

## The North Hampshire Wine Society Blog



### 'Latest Wine Finds'

Presenter: Chris Horridge (Altus Wine)

22 May 2019

*Prices shown are those on Altus website – there were some generous on-the-night discounts*

#### The wines

##### Whites

**1. Fincha Flichman Unoaked Chardonnay 2017, Argentina** 12.5% £9.00  
Zippy citrus nose and palate, restrained Chardonnay aroma, colour very pale. Overall clean and fresh. 2018 was a warm vintage but planting at high altitude is responsible for low-ish alcohol and a bright zingy palate.

**2. Baron de Badassiere Picpoul de Pinet 2018, France** 13% £10.00  
Fashionable Picpoul, here given 4 hours of skin contact and cool fermentation. No oak, and drink as young as possible. Colour had a greenish tint, a slightly herbal flowery nose, a reasonably weighty palate with grapefruit notes and plenty of mid-palate body. Generally much enjoyed.

**3. Greywacke Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2018, New Zealand** 13% £17.00  
Kevin Judd, ex Cloudy Bay, now makes this classy Marlborough Sauvignon which, as one of us thought, could be 'a Sauvignon for Loire lovers!' Restrained style - as Chris said much more like a Loire from 2018 (a ripe vintage) than a traditional Marlborough Sauvignon. Very pale colour, but the palate richness would suggest that it's *not* a Loire wine. Again, much enjoyed.

**4. Tinpot Hut Gruner Veltliner 2016, New Zealand** 13% £17.00  
Austrian grape translated to New Zealand terroir. Fruit grown in Blind River, Awatere – a top area for Sauvignon Blanc too. Made only from free run juice, no pressing, and minimal skin contact. Stainless steel fermentation. Some of us thought this had a tinned fruit character on the nose, and Chris felt it was showing a bit more weight than other examples which might have more 'lift'. Not as well-liked in the room as the previous two wines.

##### Reds

**5. Gauchezco Estate Malbec 2017, Argentina** 14% £12.50  
A wine that divided opinion, this was a lighter style of Malbec grown at high altitude. Despite the 14% alcohol the palate here was relatively lightweight, although some in the room did think it 'big'. Chris discussed the wide range of Malbec styles from big and black to much lighter and more delicate. He thought this one had perhaps 'put on a bit of weight today!' Other comments overheard – 'leather, tar, liquorice'. It wasn't universally popular – perhaps partly due to not being quite the expected style? Soft palate but a bit of alcohol on the finish.

**6. Vetus Flor de Vetus 2016, Toro, Spain**

14% £15.00

On to more familiar stylistic ground, this had the classic Tempranillo nose and the colour was very deep to the rim and opaque. 9 months in 50% French/50% American oak, good tannic grip on the palate. Fruit well integrated with the alcohol. Concentrated. 'Tobacco, cherries, chocolate' all overheard. Chris – 'red fruits, floral.' Generally liked.

**7. Mitolo Jester McLaren Vale Shiraz 2016, Australia**

14.5% £16.00

Highly respected Barossa winemaker Ben Glaetzer is a partner here, and this immediately stood out as a classy cool-climate Aussie Shiraz. Only 10% new oak, the rest old. Big 'cool' eucalyptus nose which I thought lovely and very persistent in the glass; on the palate perhaps just a slightly drying finish due to tannins not yet fully integrated? Classic McLaren Vale menthol character, but it divided opinion in the room – some thought it too alcoholic. I'd say give it a year or two...

**8. Henrich Burgenland Zweigelt 2016, Austria**

12% £20.00

The Zweigelt grape is a St Laurent/Blaufrankisch cross. 14 months in old oak – 500 litre casks so only to 'soften' not to impart 'oak'. An interesting glass stopper in place of a cork or screwcap. Vegetal nose, but palate milder – soft and juicy. As with several of this evening's wines this was a room divider – some could discern notes of 'forest floor, leaf mould' and some thought the length a bit short. A possible match with venison was mentioned – sounds like a plan... Only 12% alcohol, and the funky slightly animal nose prompted an interesting discussion about the character of 'natural' wines.

As always a fascinating and thought-provoking tasting with a wealth of information from Chris

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