

# The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



## Bordeaux

Presenter: Andrew Gadd from Averys of Bristol

23 August 2017

(Prices in red discounted for attendees until Fri 29 September)

### The wines

#### Whites

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| <b>1. Chateau Vircoulon 2015, Entre Deux Mers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 12.5% | £9.99         |
| Sauvignon/Semillon/Muscadelle blend from a fourth generation family estate. A slightly confected sherbety nose was commented on (AG agreed), palate crisp with some nice Semillon weight and creaminess in the middle. AG – ‘seafront, almost Muscadet-like’. Not too complex but good value and very drinkable, and generally much enjoyed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |       | <b>£8.99</b>  |
| <b>2. G de Chateau Guiraud 2016, Sauternes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 13.5% | £18.99        |
| One of a new(ish) breed of dry white Bordeaux made by some Sauternes producers - Y d’Yquem and R de Rieussec are other high profile examples. G de Guiraud is a fair bit cheaper than either! – but as AG pointed out, Guiraud is right next door to Yquem and is itself a Sauternes 1er Cru. This is a 50/50 Semillon/Sauvignon blend with some barrel fermentation in old Sauternes casks and 7 months lees ageing. A nice leesy nose and a structured palate – the difference in complexity with wine 1 was remarked on. It’s still very young, and I can vouch for its ageing ability having bought this wine in its 2011 and 2014 vintages. Very good value for white Bordeaux of this quality. |       | <b>£16.99</b> |

#### Reds

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| <b>3. Avery’s Fine Claret 2012, Bordeaux Superior</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 13% | £10.99        |
| Avery’s basic claret, 70% Merlot/20% Cabernet Sauvignon/5% others including some Cabernet Franc. Early ripening, early drinking style, another 2-3 years perhaps, very supple and smooth on the palate, some nice mature soft tannins on the finish, aromatic nose (Cabernet Franc maybe?), a great value introduction to the red Bordeaux style. Overheard – ‘far better than BBR’s Good Ordinary Claret’. I couldn’t possibly comment...but approving noises were certainly heard all around the room.                                                                     |     | <b>£9.99</b>  |
| <b>4. Chateau des Francs 2014, Cotes de Bordeaux</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 14% | £13.99        |
| This wine has pedigree as it comes from the stable of Hubert de Bouard, owner of Cheval Blanc and Angelus in St Emilion. Some primary fruit on the nose still, but much more going on with some secondary aromas starting to develop. A deeper colour than wine 3, much more fullness on the palate and that lovely dry finish typical of Bordeaux, with tannins still prominent but in balance. Most of us thought this a big step up from wine 3 in complexity and interest. My notes say ‘lovely, classy, very good value for the 2014 vintage even before the discount’. |     | <b>£11.99</b> |

### 5. Cazabonne Medoc 2013

13.5% £13.99  
£11.99

At first sniff there was some concern in the room about possible faultiness. In fact both bottles were sound (confirmed by AG) and there wasn't even any really detectable bottle variation. This was just a very different nose - the Cabernet seeming more prominent than the 40% actually in the blend so a left bank nose vs wine 4's right bank Merlot nose - different animals. Also, 2013 was a 'lighter' vintage so you might expect perhaps a little more stalkiness on the Medoc nose than you'd get in a riper vintage. As time went on this started to open out very nicely in the glass. Cazabonne is a negociant with access to a wide range of Bordeaux chateaux – some bottlings such as this one are deliberately 'anonymous' where a chateau may need to clear stock at lower prices.

### 6. Cazabonne Pauillac 2014

13.5% £27.00  
£25.00

The Aveyrs website doesn't identify the chateau from which the grapes used in this Pauillac originate but AG did mention Latour's younger vines as a possible source. A more restrained nose here, and the colour very deep indeed with practically no rim. Lovely fresh tannins, definite eucalyptus on the palate, with (some of us thought) liquorice notes and a lengthy finish. Certainly with a life ahead of it – the website suggests drinking till 2024. Impressive concentration, all very harmonious.

### 7. Chateau Malescasse 2002, St Julien Cru Bourgeois

12.5% £18.99  
£14.99

A parcel of mature St Julien from a somewhat underrated vintage which, in some communes at least, seems to be lasting rather better than expected. Here the nose was pure secondary aromas with farmyard hints but not over-intrusively. 'Earthy' was a very good description overheard. Nicely mature and smooth on the palate with fully developed tannins, the fruit holding pretty well, the nose dissipating fairly quickly in the glass (so probably not one to decant too far in advance of drinking). The group really enjoyed this as a contrast to the younger wines on show, and it was a great opportunity to taste a good quality fully mature Cru Bourgeois.

### 8. Chateau R de Romer du Hayot 2014, Sauternes

£12.49  
£10.65

And finally...to everyone's satisfaction there was a sticky – and some Roquefort on the cheesboard to make the most of it! Romer du Hayot is a Sauternes 2e Cru Classe and seems good value - most Sauternes is produced in small quantities but only the stellar producers can charge correspondingly high prices, so much of the sweet wine produced here is exceptionally good value for the quality. Barley sugar nose and palate, quite a sweet one (they do vary) but with decent acidity and quite a floral character overall. A lighter style to drink relatively young and fresh.

The group as a whole really enjoyed this tasting of quality Bordeaux in a range of styles and stages of maturity, and we learned a lot from Andrew's broad knowledge of (and obvious enthusiasm for!) the wines he chose to show us.

There was a particular appreciation for wine 4 throughout the group - the Brouard-owned Francs Cotes de Bordeaux - which continued to impress even when compared to the later reds.