

The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



Both Sides of the Rhine Presenter: Andy Finklaire

22 June 2016

A 'mostly whites' evening from Andy, comparing wine styles from Germany and Alsace

The wines

Red

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1. Dornfelder 2014, Pfalz Qba | 12.5% | £4.99 |
| Deep cherry red colour, fragrant nose with berries prominent. Not as light on the palate as you might think (and many of us expected) – some body on the mid-palate, finishing quite dry, a very soft finish but pleasantly persistent. Generally well-liked, especially at this price. | | Lidl |

Whites

- | | | |
|---|---------------------|----------|
| 2. Dr L Grey Slate Riesling Private Reserve, Mosel Qba | 10.5% | £9.99 |
| Ernst Loosen's entry level Riesling, made for early and relatively simple drinking. Very pale with a hint of lime green. Super-spritz attack (deliberate), off-dry but zingy palate, mouth-watering hints of citrus, very delicate. Perfect for the summer terrace, lovely balance, a touch of class behind the easy-drinking style. | | Waitrose |
| 3. Dr Loosen Urziger Wurtzgarten Riesling Kabinett 2014, Mosel QmP | 7.5% | £15.99 |
| A step up in complexity here from Ernst Loosen – a single vineyard Kabinett from the Wurtzgarten ('spice garden') vineyard. This is classic Mosel Riesling – just 7.5% alcohol but <i>concentrated</i> in a way that the previous wine isn't meant to be. Very pale watery lemon colour, steely mineral 'stony' nose, a concentrated palate of 'ripe apples' and some 'straw' (implying a hint of development just starting to show). An off-dry finish, and this could be kept if you wanted it to develop some petrolly aromas. | | Waitrose |
| 4. Kuhlmann-Platz Pinot Blanc Cuvee Prestige 2014, Alsace | 12.5%
each for 2 | £8.99 |
| Very pale colour, almost colourless. A nose of stone fruits – 'apricot and peach' was heard around the room. A less fruity grape and wine style here, a much dryer palate with quite an austere finish. Pinot Blanc can make interesting wines in Alsace and elsewhere, but it can be overshadowed by more showy grapes. I liked this but the room's verdict may have been a little more mixed. | | Majestic |
| 5. Cave de Beblenheim Pinot Gris Reserve 2014 | 12.5% | £9.99 |
| You'd expect a spicier palate with Pinot Gris, and this was a nice example from a well-established Alsace winery. Bright pale golden colour, a noticeably bigger spicier nose than the previous wine, similar prominent aromatics on the palate with some richness and body. Full but not 'fat' and still dry but with a warm finish. 'Cream soda' was one comment overheard – in a good way I think... | | Waitrose |

6. Kuhlmann-Platz Riesling Cuvee Prestige 2015, Alsace

13% £7.99
each for 2 Majestic

The only partial disappointment of the evening, as the general feeling was that this Alsace Riesling promised more than it delivered. Nose slightly synthetic perhaps? – and the familiar ‘pear drop’ was noticed. Quite a full palate, and I thought there was maybe a hint of some complexity, but generally we weren’t over-impressed by the flavours or the length. But it is relatively inexpensive for Alsace Riesling.

7. Domaine Paul Blanck Gewurztraminer 2014, Alsace

13% £11.99
Waitrose

Mixed reactions here, but the majority seemed to enjoy this. Another step up in quality from the previous wine. The expected flowery nose, but (for me) not guilty of straying into unfortunate Turkish Delight territory. However there were comments such as ‘honeysuckle – leave it on the wall...’ which suggested not to everyone’s taste! Lovely pale gold colour and a real solid streak of acidity running through the palate which cut the lychee effect very well. A jolly nice example of Alsace Gewurz and a pretty fair price for the quality.

8. Darting Estate Huxelrebe Beerenauslese 2011, Pfalz QmP

8% £20.00
50cl M&S

An affordable Beerenauslese ‘sticky’ from M&S and a very creditable one too. An absolute plethora of descriptions of the nose were overheard (well it was the end of the evening) – such as ‘laundry basket’, ‘ice hockey kit’, ‘wet suits’, ‘whiffy animals’ – you get the drift... Yes there was a bit of development on the nose, and possibly just a touch of very desirable botrytis, but overall I’d have said honey with plenty of orange marmalade/barley sugar on the palate, all cut through with properly massive acidity. Very nice...

A great line-up from Andy, with (as ever) loads of knowledgeable background information – plus holiday snaps!

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