

The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



'Portugal – Europe's best kept secret'

Presenter: Paul Hibbert

23 January 2013

The wines

Whites

1. Quinta da Espiga 2011, Lisboa

Blend is Fernao Pires, Arinto, Moscatel and Sauvignon Blanc. Region is Boa Vista, winery is Casa Santos Lima, founded 1890s. Restrained 'cool' nose, bright in the glass with a greenish hint. Dry mid-palate and an attractive saline finish. Full bodied – it's allowed to stay on the skins longer for bigger flavours. Screwcapped for freshness and holding well.

12.5% £6.50
Wine
Soc

2. Torre de Azevedo 2010, Vinho Verde

Blend is Loureiro, Pederna (Arinto) and Trajadura. A modern Vinho Verde made by the massive Sogrape operation which is producing some lovely wines at competitive price points. My notes say 'very typical!' Light bodied and spritzzy with a hint of bubblegum (not intrusive) and the expected acidity leading to a very lemony finish. More body than apparent at first sip – the glass showing some 'legs'. Screwcap

11.5% £6.99
Sains

3. Adega de Monaco 2011, Vinho Verde

Alvarinho (i.e. the same grape as the Galician Albarino) and Trajadura blend. From a co-operative. A really 'star bright' colour and some hints of vanilla on the nose. Again a pronounced spritziness from the (deliberately added) CO2. A creamier mid-palate and finish here. My notes say 'wine 2 tastes quite astringent by comparison, going back'. General verdict – good value. Bottled under cork.

11.5% £5.95
Wine
Soc

4. Monte Velho 2011, Alentejano

Blend is Roupiero, Antao Zaz and Perrum. Made by Aussie David Beaverstock, Portuguese Winemaker of the Year in 1991 so plenty of experience here! Deeper greenish gold colour and a bigger wine with prominent 'legs' on the glass. More of a food wine than the previous three. Some alcohol on the finish but pretty well balanced. My notes say 'fruit is not the main point here'. Nice rich mineral nose. Splendid value again from the Wine Society.

13.5% £6.50
Wine
Soc

Reds

- 5. Quinta da Lagoalva 2009, Tejo** £6.70
By the river Tagus, winery founded 1834. Sandy soils. Winemaker had worked (£8.95)
in the Hunter Valley, Australia. Touriga Nacional and Castelao blend. Showing BBR
a little age on the rim, and quite a 'port' aroma with damsons and black fruit, a £6.55
good upfront nose. Very dry on the mid palate, lots of body with coloured 'legs' Wine
but nicely balanced. A hint of menthol on the finish. Soc
- 6. Monte Velho 2011, Alentejano** 14% £6.75
The second Monte Velho wine of the evening, this is a blend of Tincadiera, Wine
Aragonez and Castelao. My notes say 'a Syrah nose' - smoky character with a Soc
bit of that Syrah 'rubber'. Decent smooth palate, but seems young still. Alcohol
fairly evident on the finish, and it's fair to say that this wine was not particularly
well-liked around the room (I liked it more than most!) Paul said his 3 bottles of
2010 had definitely been superior to this 2011 so maybe another year will help...
- 7. Altano Symington 2010, Douro** 13% £7.95
From one of the biggest names in Port (Symington) and from the Douro, so we (10.75)
could expect that the flavours here would have something in common with Port, BBR
especially as it's a blend of 'port' grapes - Touriga Franca, Tinto Roriz (i.e. £7.75
Tempranillo), Tinta Barroca and Touriga Nacional. Organically produced. A real Wine
'port' nose, very deep colour, concentrated, opaque, purple 'legs', narrow rim. Soc
Smooth palate, again pretty dry on the finish, but better length here. Some
vanilla evident. This is a relatively new style in Portugal - modern full flavoured
table wines made from the port grapes for early drinking. It was generally liked
(and felt to be good value at the Wine Society price, though perhaps less
obviously so at BBR's full price!)
- 8. Drink Me Niepoort 2008, Douro** 13% £9.95
Stainless steel fermentation, 12 months in 20% new oak barrels. Dutch company Wine
hence the name. Touriga Franca, Touriga Nacional, Tinta Roriz, Tinta Amerla, Soc
Tinta Cao - a veritable cocktail of port grapes. Age showing on rim but a very
backward nose - is there more to come? A ripe palate and a nice 'sweet' finish.
Balanced, smooth, plenty going on here. Some minerality and the tannins are
smooth and silky. A good tenner's worth for a wine with a little bottle age.

A really interesting selection of modern Portuguese wines, showing what good value these currently are. Buy before prices rise!