

## The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



### Joie de Vin: Languedoc-Roussillon

Presenter: Tim North  
27 July 2016

New presenters to the Society Tim and Jill North of importer **Joiedevin.co.uk** brought a selection of small-producer wines from the Languedoc

Prices below included a 'purchase on the night' discount

#### The wines

##### Whites

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| <b>1. Domaine de La Chaise Fines Bulles de Touraine Brut</b>   | 12.5% | £65<br>for 6 |
| Loire 'traditional method' sparkling wine with secondary fermentation in the bottle (like Champagne). Made from 100% Chenin Blanc whose high acidity works very well in Loire fizz (think Cremant de Loire). Fresh appley nose, lightweight citrus/apple palate with no hint of breadiness, prominent lively acidity, no great length but a very pleasant aperitif indeed and a refreshing start to a hot July evening's tasting...  |       |              |
| <b>2. Chateau Montfin Cuvee St Jacques 2014, AOP Corbieres Blanc <i>Organic</i></b>  | 14%   | £80<br>for 6 |
| A rich oaked white made in limited quantities from small parcels of old vine Roussanne and Grenache Blanc. Pale gold with visible legs in the glass. Nose showing some oak but by no means in-your-face – fresh tropical fruit much more evident. An aromatic mid-palate with 'pineapple chunks' and 'nuts' and real complexity on a lengthy finish. (Our bottle had a sticker showing an endorsement by Tim Atkin MW.) Coming back to this later on in the evening, the oak and fruit had mellowed into a pleasingly harmonious whole. Much enjoyed by the group. |       |              |

##### Rose

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| <b>3. Domaine Trilles Initiation Rose 2105, IGP Cotes Catalans</b>   | 14% | £55<br>for 6 |
| One bottle unfortunately not fresh – a sample compared with the other bottle was a darker colour and not as 'clean' looking (clear bottles sadly provide very little protection from light). The good bottle had a much fresher nose of red berries and just a hint of something floral. (The other bottle had a slightly musky medicinal nose – not right at all for this blend of Grenache and Syrah.) A big dry rose with a relatively deep colour - quite a robust palate but soft, intended for food (charcuterie suggested). |     |              |

## Reds

- 4. Domaine Trilles Initiation Rouge 2105, AOP Cotes de Roussillon** 14% **£55 for 6**  
The same producer's red, made from old Grenache/Mourvedre/Syrah/Carignan bush vines, aged 10 months in very large oak barrels. Syrah pepper-and-spice on the nose, Grenache smoothness on the palate, very subtle oak, just a little soft tannin in the background. Bottled only a month ago so still settling down, but not intended for the long haul, 2 years at most suggested. Generally enjoyed as an easy drinker.
- 5. Chateau Montfin Cuvee Pauline 2013, AOP Corbieres *Organic*** 14.5% **£60 for 6**  
More Syrah in this blend from the producer of the impressive wine 2. More development on the nose than wine 4 (as two years older) and there were some interesting thoughts on the nature of the aromas – 'herbal' and the rather less obvious 'talcum powder' were overheard comments. A firm palate with more prominent tannins, though by no means obscuring the overall impression of ripeness. A number of us commented that both this and the next wine held their alcohol levels very well with no 'hot' finish – a sure sign of balance and harmony in the winery.
- 6. Chateau Montfin Cuvee Mathilde 2012, AOP Corbieres *Organic*** 14.5% **£80 for 6**  
Bit of a step up here for this traditional southern French blend of old vine Carignan and Grenache. Half is given carbonic maceration (retaining freshness of fruit) and half is matured in new oak. 'Dark and dangerous' was one comment, but although a big wine the balance here was again impressive, with a firmer grip on the palate and finishing 'cool' despite the 14.5% alcohol. Really impressive length with some complex lingering flavours. Some discussion on the relative merits of Mathilde versus Pauline came down mostly on the side of Mathilde for her greater complexity and pretty obvious class ☺
- 7. Domaine La Toupie Sur Un Fil Rouge 2013, AOP Maury Sec** 15% **£70 for 6**  
A dry Maury - usually Maury is a sweet red 'vin doux naturel' dessert wine – but these are unfashionable so some producers are making a dry Maury instead. Again old bush vines are the key to the intensity and complexity of these wines – this one is a blend of Grenache/Syrah/Mourvedre with a whopping 15% alcohol. A hint of port on the nose (unsurprisingly!) – some of us thought slightly metallic. A ripe concentrated palate with an almost Italian-like bitter cherry note on the finish – something a number of us noted. Mixed reactions on this one, a definite curiosity.
- 8. Mas Gabinelle 2013, AOP Faugeres** 14% **£80 for 6**  
This comes from a little further north towards St Chinian. Low yield Syrah/Grenache/Carignan/Mourvedre, given some new (or 1 year old) oak barrel treatment. Almost tempting to imagine they may be aiming to play the New World at their own game – this is ripe, smooth, no rough edges, with a soft finish and very approachable. 'Very black, very smooth' was one comment – perhaps with just a little less overtly local 'character' than some of the other reds tasted this evening?
- 9. Domaine Trilles Pedra Lluna 2014, AOP Cotes de Roussillon** 14.5% **£80 for 6**  
Old bush vine Mourvedre (80%) and Syrah with 12 months in oak. Massive and brooding... Coloured legs on the glass. A definite 'mintiness' was noticed on both nose and palate, as was 'plumminess' on a very ripe mouthfeel, with plenty of warmth (alcohol?) on the way through to a persistent finish. Very much liked in the room.

A really super tasting with some terrific wines, and not just the reds as we might have expected from this region – many of us were surprised at the quality of wine 2 in particular. All had interest and genuine regional character which was much appreciated by the group

**The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog** is by **Julia Shaw**