

The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



'The Exquisite Collection by Aldi' Presenter: Derek Avery

26 August 2015

Aldi's 'Exquisite Collection' has received some very good press in recent months so Derek's selection was a timely opportunity to compare Aldi's premium range with comparable ranges from other supermarkets

The wines

Whites

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| 1. Muscadet Sevre et Maine Sur Lie 2013 | 11.5% | £5.99 |
| Still pale and fresh, nice iodine nose. Plenty of savoury bite on the palate. Reasonable fruit, very slight hint of leesiness perhaps. Generally liked as a straightforward decent example. Be interesting to see how their 2014 (a better Loire vintage than 2013) will compare at this price level. | | |
| 2. Gavi DOCG 2014 | 12% | £5.49 |
| Greenish tinge, young vibrant palate. Palate a tad thin perhaps (2014 quite a difficult year). Not the greatest example - some typical characteristics with just a hint of almond character on the finish, but a bit dilute. | | |
| 3. Clare Valley Riesling 2014 | 12% | £6.99 |
| The pick of the whites by a country mile. A very respectable example of Clare Valley Riesling with plenty of lime and grapefruit on the palate and a big upfront nose. Not much complexity (you don't expect it at 6.99) but true to character so good value. | | |
| 4. Limestone Coast Chardonnay 2014 | 13.5% | £6.49 |
| Rather a sweet palate, initially zingy but flat on the finish. After the genuinely zingy Riesling the very obvious residual sweetness here seemed quite cloying. The group generally agreed this seemed a disappointingly familiar example of cheap Chardonnay with not much varietal character and far too 'sweet' a finish. | | |

Reds

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| 5. Wairarapa Pinot Noir 2014 | 14% | £6.99 |
| From Martinborough, one of the top areas for Pinot Noir in NZ. This prompted an interesting discussion about 'value' and what should be expected from Pinot Noir at different price levels. This is 'Martinborough lite' perhaps! – some varietal character, little complexity, but at 6.99 not a bad effort. | | |

<p>6. Limestone Coast Cabernet Sauvignon 2014</p> <p>'Leafy', 'menthol' and 'mint' heard around the room (all typical Cab Sauv characteristics) as was 'dentist's rinse' (not so typical...!) Nice restrained nose but palate a bit green and stalky. Very dark plum colour, short finish with a hint of coffee.</p>	<p>14% £6.49</p>
<p>7. Argentinian Malbec 2014</p> <p>High altitude 1000-1500m. Restrained Malbec nose, palate true and clean, a little thin in the middle but a lot more complete and better balanced than the previous wine. Perhaps Malbec is more forgiving than Cab Sauv when made in a simple style. Generally liked.</p>	<p>13.5% £5.99</p>
<p>8. South Australia Shiraz 2014</p> <p>Opaque, deep black colour. Big rather obvious fruity palate – bulging with black fruit and dark spice. Not at all subtle! – but would go down fine at a big smoky BBQ.</p>	<p>14.5% £5.99</p>

Interesting that the two discount supermarkets have rather different approaches to their wine lists. Aldi concentrates on this more-or-less permanent premium range showcasing decent examples of classic styles, whereas Lidl tends more to periodic limited small parcels from France in particular. You have to be quick off the mark to acquire the more interesting Lidl bottles before they sell out! Aldi's range is more permanent but less off-piste than Lidl's.

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