrus, minerally palate, cool climate style but with the ripeness you expect from the New World. Always great value this wine

The wines

Whites

Moreson Solitaire NV

£14.50

From Franchhoek, a warmer area than the other two 'biggies' Paarl and Stellenbosch, and we were told very good for bottle-fermented wines. This has a minimum of 2 years bottle age giving it some complexity. Estate grown grapes, just off-dry style. Lovely bready nose, bottle aging apparent. Nice bright gold colour with very fine bubbles. Surprisingly rich palate but fresher than some South African whites. Reasonable finish (pleasant rather than long) - a nicely balanced wine with some style. Generally well-liked around the room.

Miss Molly's 'Kitchen Thief' Sauvignon Blanc 2011

£8.50

An easy-drinking Sauvignon to kick off the whites. Characteristic grassy nose with a hint of minerality – aromatic but not stridently gooseberry. Quite a 'green' character. Colour a little deeper than its New Zealand equivalent would be. Slightly spritzy palate (deliberate). Softer than NZ sauvignon, different character, less overtly astringent, lower acidity. My notes say 'a slightly odd pear-like finish, ripe, quite full'. The 2009 is apparently still drinking well so there's enough body here to last a couple of years – always a good sign though sauvignons at this level are not for keeping really. Very drinkable!

Miss Molly 'Hoity Toity' Chenin/Viognier 2011

£8.50

Here's an interesting blend of high acidity citrusy Chenin and low acidity aromatic Viognier – understandable why they'd do it! I thought a slightly pear-drop nose (perhaps it was the contrast after the sauvignon) with definite Viognier perfume over the Chenin astringency. Again this is noticeably ripe, with a reasonably defined mid-palate though a little more restrained than the nose might have suggested. A little too 'confected' for my own taste but this is a crowd-pleaser and would be a great summer picnic wine with enough body to deal with outdoor food.

Moreson '37 Barrels' Chardonnay 2010

£18.00

Now we're talking... Older vines, not much irrigated so that the grapes are more concentrated. An astonishingly different nose from the previous wine – the contrast made this smell at first sniff exactly like fresh toast. (Just shows how the order in which you show wines at a tasting can be crucial in displaying their best characteristics.) Some pineapple notes, very tropical style, classic buttery palate. My notes say 'this is really good Chardonnay – nice and mineral, ripe, buttery, excellent acidity balance, low yields obvious in the concentration'. Fresh and long – impressive (though not inexpensive!)

A series of interesting whites of which this one was undoubtedly the class act – my notes say 'all the whites had very good noses'.

Reds

Miss Molly 'In My Bed' Cabernet/Merlot 2010

£8.75

A 50-50 blend. Not estate-grown but they buy in the grapes rather than the juice – a sort of halfway house between buying in and growing your own. Narrow purple rim - this is the new vintage and is not intended to improve in bottle. Quite a Cabernet nose, coolly minty, pleasant and refreshing. Palate again is soft - not tannic at all despite the Cabernet. Popular easy drinker, fruity. Linda had brought along a very interesting little gizmo which we tried out on this wine – a 'wine ager' which purports to give young wines the impression of bottle age. The general consensus was that it tends to take the top fruit notes out of the wine leaving the tannins – or in a wine with very little tannin like this one, unfortunately leaving not very much at all! An interesting experiment and it certainly seemed to change the wine considerably. But beware how you use it seemed to be the general verdict...

Moreson Pinotage 2010

£14.50

This prompted an interesting discussion about Pinotage and the often-quoted prejudice against its rather 'animal' nature. Always an idiosyncratic wine, the group was split over what you might want to pay for it, however good an example. This however is not an aggressively 'animal' pinotage – the fruit is quite prominent and the rather strange pinotage character is kept pretty much in the background. Purple legs on the glass, thick and viscous, not an old-style pinotage, a much more modern fruit-driven wine that might even win over the doubters! Value for money tricky to gauge since none of our group was all that experienced with this grape, but it's fair to say that it was generally more enjoyed than some of us might have expected.

Moreson Mata Mata 2007

£8.99

Cabernet Franc-Merlot blend with a 5% dash of Cabernet Sauvignon. St Emilion anyone? Current vintage is 2009 so we were treated to a beautifully bottle-aged wine showing its virtues very well. Nice minty nose, some cedar - both Cabernet Franc characteristics. Mellow, very 'Bordeaux' in style. Showing age on the rim and very reminiscent of a decent St Emilion with a bit of bottle maturity. You might not pick this as South African. A fair whack of 14.5% alcohol might be a giveaway – but that's certainly not unheard of in St Emilion these days! A restrained, very nicely balanced mature red

Linda peppered her presentation with stories about the wines and their background, and entertained us with insights into the on trade generally and pricing strategies in particular – all fascinating stuff and a new angle to many of us. Linda's knowledge and enthusiasm was infectious and the wines were interesting too. A very successful evening much enjoyed by the group.