

The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



'Call My Bluff'

Presenters: Paul Carter with colleague Joe, from Majestic Basingstoke

26 October 2016

One wine, two alternative descriptions, which True and which Bluff?
Vintages weren't supplied on the tasting sheet so check Majestic website if not shown below

The wines

Whites

1. Chablis 'La Collégiale' Domaine Laroche 2014

The two descriptions mentioned 'minerality' vs 'Italian indigenous grape variety'. Not all that easy since the very ripe 2014 Chablis wines are noticeably fruitier and richer than in some years. Some of us picked up the minerality and were not seduced by the Piedmontese Gavi description, but a number of us were fooled...

£14.99 £12.99
bottle mix six

2. The Cup and Rings Godello

Either 'Spanish Atlantic coast, with shellfish' or 'light citrusy southern France' was also quite tricky - some of us imagined that the Spanish description might imply Albarino whereas the wine itself had more body than you'd expect, leading some to guess south of France for its riper feel. But if you'd identified from the descriptions that you'd got either Godello (not Albarino) or Picpoul it would have been a lot easier to make the right call!

£11.49 £9.99
bottle mix six

3. Gerard Bertrand Viognier

'Scented flavour-rich tropical grape-of-the-moment' vs 'stone fruit, floral intensity, grown in many regions'. Much easier this one – the stone fruit character was very obvious and there really wasn't a tropical Sauvignon character, so many of us picked both description and wine as Viognier. This southern French example from a respected producer was much liked – quite a success since our group contains both Viognier-lovers and Viognier-doubters.

£9.99 £8.99
bottle mix six

4. Villa Maria Cellar Selection Sauvignon Blanc 2015

The Bluff description for wine 3 was actually a perfect True description for wine 4 – the alternative description implied Pinot Grigio/Pinot Gris which this very clearly wasn't. Probably the easiest of the evening to identify, since once you know the aroma of Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc it's unlikely you'll confuse it with anything else. This leapt out of the glass with massive blackcurrant leaf and gooseberry aromatics. A very nice example from the superior 2015 vintage.

£11.49 £9.99
bottle mix six

Reds

5. Russian Jack Pinot Noir, Martinborough 2014

'Carbonic maceration' mentioned in the Bluff description indicated a possible Beaujolais, and the True description indicated Pinot Noir (a nice comparison since both Gamay and Pinot Noir could either be from Burgundy or elsewhere). This was picked by many of us (not just the one of us who could pick Pinot Noir blindfolded...) From Martinborough, one of the strongholds of NZ Pinot Noir, this is a relatively inexpensive example but with plenty of typical red berry fruit character and we found it very drinkable.

£13.99 £11.99
bottle mix six

6. Definition Chianti

'Grape grown in Italy/California, ancient vines, spice' (indicating Primitivo/Zinfandel) vs 'NW Italy, acidity' (indicating Sangiovese perhaps) should maybe have been easier than it was in practice, but at wine no 6 palates were possibly not quite as razor-sharp as earlier in the evening... This felt to me like quite a beefy Chianti but the black cherry character and high acidity was definitely there and should have led to the right identification.

£11.99 £9.99
bottle mix six

7. Marcelo Pelleriti Malbec 2015

'Popular grape, steaks, BBQ' (indicating Malbec) vs 'Thick skins, with Merlot/Cab Franc (indicating Cabernet Sauvignon) again wasn't necessarily very obvious but many of us did go for the True Malbec description – generally a more rounded softer mouthfeel than Cab Sauvignon, especially here in a much-enjoyed full-bodied example from Mendoza, Argentina.

£12.99 £9.99
bottle mix six

8. Vina Ardanza Rioja Reserva 2007 La Rioja Alta

Despite not knowing the vintage until it was revealed, the rim and general colour was a heavy hint that the Bluff description of 'Chile, grape blended with Cabernet Sauvignon in Bordeaux' (indicating Merlot or possibly Carmenere) might not be plausible. Most of us went for the Rioja description, and not just any Rioja - a mature 2007 Reserva from top region La Rioja Alta – a special treat to end the tasting.

£23.99 £19.99
bottle mix six

A really fun tasting-with-a-twist, showcasing some enjoyable wines from the current Majestic list

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