

BUCKINGHAM WINE CIRCLE



JUNE 2022

Chairman's Column

I have said it before and believe it is worth repeating!! I believe that Terry has missed his true vocation. He continues to show a mastery of editorial and publication skills in producing another really interesting newsletter. I am fast running out of superlatives.

The quality of the final publication is greatly enhanced by the informative and interesting articles that you, our members, continue to submit and these are then expertly put together by Terry. The articles in this issue from Julie, Keith, Sue, Kevin T, Terry and even Napoleon Bonaparte, Ludwig Van Beethoven and Joan Collins are very much appreciated. I am surprised to learn that the newsletters are so widely read!! Perhaps the next issue might include an article from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second after the dust has settled on her Platinum Jubilee celebrations. I hope you all enjoy any festivities planned for the Bank Holiday weekend and please submit an article on your celebrations for the next newsletter.

Thank you to Julie for continuing to report on our meetings and her attention to detail is excellent. How do you manage to remember them all after the consumption of the wines on offer?? Both the April and May events are included and a BIG thank you again to Sian, John, Helen and Ed for making the April presentation so memorable. As Keith in his article states, we were all very lucky to have such a great evening.

Enough of my ramblings. Best wishes to you all

Ken



Payments to the Buckingham Wine Circle

When you make a payment to the Circle's account would you please send an email to the Treasurer -

terry.wagstaff@live.co.uk

and state the purpose of the payment as the reference. {Details of the bank account can be obtained from the Treasurer.} All receipts will be acknowledged.



For an 'educational' clip on wine, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baxY3ICYHf4>

2022

JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH APRIL

See details of events on last page

April—Northern Italy Wines with Nibbles



Our hosts for the evening, John and Sian, ably assisted by Helen and Ed. John began this much anticipated event by

giving an overview as to how he became involved with Italy and Italian wines, by working for Olivetti as an engineer in Italy for two years.

Italy began producing better quality wines in the 1970's/ 80's. In the last two to three years their reputation has gone through the roof,



becoming a leading wine producer in 2020. Italian wines are produced from all typical Italian grape varieties. Prices being levelled at those of fine wines. Three white wines and four red wines were selected for this event, all served with food to compliment the wine.

“Either give me more wine or leave me alone.”

— Rumi, circa 1200's



1. Gavi de Gavi - Broglia DOCG from the Piedmont region 13.5% - £15 served with Bruschetta with Tomato and Basil

2. Vernaccia di SAN Gimignano DOCG from the Tuscany region 13% - £7 served with cold Pea soup with Basil.

3. Luganda DOC from the region of Lombardy 13% - £9 served with roast Salmon with citrus fennel and chilli

4. Bersano Piandelpiete Dolcetto d'Asti from the Piedmont region 13%- £10 served with Antipasti

5. Araldica Barbera D'Asti Superiore from the region of Piedmont 14.5% - £10 served with Pasta

Chairman's Opening Remarks

Ken opened the evening with a short introductory speech, in which a new member, Lara, was welcomed. Members were informed that disappointingly, the Kent trip is not looking very promising. He, also mentioned that feedback on the Tombola prize was welcome and all members are invited to put forward items they would like the Committee to discuss.

stuffed with Truffle

6. Extra special Valpolicella Ripasso DOC from the Venetian region 13.5%- £9 ASDA served with Meatballs

7. Barolo DOCG from the region of Nebbiolo 14.5%- £9 Lidl served with Gorgonzola
At the end of this wonderful Italian wine tasting, John continued with a short quiz. Ken, then gave a special thank you to John and Sian, for giving the the Wine Circle a most enjoyable evening.

Julie



Assyrtiko, Greek wine

On another trip to Aldi I discovered this Greek wine.

It is a blend of 90% Assyrtiko with 10% Sauvignon blanc, with an ABV of 13%. and from the 2019 vintage. It was retailing at £6.99, but when I looked recently it was out of stock.

It is recommended to go with mezze, feta and seafood.

It has pronounced aromas of lime blossoms and citrus. On the palate, a lively combination of high acidity, light body and lingering lemon and lime flavours along with

From Keith

Valerie and I were lucky enough to be attendees at the recent wonderful presentation of Italian wine and food by John and Sian. We went home feeling as though we had fed and watered to full capacity.....roll on the next country for introduction!!

At the end of the evening we were lucky enough to win the raffle and Ken asked for a brief report on the wine

It was a Gable and Grace blend of Shiraz and Malbec from the western cape of South Africa

We found the 2 grapes fused well together giving a full bodied red wine very suitable to drink around a barbecue or with red meat at any time

There was a strong fruit flavour and also a ripe fruit nose to the wine

We know it is available in Waitrose at £5.99 and consider a good buy.

noticeable minerality are said to leave you feeling refreshed and wanting more.

Assyrtiko is a rare, classy white grape, possibly some of the greatest varieties found in the Mediterranean basin. It originated from Santorini (Assyrtiko-Santorini) where it is grown in a basket style of trellising called 'Kouloura'. This design is meant to protect the grapes from the harsh winds that sweep across the

island. However it has spread all over Greece, becoming, in terms of quality, one of the most important native varieties. It has been planted in most Greek wine regions, from other Aegean Islands to Macedonia, Central Greece and down to the Peloponnese. It produces mainly dry white wines, some of which are being

aged in oak.

However, a number of sweet wines are made, from sun dried grapes.

In these areas, Assyrtiko keeps the crispness and minerality but it also shows a higher level of primary fruit aromas and a less dense structure. Sweet Assyrtiko like Vinsanto or PDO Monemvassia-Malvasia is a rich, sumptuous, piercing wine.

Wines from Santorini are

notoriously pricey and in order to be more cost effective.

Aldi has opted to source the grapes for this bottle from the Florina region of Greece which falls along the country's northern border. This just happens to be the coldest viticulture region in Greece. Therefore, the wine has cooler climate complexities such as

"Nothing makes the future look so rosy as to contemplate it through a glass of Chambertin."

– Napoleon Bonaparte

ripe, zesty citrus, rather than possessing more tropical passion fruit, beeswax and salty minerality that you might find in a warmer growing region closer to the sea. In order to add more complexities to this wine, Sauvignon Blanc is blended with the Assyrtiko which incorporates lime blossom aromas.

Assyrtiko is one of these rare white grape varieties that can grow in hot and dry climatic conditions, while at the same keeping the high alcohol in perfect balance by its crisp acidity. It is more of a textural variety, emphasizing extract, body and structure, rather than an aromatic grape.

All Assyrtiko wines, both barrel aged and stainless steel matured, can age confidently for five or even ten years, sometimes significantly more. Sweet Assyrtiko wines can keep forever,

Sue



The Circle to become a Music Appreciation Club

It was reported in the press recently that music can greatly influence our appreciation of wine. There have been several studies researching whether what we hear can influence what we taste. Way back in 2005 Johnson in 'Wine: a life uncorked' stated "Benny Goodman is a Riesling from Joseph Phelps; Louis Martini's wines have the charm and good manners of Glenn Miller. Joe Heitz, though, is surely Armstrong at the Sunset Café; virtuoso, perverse and glorious."

In a 2015 lecture, Charles Spence, professor in experimental psychology at Oxford University, said his team



had matched taste such as sweet and sour to sound properties like pitch and tempo. They confirmed that the brain, when eating and drinking, is influenced by external surroundings. As might be expected, if the surroundings are pleasurable, the taste is better. To make our wine taste better we should select the appropriate

background music. {Theoretically the expert wine tasters should be making an objective sensory (smell, taste, colour) evaluation of wine and not be influenced by their aural surroundings.}

The study matched heavy red wines, such as Malbec, with instruments like the organ and light white wines, like Sauvignon Blanc, with the harp. It found that sound does subjectively change the taste and texture of the wine. Powerful music makes the wine appear fuller bodied, or if the music is mellow and soft, the wine becomes more subtle. They suggest sweet wine is best

matched to soft music that has an even rhythm and slow tempo. Music that has a syncopated rhythm, fast tempo and a high pitch, perhaps featuring brass instruments, will suit red Italian wine such as Barbera. While staccato brass music matches Fino Sherry and other salty wines. Wines with fruity aromas, such as Beaujolais, goes best with with higher pitched music; wines which are smoky (Margaux), dark chocolate (Nero d'Avola) or cedar (Bordeaux) match with lower pitched music. High tannin wines go well with rock guitar of chunky, gritty strings and full-bodied wines need a symphonic orchestra.

Wine expert Susan Lin, who is also a trained concert pianist, found that playing music while drinking champagne makes it taste both fruitier and bubblier. She found: "When people thought the music was exciting, they felt the wine was exciting." So classical music makes wine taste better. Listening to Mozart and Beethoven symphonies apparently improves the enjoyment of a glass of red or white wine. This even applied to those who dislike classical music.

Terry

"Music is the wine which inspires one to new generative processes, and I am Bacchus who presses out this glorious wine for mankind and makes them spiritually drunken."

— Ludwig Van Beethoven



I just had a lunch in Browns near the Hub in MK and it was very good indeed. They have a set menu for lunch which is £14.95 for 2 courses or £18.95 for 3 courses and the choice of food

was excellent, as was the quality. It's a very nice environment with good service. We are all used to a Table D'Hote menu, whether it is in France or elsewhere in

Europe and the choices are often very slim, but this was very different. I will definitely go again for choice, quality, ambiance and overall dining experience. Highly recommended.

Kevin J



e-voice.org.uk/bwc/

May—Pieroth Wines

A short presentation was given by Courtney Brickstaff of Pieroth Wines. The company was founded in the 1960's, and sells wines exclusively. Pieroth wines will not be found in supermarkets. Throughout the wine tasting, Courtney came to each table to give an explanation of each wine.

Cash Nueva - Sauvignon Blanc

A Chilean wine, the region of Molina, 12.5%, retailing @ £9.99 + VAT. A fresh fruity wine, recommended to accompany pasta, grilled prawns, light dished with green herbs, softer more sour cheeses such as goats' cheese.

Cape Root - Chenin Blanc

Produce of Western Cape of South Africa. 12%, retailing @ £9.99 + VAT. A wine with seductive aromas of ripe honeydew melon, pear and peach scents.

Recommended to accompany grilled prawns and seafood.



Lobster Key - Sauvignon Blanc

A New Zealand wine, 2021, from the Marlborough region. 12.5% £15.99 + VAT. A wine with summer fruit overtones. Recommended to accompany white meat dishes and simmer salads.

Ponticello Rose

Produce of Vallagarina region of North West, Italy, just above

Lake Garda. 9.5%, £10.99 + VAT. An elegant wine full of raspberry and strawberry fruit flavours. To be enjoyed on its own or with family picnics or with dishes of grilled/ barbecued tuna.

Barbera D'Asti

From the Piedmont region of North-Western Italy. The region received DOCG classification in 2008. 13.5%, £12.99 + VAT. On the palate, soft and elegant. Recommended to accompany classic Italian dishes, or lightly chilled with antipasti.

Mount Leonard Cabernet Shiraz

From Australia. 14%, £10.99 + VAT. Made from a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz, an intense compact wine, with warm and spicy fruit flavours. Recommended to accompany

roast dinners and casseroles.



Chevalier de Bayard

From the Aude, part of the Southern French d'Oc area. 12%, £9.99 + VAT. A blend of Carignan, Cinsault, Grenache. A vibrant cherry fruit flavour, light and elegant with a hint of plum followed by a delicately smooth finish. Best enjoyed slightly chilled, with pate, Brie, Camembert, chicken, or on its own.

The evening was closed by the Chairman thanking Courtney.

Julie

“Age is just a number. It's totally irrelevant unless, of course, you happen to be a bottle of wine.”

— Joan Collins



Programme

**Thursday 16th June
Summer Meal
Grand Junction
5.30pm for 6.00pm**

**Thursday 21st July
Visit to
Majestic, Bicester
7.30pm
£5 charge (in advance)
Refundable against any purchase**

**Thursday 18th August
Wine Based Quiz
8.00pm
Buckingham Community Centre**

**Thursday 15th September
Organic Wines by Vintage Roots
8.00pm
Buckingham Community Centre**



Members are welcome to bring the occasional

guest to our meetings at the Community Centre. If you intend to bring a guest please contact Mary at least 7 days before the meeting to confirm there is space. The temporary membership fee is currently £15 per attendance.

Articles and Comments

your contribution would be welcome so please email it to

terry.wagstaff@live.co.uk

by **25th July** for the August issue

Looking forward to hearing from you

Grand Junction

Known by various names over the years, most recently as '13', the Grand Junction at 13 High Street was acquired by Oakman Group Plc in 2019. For the last six months it has been undergoing a major refurbishment, restoration and redesign. Ken has circulated the full arrangements by email to every member.

Majestic

Majestic Wine was originally founded as 'Majestic Vintners' by Sheldon Graner in 1980. Its first warehouse was opened in Harringay, North London. Now it is the UK's largest specialist wine retailer, with over 200 stores.

Please note: Details will follow, but, to attend members will need to book and pay the £5 fee in advance. Transport (at cost) will be arranged.



WINE A LITTLE

YOU WILL FEEL BETTER!

Wine Based Quiz

Question master Ken will put his book of wine trivia to good use. A selection of wine, of course, will be served. Cannot guarantee that the questions will match the wine.

Organic Wines by Vintage Roots

Vintage Roots is an ethical business formed in 1986. All their range is 100% organic. In 2015 Drinks Business named them Green Retailer of the Year. The original founders still run the business which is based near Reading.

Though Vintage Roots will not be able to join us, they have specially selected the wines and supplied comprehensive tasting notes.

