

The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



'Festival of Portugal'

Presenter: Mick Gleed

28 August 2013

Always a fun evening with Mick who'd chosen to present an evening of Portuguese wines - currently very much on the 'up' in terms of popularity and availability

The wines

Whites

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Tesco Finest Vinho Verde 2011 | 11.5% | £7.49 |
| <p>We thought there was some bottle variation here – bottle 1 seemed slightly more developed (and possibly 2011 is borderline for an early drinking wine). Interestingly neither bottle had any spritziness on the palate – often present in Vinho Verde. Acidity good but not searing and a fuller palate than we expected.</p> | | |
| 2. Laithwaites Amoras 2012 | 12.5% | £7.49 |
| <p>Family owned winery – Jose Luis Oliveira da Silva. Blend of four grapes - Fernao Pires/Arnito/Vital/Moscatel. Bright pale lemon colour with a nice little spritz on the tongue. Lovely dry mid-palate and a longish finish for an £8 wine. Modern fresh winemaking. My notes say 'this nose is more what might have been expected from the Vinho Verde'. Generally well-liked around the room. Good value.</p> | | |
| 3. Laithwaites Portinho Do Covo Branco 2012 | 13% | £7.99 |
| <p>Fernao Pires/Verdelho/Moscatel. Greenish tint and a more aromatic nose here, quite a floral palate, full and round. A hint of 'warmth' – ripeness but also a touch of alcohol on the finish. My notes say 'a prettier nose than 2 but not quite matched by the palate'. A less floral finish and a bigger wine than 2 but not quite as well balanced? Probably enough body to stand up to crab as well as the usual suggested seafood match.</p> | | |
| 4. Albarrada Branco Alantejo 2012 | 12.5% | £6.99 |
| <p>A co-operative wine. Blend is Fernao Peres/Arinto/Rabo-de-Ovelha. Delicate herbal nose and a definite saline note on the palate - which seemed much dryer than wine 3. My notes say 'a strange herbal/saline mid-palate, dry but full, style more like wine 2 than wine 3'. I also noted that wine 2 was still as impressive on re-tasting it after wine 4.</p> | | |

Reds

- 5. Laithwaites Brigando 2011** 12.5% £6.99
Shiraz/Tinta Roriz/Touriga Nacional. A 'porty' nose – not surprisingly with two port grapes in the blend. Narrow rim, very little age showing. My notes say 'a soft juicy palate, no real tannins here, nose promised much, palate more straight up and down.' Easy drinking, in some ways rather like a new world shiraz without the big alcohol finish. An attractively ripe finish.
- 6. Laithwaites Valoroso 2011** 15% £8.99
Cabernet Sauvignon/Touriga Nacional/Syrah. Opaque, big and black with purple legs on the glass. Some oak apparent on the nose, and a little hint of rubber (Syrah?) A noticeably minty palate (Cabernet) with spice (Syrah) and a finish tinged with alcohol, but not overly so given the 15%. Balance reasonable but my notes say 'it's all on the front end rather than the finish'. But at 8.99 that's to be expected.
- 7. Laithwaites Quinta Esperito Santo 2011** 15% £7.99
Tinto Roriz/Catelao. Cooler climate wine. A very 'closed' nose by comparison with the previous wine. But a stronger mid-palate with better acidity and 'grip'. Alcohol not as evident here on the finish, although the room generally didn't agree and many of us preferred wine 6 on the night. I liked wine 7 as possibly the better prospect for 2-3 years on.
- 8. Taylor's First Estate Reserve Port NV** 20% £14.00
Very sweet palate (like a Ruby?) and pleasant enough, but by general agreement this didn't seem particularly distinguished. Arguably it wouldn't be at £14 - nevertheless the Taylor's pedigree led us to expect a hint of class so overall a bit of a disappointment. Perhaps expectations were too high at this price point...

A well researched and informative presentation by Mick that really showcased modern Portuguese winemaking and the increasing availability of very drinkable wines at (as yet) very fair prices.