

# The Yorkshire Sommelier



Another Lockdown Special

Number 68 November 20

[www.yorkshiresommeliers.co.uk](http://www.yorkshiresommeliers.co.uk)

**The Yorkshire Guild of Sommeliers**  
[www.yorkshiresommeliers.co.uk](http://www.yorkshiresommeliers.co.uk)

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# The President's Column

So here we are - at the end of October in the oddest year I've experienced during my long and eventful life. The question is what to write about? There have been no meetings of my York section and only the odd one elsewhere which I did not attend. This Covid 19 has much to answer for! It has turned our lives upside down and meant that oldies like me have had to hunker down for much of the summer and others doing our shopping and a visit to the hairdressers forbidden.

Well things did improve by the end of July when our family hotel "The White Swan" opened its doors again offering "Rishi's Dishes" at bargain rates for the first three days of each week for the month of August. With friends, I made the most of those, being able to scoff my favourite food, Lobster, not once but twice during the month! But what did I wash it down with? Well, I remember it was a very tasty South African Chenin Blanc—Paarl Heights 2019. I have to explain that I am very bored with Sauvignon Blanc at the moment and find that Chenin Blanc suits me much better.



Another occasion comes to mind when I was invited to share T-bone Steaks with my family on a summer Sunday evening. As a treat, I ventured down into my cellar to find a decent bottle to take to the feast (I'm not supposed to go there when there's no one else in the house but I risked it!). It was a Chateau Bernateau 2005, Grand Cru Saint Emilion and it drank exceedingly well—in fact, I should have taken two bottles as the one was gone in a flash as my two grandsons were in the party and they don't waste time! The T-bones were delicious too and they vanished in similar fashion to the wine. Finally, I was taken out to lunch recently by two very good Yorkshire Sommelier friends.



We went to "The Fox & Hounds" at Sinnington where we dined on superb Twice Baked Cheese Soufflés followed by large portions of Sausages & Mash washed down by glasses of white wine. That should have been it but two of us were tempted by the puddings—goodness! The third member of the party sensibly chose to settle



for a small glass of pudding wine—a lovely rounded Riesling, an Australian Tamar Ridge Riesling 2011—and I followed suit. But then went on to devour a dish of delicious Crème Brûlée to boot. I scarcely ate a thing for the next two days!

A propos of Sommeliers, we have been having "Zoom " Management Committee Meetings and I fear these will continue now that we are to be in lockdown until at least early December. They are not ideal and I am hoping that no big decisions will be made until we are able to meet around a table again. The cancellation of our Annual Dinner Dance at Washingborough Hall is a great shame—it was such a hit last year and I'm sure many of you were looking forward to it as much as I was. Let's hope that by 2021 there will be a vaccine and we will be back to something near normal.

In the meantime, I wish you all the very best for "The Festive Season" if it takes place and, whatever happens, please stay safe and pour a glass of something special. Being of "good cheer" is more important than ever in these very strange times.,

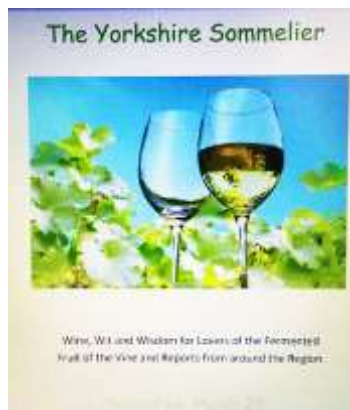
**Deirdre Buchanan**



## Chairman's Report

**Dear Sommeliers,**

What a different World that we are living in today, 12 months ago who would have thought that we would spend most of 2020 in varying degrees of Lockdown (or even what that word meant!). As Chairman of our Guild, the year has been challenging since March 23<sup>rd</sup> with no actual meetings, four online Committee Meetings and numerous phone calls and emails with members, Section Chairs and fellow Committee members.



One topic has been the thought of next year's subscription, where there has been discussion on the options for January. The Committee are unanimous in wishing to encourage all members to continue with their subscription for 2021, on the basis that we will get back into action at some stage and have a chance to once again further our enjoyment of wine. Many members probably do not realise what happens to their individual or couple's subscription, though if you look at the March Magazine the P & L is published in full each year.

One of the main costs is the printing and circulation of our excellent magazine, which has been solely online

this year, We are aware that some members (including our President) do not really "do" internet and like the printed version and so we are planning to continue to cater for this need. Another cost centre is the Honoraria paid to some of the Committee, including myself, which could amount to £2,100 in a full year, this system was introduced many years ago to avoid the necessity to have an expenses system to cover extra travel, phone calls, postage etc for the various participants. I am delighted to report that this year only £450 is being claimed out of the total, which will result in a substantial change to the rebate paid to the Sections this year. In a normal year, each section receives a rebate of around 60% of the subs paid into the Guild by their local membership, as decided by the Treasurer and ratified by the Committee. This year this rebate will increase to around 90% for all Sections, due to the reduced costs of the magazine and Honoraria, we feel that this is the best way forwards, giving each section the autonomy to spend this 50% windfall as they see fit – perhaps a tasting with higher quality wines, a free night or an extra wine with dinner, the important thing is that your local Section is responsible for the choice.

I am sure that most of us have continued to try wines in spite of Lockdown, looking at supermarket sales, certainly wine purchases are higher this year than last and I am convinced that most cellars have not increased in stock! Here are a couple that Kay and I have tried recently. Somerby Vineyards Solero 2016 is produced just a couple of miles from our house at a small self-contained winery, nestling on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds.



A crisp fruit driven wine that can be enjoyed on its own or excellent with fish, the vineyard and winery is for sale if you fancy a dip into producing your own quality wines!

Los Vascos Cabernet Sauvignon may be familiar to Wine Society Members as a part of the Lafite (Baron de Rothschild) empire in



Colchagua Valley, Chile. On the nose it has black cherries, raspberries and plums with a hint of spice, whilst the palate may be tickled by bright cassis and mint fruit, soft tannins it is voluptuous and long well worth the £15 price tag if you can find any stock, younger vintages are more readily available at a similar price.

The Committee have appointed a small group – Vice Chair and Chair of Harrogate, Paul Donnelly, Past Chair Greta Henderson and Leeds Member Kenneth McDowall; they have the broad brief of “Looking to the Future of YGoS”. I am sure that any positive suggestions of change will be welcome in their discussions, prior to coming back to the Committee for comment and further appraisal and possible approval.



We will be offering via Leeds Section an online tasting with Marta Vine Ltd, which will involve six delicious Portuguese wines, which will be ordered for delivery to one person in each Section that chooses to participate, with a cost of around £12 per bottle. If you are locally allowed groups of 4/6 may get together to taste or by decanting the wines locally, they may be spread around for others to enjoy whilst watching the tasting online. If you order, you will be sent a link to

see the actual tasting to be held well before Christmas. Other wines may be ordered from Marta Mateus' extensive list at the same time, whether you participate in the tasting or not. I think this is a good idea to at least enable us to try something different in these tricky times and I thank Kenny McDowall for introducing the idea.

I will close by thanking our wonderful Committee for helping us through this exceedingly difficult year and wish you all a safe and happy two months until 2021.

**Chris Rothery** [chris.rothery@live.co.uk](mailto:chris.rothery@live.co.uk)

Procrastidrinkin

The art of drinking  
instead of doing something  
else you should be doing.



# Derwentio Wines

Hope you are all well and healthy in these uncertain and unprecedented times. Like many of you we are disappointed to have been unable to attend or host any wine tastings since March. We have put together a range of wines that we think will be of interest to you all. Orders can be mixed bottles but in cases of 6. We are including free delivery and payment can be made by card over the phone to our office or via a BAC's payment. Look forward to hearing from you all

**Paul Tate Smith**



**Jules Feraud Brut NV:** Our excellent house Champagne with lively hints of green apples but a brioche richness and small bubbles offer a fizzy finish. The nose offers a citrus freshness with nuances of freshly baked bread. **£18.00.**

**Botter Asolo Prosecco DOCG:** Balanced with delicate fruity notes, a low acidity and a moderate alcohol content. **£9.50**

**Hopler Zweigelt:** Zweigelt is the most widely planted red variety in Austria. It was created by Dr. Zweigelt in 1922 by crossing Blaufränkisch and St. Laurent. The nose offers copious Red berries with a touch of vanilla, added with a long elegant finish with toasty aromatic notes creates a complex and easy drinking wine. **£10.00.**



**Quinson Provence Rose:** A blend of Grenache, Shiraz/Syrah, Cinsault, Tibouren, Mourvè This rose wine is crisp, dry, and delicate with distinct strawberry notes. **£9.00.**

**Domaine de la Serre Picpoul de Pinet:** With a delicate nose of exotic fruit and white flowers lifted with remarkably fresh acidity and just a hint of saltiness on the finish, a good alternative to Sauvignon Blanc. **£7.50.**

**Beauchene Cotes du Rhone:** Red fruits with some hints of liquorice on the nose. Elegant, with soft and well-balanced tannins; long lasting flavour of red fruits. **£8.50.**

**Did you know?**

**Russia (6Mhl) produces double the amount of wine than New Zealand(3Mhl)**

### Did you know?

In 2019 it's estimated 263 million hectolitres of wine was produced with 60% of that coming from Europe



**Tre di Tre Puglia:** A blend of Negroamaro, Aglianico and Primitivo. The nose has scents of red fruit and jam which merge on the palate with sweet and spicy notes of wood. This is a very drinkable wine with great structure and a long persistent finish. **£8.00.**

**Velarino Vermentino:** Fruity aromas, notes of cedar and white peach, apricot and apple. On the palate, it is warm with a well-balanced acidity **£7.50.**

**La di Motte Pinot Grigio:** Full bodied, flavoursome Pinot Grigio from the La di Motte estate. Juicy stone fruit characters with lemon and lime fruit balanced with good **£7.50.**



**Puerta Vieja Rioja Crianza:** Aged 18 months in American oak barrels, including an additional 6 months in the bottle prior to release for optimum maturity. Bright cherry red colour with fresh fruit and liquorice aromas along with pronounce notes of spice and toasty flavours. Soft with pleasant and velvety tannins on a nice long harmonious finish. **£8.50.**

**El Coto Verdejo:** Pale yellow with a green hue, aromas of fresh citrus fruits and white peach alongside floral notes, with a long refreshing finish. **£7.50.**

**Aresan Tempranillo Toro:** Packed full of Strawberry, raspberry and cherry flavours, but alongside this is a lovely sweet spice that's not so common. In all this make for an interesting red that is medium bodied and good to keep in the rack for any occasion. **£7.00.**



**Bon Courage Pepper Tree Shiraz:** Ripe red berry fruit and spicy plum jam complimented by pepper and vanilla. Full rounded mouth with soft tannins. Red berry flavours and spice follow through from the nose. **£8.50.**

**Bon Courage Prestige Chardonnay:** French oak matured wine with a full nose. Peach and citrus combine to add to the complexity. Big mouth packed with flavours including grapefruit, lime, lees. Vanilla and butterscotch give almost crème brûlée notes. **£8.50.**



**Murphy's Unoaked Chardonnay:** Unoaked Chardonnay showing light green colour with tropical fruit aromas. **£6.50.**

**Rossendale Sauvignon Blanc:** Rich in fruit aromas of ripe gooseberries, citrus fruit, red peppers and passionfruit. **£9.00.**

**Lomas Carrera Merlot:** Ripe, sweet plums, raspberry, cinnamon spice and vanilla. Exceptional value for full flavoured merlot. **£6.00.**

**Santa Alba Reserve Pinot Noir:** Cherries, wild berries and a note of cinnamon smoke all appear on the alluring nose of this Pinot Noir. The palate is elegant and has just a touch



of weight, fine smoky tannins, dark cherries. One for drinking now. **£7.50.**



**Los Haroldos Roble Malbec:** classic, rich, intensely fruity Malbec from high altitude vineyards. Ripe fruit, smoke and chocolate on the nose with fleshy blackberry fruit. **£8.50**

**All subject to availability and Vintages may change**

Steve Colling's has 'retired' (he will never truly retire) but no doubt we will be able to make him appear for the occasional guest appearance when things can return to normality. Many of you have met me through various tastings (the younger one of the three of us) and I will be looking after Derventio and any upcoming events that we will be able to do in the future. We will be changing the shop soon and opening again with new wines and great deals. I will also be blending in with millennials and will carry on using Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to help get information out quicker than just mailsots after the success we had during lockdown.

Look forward to hearing from you all, stay safe.

**Scott Hanby**



## Yorkshire Sommelier's Selection



	Price (incl VAT)	Order	Total
Jules Feraud Brut NV	<del>£19.00</del> <b>£18.00</b>		
Botter Asolo Prosecco D.O.C.G.	<b>£9.50</b>		
Hopler Zweigelt 2007	<del>£12.00</del> <b>£10.00</b>		
Quinson Provence Rose 2019	<b>£9.00</b>		
Domaine de la Serre Picpoul de Pinet 2019	<b>£7.50</b>		
Beauchane Cotes du Rhone 2017	<b>£8.50</b>		
Tre de Tre Puglia 2019	<b>£8.00</b>		
Velarino Vermentino 2019	<b>£7.50</b>		
La di Motte Pinot Grigio 2019	<del>£8.00</del> <b>£7.50</b>		
Puerta Vieja Rioja Crianza 2017	<del>£9.00</del> <b>£8.50</b>		
El Coto Verdejo 2019	<b>£7.50</b>		
Aresan Tempranillo Toro 2019	<b>£7.00</b>		
Bon Courage pepper Tree Shiraz 2018	<b>£8.50</b>		
Bon Courage Prestige Chardonnay 2018	<b>£8.50</b>		
Murphys unoaked chardonnay 2019	<b>£6.50</b>		
Rosendale Sauvignon Blanc 2020	<b>£9.00</b>		
Lomas Carrera Merlot 2019	<b>£6.00</b>		
Santa Alba Reserve Pinot Noir 2018	<b>£7.50</b>		
Los Haroldos Roble Malbec 2018	<del>£9.00</del> <b>£8.50</b>		
<b>Total</b>			

PTO

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If you need any more information please write to us at Derventio Wines, Sundella House, Catlegate, Malton, YO17 7EE or email: [info@tatesmith.com](mailto:info@tatesmith.com).

Customer Signature:.....

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Every day Covid-19 check: at 5pm open a bottle of wine, smell it, put

it in a glass and taste it. If you can both smell it and taste it, you

can celebrate by finishing the bottle and you're good to go for another

day!

### **Bingley Section Report**

Last Tuesday Bingley held it's first wine tasting for twelve months, excitement was definitely in the air as we battled with technology to gather, but, gather we did.

Viognier was the grape which inspired our tasting. We all purchased a bottle, 4 came from independent suppliers, all came from different corners of the world. Paul Más from France, Tabali and Maray from Chile, Mandrarossa from Sicily and Santa Rosa from Argentina. Listening to the comments it was surprising to hear how similar the descriptions were, we wondered if we would think they were so similar had we had them side by side.

We then moved onto a red from the same producer, whilst we couldn't compare these we did talk about how we were all taking advantage of the local deals and enjoying some good wine.

The evening concluded with a toast to absent friends and an agreement to meet again on December the first.

**Honor Tierney**



### Jeeves and the Perils of Drink (cont.)

'Yes, madam. You see, Mr Wooster has recently been convicted in court on rather serious charges involving the theft of police property. I am afraid the experience has had a most unsettling effect.'

I looked at him in complete horror.

'Jeeves!' I began '.....!'

'Is this true, young man?'

Dumbstruck, I nodded. She turned to Augusta.

'And you are prepared to take the hand of a common criminal in marriage?'

Augusta didn't answer. She turned to me and spoke in what I must admit was a jolly quiet and dignified tone of voice, all things considered.

'Why did you propose to me, knowing that by then you had already committed the offence which would lead to this shameful outcome?'

If I'd thought before opening my mouth, I probably wouldn't have said it.

'Because the previous five all turned me down, I suppose' I blurted.

There was a piercing shriek from Augusta, and in a less than pleasing contrast a kind of baritone squawk from Great Aunt Matilda.

'Bertram!' she commanded 'You will leave us alone.'

I retreated to my room where I waited for an age before I heard Jeeves showing them out. I returned to the drawing room.

'Both ladies were somewhat distressed, sir, but before leaving each wrote you a note.'

'A note?'

'Yes sir. Would you care to open them now?'

I ripped the first envelope open with trembling hands. My ferocious relation, it transpired, was disgusted with me, could not bear to stay in my house one moment longer and would never see me again. Joy, however, was yet to be unconfined.

I turned to the second envelope. I opened it. I fell to my knees. Without my asking for it Jeeves poured me a dashed stiff whisky.

My mouth opened and closed soundlessly. Never before had I been struck all of such a quivering heap. 'Jeeves,' I whispered eventually 'she has called off the engagement. Jeeves.....Jeeves.....you planned all this, didn't you?'

He inclined his head wisely.

'I rather fancied that Miss Blenkinsop could not decline an invitation to meet a member of her new family, sir. I regret the slight deception, but I judged that if the scene was to play out convincingly you needed to be genuinely aghast when I admitted her, and again when I mentioned the court case. If I might say so, sir, it was clear to me shortly thereafter that you had detected my little ruse, and I thought your subsequent reference to the five previous marriage proposals was masterly.'

I shrugged in what I hoped was a modest and knowing sort of way.

'Jeeves,' I said simply 'how can I possibly thank you?'

'In pecuniary terms, sir, there is no need since both ladies have already been most generous; Miss Blenkinsop for saving her from what she now regards as an ill advised

marriage, and your great aunt for my loyalty in remaining with you during difficult times.'

'But is there nothing.....?'

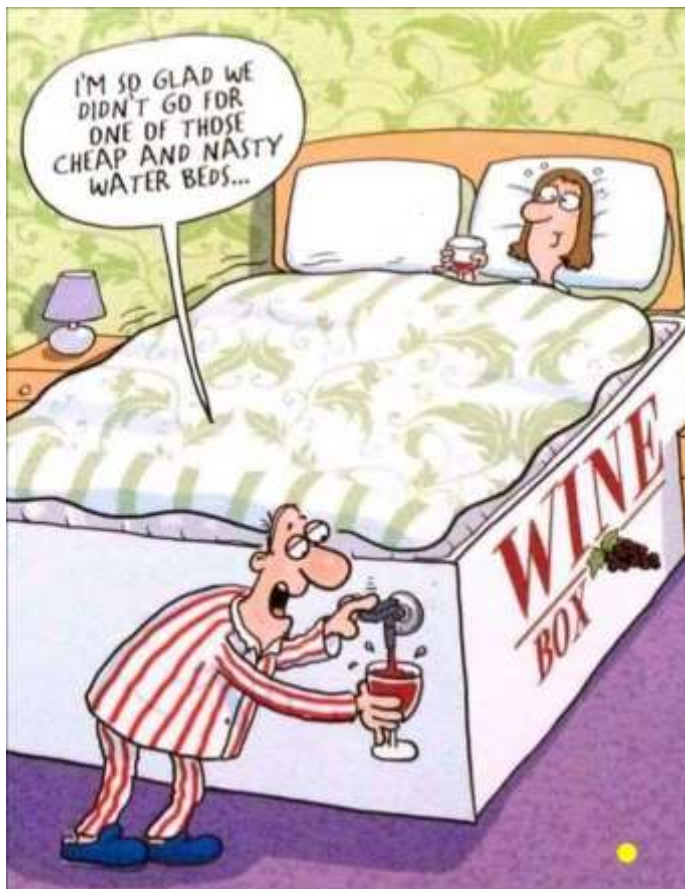
He raised a questioning eyebrow.

'I appreciate that it would be somewhat irregular, sir, but I wonder if I might request that you consider allowing me to withdraw my resignation?'

I mulled the matter over just long enough to let him know which of us was the boss.

'I suppose that would be alright' I said.

### Don Knibbs Hull Section



## Lockdown life from Leeds

Over the past few months we have all endured all the shortages with great fortitude I'm sure. In our household we have been sustained with some bottles from under the stairs which I thought I would share with you, along with some basic notes.



### Parado Enea, Rioja, Grand Reserva, Muga 2006

Purchased on our travels from the Muga Winery 4 years ago, we don't recall what was paid for this but the current price for a 2011 is £47. Lovely cherry & cask flavours, light and smooth with slight acidity. A lovely bottle of wine.

### Chateaux Lynch Bages, Grand cru Classe, Pauillac 2002

Wine society purchases En Primeur £85- £140 somewhere in between a medium & full bodied wine.

An expensive bottle of wine doesn't always live up to expectations, is that because you know what you have paid for it or it's not to your taste? We had this with a very succulent chateaubriand.

### Louis Jadot, Beaune, premier cru 2013

Waitrose & Majestic £33

Vanilla, oak & cedar with raspberries and cherries.

Paired with a rump of lamb, maybe the wrong choice or the pre dinner G&T as it was somewhat disappointing for a premier cru. We have had 'regular' less expensive bottles of Beaune which are more to our taste.

### Chateaux Beaumont, cru Bourgeois, Haut- Medoc 2009

Wine society purchased en primeur approx £18

53% cabinet Sauvignon, 46% Merlot, 1% petit Verdot

I didn't get a really fruity hit with this, a bottle of 2010 hit the spot in the past. Great with Roast Beef.

### Chateaux Langland Barton, cru classe, Saint Julienne 2001

Wine Society Cellar Plan. £55 to £65

First bottle was corked, success with the second yielding red fruits some tannins a nice bottle of wine. We decant most of our red Bordeaux wines, this was definitely improved by decanting.

### Pernard Ile des Vergelesses, premier cru, 2016

Found on our travels from a family vineyard in Burgundy £ no idea.

We were heading for Montagny and missed the turning ended up south of Savigny-les-Beaune. Beaune is one of my favourite wines. After our purchase we headed to Puligny Montrachet for another tasting, unfortunately it was my turn to drive.



### **Hubert Bouchard, Sancerre 2019**

Waitrose £17

Alcohol 13%

Classic Sancerre, aromatic, crisp and dry, some acidity, a long finish.

A great companion for a fish supper or a starter of goat's cheese & caramelised onion tart.

### **Brouilly, Domaine Tavian 2019**

Waitrose £13

Smooth, well rounded, soft red fruits, easy drinking.

We had this with fricassee of chicken, rice & French beans.

### **Paololeo Riserva, Salice Salentino, Sicily**



IWSC bronze award  
Derventio Wines, Malton £13  
Old vines, 25 to 30 years old.  
Red ruby colour, intense jammy  
flavour with a hint of wood,  
mild tannins.

A tomato based pasta bake  
went well with the fruitiness in  
this wine.

**Molly Eastwood**

### Natural wines

You're in a cutting edge wine bar (habitually frequented I know by Yorkshire Sommeliers) or restaurant and you see a selection of "natural" wines. What's that all about then? Is it just another way of saying they're organic? Well, after many years of being a rather cloudy term (some would say rather like the wines themselves) earlier in 2020 (in France at least) a definition was agreed. In order to use this classification, grapes must come from certified organic vines, be hand-picked, unfiltered, use minimal sulphites and produced using indigenous yeast. So all natural wine is organic, but not all organic wine is natural.



Its fans say it's not just unfiltered, but also untamed, un-photoshopped - real wine if you like; fermented grape juice without additives and intervention. And it's true that at its best it can be vibrant, fresh, wild and somehow more "alive". Once you know what to look for, natural wines are easy to spot: they tend to be smellier, cloudier, juicier and more acidic. Advocates of natural wine assert that natural wines represent a return to the core elements that made human beings fall in love with wine when we first began making it, around 6,000 years ago. They believe that nearly everything about the £130bn modern wine industry - from the way it is made, to the way critics police what counts as good or bad - is ethically, ecologically and aesthetically wrong. Their ambition is to strip away the artificial trappings that have developed in tandem with the industry's decades-long economic boom, and let wine be wine. One natural wine proponent comments that its detractors have had their taste buds deadened by years of manufactured fruit juice made to a recipe on an industrial scale and sold by clever branding and marketing budgets"

Its many detractors, on the other hand, see its proponents as "Luddites", a sort of viticultural anti-vax movement that lauds the vinegary faults that science has spent the past century painstakingly eradicating. According to this view, natural wine is a cult intent on rolling back progress in favour of wine best suited to the

tastes of Roman peasants. The Spectator has likened it to "flawed cider or rotten sherry" and the Observer to "an acrid, grim burst of acid that makes you want to cry".

Are they better/healthier for you? The jury's out. Firstly there's no evidence that much maligned sulphites cause the headaches they are often accused of. And natural wines are unfiltered as well as unfinned, which means that any impurities in the wine (microbes and proteins) are included - and in any case not everyone wants bits of skin and sediment floating around the bottle.

We won't be listing natural wines for the sake of jumping aboard this bandwagon. That said, we're similarly sceptical about the scientific basis for biodynamism (cow horns, phases of moon, compost) yet often find those who adhere to these principles consistently produce excellent wines.

Perhaps in the end it's less about viticulture, and more about the passion, meticulousness and attention to detail of the winemakers?

### **Any Port in a Storm?**

A recent visit to Porto in August (in the short quarantine-free window!) reignited my love and appreciation of good port. No longer confined to dusty gentleman's clubs, port sales have climbed steadily in recent years, as many Sommeliers will attest.

All port is fortified. The grapes were traditionally crushed by foot in large stone troughs called "lagares" although these days this process has largely been automated, with the aim of extracting as much colour and tannin as possible. When the sweetness in the fermenting grape must reaches a certain level - normally when the alcohol is about six to eight percent - a clear, flavourless 77 percent alcohol brandy known as aguardente is added to stop the fermentation. The maturation process then harmonises the fruit, tannins and alcohol in the wine, which by this time is about 19 to 20 percent alcohol. Ports are normally labelled under the name of their shipper who is responsible for blending, maturing and bottling the wines.



A quick reminder of the different styles: ruby is the entry port - a mixture of vintages, matured in stainless steel, fiery and drunk young; tawny - still a blend of different vintages, but matured in wood and silkier and lighter as a result; crusted - a blend of vintages but matured (like vintage port) in bottles; LBV (late bottled vintage) wine from a single year, bottled 4 - 6 years after vintage and ready to drink at that point; vintage - wine from a single year, bottled after two years and with considerable aging potential. However the style that often gets forgotten is one of our favourites: Colheita.

Aged in wood for at least 7 years, (so starting life as a regular tawny port but, unlike most tawnies, from a single vintage), colheitas can offer excellent value as they're usually less expensive than similarly aged vintage ports, but account for less than 1% of all port output. By law, colheitas should be matured in wooden casks for at least seven years, although in practice they tend to be aged for much longer - sometimes up to a century! They are bottled only when the producer decides that the port is ready to drink, and unlike vintage port they will not improve after bottling but will keep for many years. The label should carry both the vintage and the bottling date.

The great Robert Parker opines thus: "Colheitas are too often underrated and undervalued (perhaps more outside Portugal itself); whereas I believe that the great Colheitas are fully the equal of the great vintage Ports, whose reputation typically overshadows them. Colheitas deserve more attention. Sometimes it seems like they get almost none."

Colheita port combines all the sweet, dried fruit and nutty finesse of an aged tawny with individual vintage character. We love the style produced by **Krohn** and currently stock the 2007 vintage (bottled in 2019) and whilst vintage changes can occasionally go back as well as forward their wines are always delicious.

### **More than Mateus...**

The Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa wrote, "Boa é a vida, mas melhor é o vinho" (Life is good but wine is better). We wouldn't go that far - but there is a real buzz around Portuguese wine at the moment.

In the thirty or so years since it joined the EU, Portuguese wine has morphed from turning out uninteresting whites and tannic reds to producing innovative, interesting and great value wines driven by experimentation, investment and modern technology.

Portugal has always been a bit different. Historically an ally of England against the French it became isolated itself for much of the 20th century under the Salazar dictatorship that ended in 1974. Whilst known by some only for port, vinho verde and Mateus rose, Portugal is proud of its range of over 300 weird and wonderful indigenous grape varieties - and because its wine culture developed in relative isolation, there are many grape varieties that do not grow anywhere else in the world. So, if you don't recognize the grape variety on a Portuguese wine label, it's



a good thing. As Jancis Robinson has written, "Isolation has its disadvantages but one strong advantage for Portuguese wine is that it is made from a dazzling array of high-quality vine varieties that are, for the moment anyway, rarely found elsewhere... for a palate tired of the limited palette of international varieties, Portugal has much to offer". To many wine experts, Portugal is the last frontier of wine in Western Europe with lots to be tasted and explored.

Portugal's defined appellations are designated DOCs (Denominação de Origem Controlada), along with a second-tier IPR (Indicação de Proveniencia Regulamentada) - effectively DOCs in waiting - and a third, more flexible classification for larger regions, VR (Vinho Regional).

Its finest white varieties include Alvarinho (aka Albariño), Bical (Bairrada), Arinto (in southern Portugal), and the full-bodied Encruzado (Dão). For the reds, the Port grape Touriga Nacional is its trump card, followed by other Port grapes such as Touriga Franca, Tinta Cão and Tinta Roriz (aka Tempranillo), Baga (Bairrada), Castelão Frances (aka Periquita/João de Santarém in the south) and Trincadeira in the Alentejo.

We love selling some wines that have been truffled out and identified by Marta of Marta Vine who moved to the UK in 2009 after years in Portugal working on vineyard mapping and on her father's cork farm in Alentejo. Marta brought with her the Portuguese love of good food and great wine which has inspired her to be one of the best Portuguese wine importers to the UK. **Azulejo Tinto and Branco** are great value and showcase some excellent blends of these obscure grapes! Alternatively try a classy **Alvarinho** from Vila Nova (the Portuguese name for Galicia's Albarino) or their lovely fresh **Vinho Verde** with a faint sparkle on the tongue.

**Andy & John**

**H C Wines**

**PTO**

## Drink In to Help Out

We hope you've enjoyed our scribbles. Molly said we could have a brief sales pitch! Here it is!

It looks like we won't be doing much wine tasting together in the next few months but I hope Yorkshire Sommeliers will continue to enjoy a glass or three indoors or outdoors with or without family and friends. We'd be delighted to hear from any thirsty members out there: as ever YO deliveries are free; and outside that are although we have to charge £9.95 delivery we'll honour the normal 5% discount to any Sommeliers that we habitually offer at tastings – just drop us an email with what you'd like and we'll sort it! As ever new wines and old can be found at [www.hcwines.co.uk](http://www.hcwines.co.uk)

And If any Sommeliers outside YO postcodes would like to co-operate and put together an order of at least 4 cases delivered to addresses within one area we'll halve the delivery charge to £4.95 on top of the 5% discount.

Keep in touch and we look forward to seeing you on the other side!

**Andy & John H C Wines**

## Editor's Report

I am starting to compile this edition of the magazine knowing that lockdown starts on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November. What joy! I do hope that it is for only a month but I have my doubts.

Who knows when I will be able to produce a "normal edition" again.

I would like to very much thank all the contributors to the magazine.

Please do keep your articles coming so that I have something to use.

On behalf of the Guild Subscriptions Secretary please may I ask that you inform your section chairman and or secretary of any changes in your contact details, your address, telephone number, email address etc. so that we may keep our information up to date. You could even email Martin as well as his email address is on page 2 of the magazine. Thank you , it really does help!

I like most members have not been to any organised wine tastings and I am missing them and looking forward to them restarting sometime next year.

Please enjoy Christmas and New Year as much as you can and I hope to meet you in 2021

**Ann Johnson**



# **CORONAVIRUS**

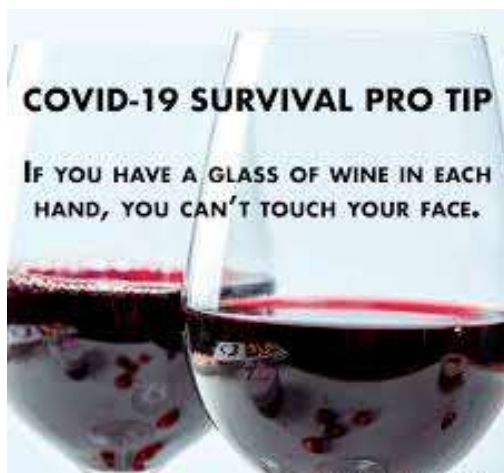
**You should use hand sanitizer which contains alcohol to kill the virus.**



**Therefore, you should keep your whole body topped up with alcohol to stay completely safe. Don't take any risks and stay drunk until further notice!**

## **COVID-19 SURVIVAL PRO TIP**

**IF YOU HAVE A GLASS OF WINE IN EACH HAND, YOU CAN'T TOUCH YOUR FACE.**



## **Non Alcoholic Scarborough**

Due to ill-health and subsequent medicines I have had little or no alcohol this year. Dreadful, I hear you say, yes, but I have discovered non-alcoholic wines, and have been amazed at their quality.

I have wine delivered from Majestic in Beverley, where the excellent Emily has been more than helpful.

They do two each of a white, a rose and a red. One set of each is German and the other Spanish. The latter are called Sangre de Toro, and are produced by the Torres family.

The German white is a Riesling and is very good. There is depth of flavour and it is obviously a German Riesling. The Spanish white is a Muscat and is also very good and tastes very fruity.

The Torres rose is super, whereas the bottle of German rose seemed to have a slight fizziness, which I did not care for. However, a second bottle was much better.

The German red is Cabernet Sauvignon. I would not normally choose a German red, but this is very pleasant, especially with red meats. The Torres red has Syrah and Grenache grapes. It is superb, full-bodied, with a dark-fruit flavour.

I had not realised how non-alcoholic wine is produced. There are two methods, each starting with wine made in the traditional manner.

One method “boils” the wine under much reduced pressure so that the alcohol is removed although the wine is not heated very much. The other method is a reverse osmosis where the wine is put under high pressure and the wine passes through a filter and leaves the alcohol behind. So, it is not grape juice; it is proper wine with the alcohol removed.



I have enjoyed all the wines, with the added advantage of being able to have as many glasses as I fancy! I would have to admit that there is less complexity, but they are very reasonably priced.

As an aside, I can also highly recommend a non-alcoholic gin called Cedar's Classic. It has South African botanicals and is lovely with ice and a good tonic.

There is life without alcohol, but I do miss a glass of single malt whisky!

**Paul McCabe Scarborough Section**

## New Zealand Wine Trip (cont.)

Continuing south from Waipara on Highway 1 to Christchurch a distance of 57 K takes approximately 50 minutes. Then still on Highway 1 to Timaru 163K 2 hours. From Timaru to Waimate 34K. Then Waimate to Kurow 63K taking us into Northern Otago. A little outside Kurow is The Kurow Estate Winery where you can taste 8



lovely wines and enjoy a meal. The winery is attended by the local Kiwis. Another winery is in the centre of Kurow itself called Ostler Wines and is well worth a visit.



We have a number of friends in the area who live on 11 acres of land up the Hakataramia valley towards Cattle Creek. Continuing west to Omarama 57K you turn south and join Highway 8 taking us to Central Otago the best Pinot Noir growing area in New Zealand.

Waitrose sells three Pinot Noirs from this area, two from a winery called Mount

Difficulty, (£27.00) also the name of their premier wine, their second is named Roaring Meg (£16.99) named after the river just above the winery. The wines are excellent but not cheap.

Nanny Goat Vineyard (£20.00) a little North of Cromwell is the other wine sold at Waitrose.

Mount difficulty is a boutique winery located in Bannockburn in Bannockburn area recognised as one of the world where Noir variety has outside Burgundy.

lovely mix of red with further complexity gained are balanced by soft tannins, balanced acidity and a fruit-driven wine to be enjoyed over the next five years. Enjoy with pork loin casserole.



This wine exhibits a lovely mix of red and black berry fruits

from oak spice. These characters are balanced by soft tannins, balanced acidity and a fruit-driven wine to be enjoyed over the next five years. Enjoy with pork loin casserole.



Other wines to buy from this area are;  
Parcel Series Pinot Noir Majestic wines £21.99.

When wineries needed to sell their wine quickly and discreetly, we pick Parcel Series entrant usually sells from £70 to £80 and that's why we buy it up at a great price and pass the saving straight to you. This can't say anything about who made it. It's concentrated and ripe, with notes of black and red fruits, well-integrated oak, firm acidity and ripe tannins.

Loveblock Pinot Noir Winebuyers £22.10

This lovely crimson Pinot Noir has ripe black cherry, smoky mushroom aromas that reveal flavours of black plum, lots of cherry and notes of violet. Dry tannins and plush fruit, a classically Otago Pinot.



Covid 19 restricts visits to these excellent vineyards in New Zealand but never the less we can still enjoy them in the UK.

### Porto 1992

One of the great wine-tasting holidays. The only downside was, we flew there and couldn't bring wine back to the UK.

The second day, we travelled by train following the Douro River west towards the Spanish border, was special.

At the second station, the great Bruce Guimaraens who was in sole charge of the Fonseca Port House at the time boarded the train. Fonseca and Taylors are parent companies and Bruce was on his way to the same vineyard as our group, many of whom were from Rotherham. Bruce was educated at Thomas Rotherham college in his younger days and knew some of our members.

We travelled for 2 hours and then disembarked at Taylors vineyard Quinta de Vargellas. Quinta de Vargellas is pre-eminent among the wine estates of the Douro. Located in the wild and hilly eastern reaches of the valley, it has been prized as a source of the finest ports since the 1820s. Today it ranks among the great vineyards of the world.

On arrival, the dining table was already set where we had a lovely meal accompanied by different wines for each course and finishing 1970 Taylors vintage port.

We then had a guided tour of the Quinta and of course treading grapes. Before leaving Vargellas we had a second meal to equal the first.

The next day Bruce invited us to the Fonseca Port House across the Douro River in Vila Nova Di Gia for a tour and a parallel tasting of 10, 20, 30 and 40 year old tawny ports and vintage ports back to 1970.

Comparing Taylor and Fonseca. For my pallet, Fonseca won hands down.

Then back over the River into Porto to have a late lunch at The Factory House where all the port owners and managers meet for meetings and lunch. The Factory House is split into two equal-size rooms. One for eating and meeting and the other for Port Tasting.



At the end of the meal, Bruce gave a British Bulldog ending with a story about a Portuguese who ask him which barrel needed stirring. The guy left to do the job, Bruce saying he never saw the guy again. Fonseca exported the barrels of Port to the UK and getting to the bottom of a barrel they found a skeleton. A little concerned Fonseca contacted the UK supplier and asked what the last batch of port tasted like. The answer they received was excellent much more than the usual stuff. What a storyteller and an exceptional day.

A great week was I have since been several occasions it never fails to Portugal is a and well worth a Four families company's



had by all. back to Porto on and conclude that impress me. lovely country visit. have shaped the destiny since its



foundation in 1815. The story begins with the FONSECAS and Monteiro's the original founders of the business. Then came the Guimaraens family who led the firm for over a century and first established its reputation as a 'first growth' Vintage Port house. And finally, the descendants who successfully through 20th century and into



Yeatman's and their steered the company the second half of the the new millennium.

**Michael France**  
**Sheffield Section**

## Lockdown

Lockdown is a strange thing. It reminds me of when my wife was pregnant with our son; drinking wine became a more solitary endeavour in those days. Don't get me wrong, I can't say that small amounts of alcohol didn't creep past my wife's lips on occasion, but it did more or less, stop. I should highlight for the record (and speaking as a registrar in obstetrics and gynaecology) that the only safe amount of alcohol in pregnancy is none whatsoever, according to official NHS advice! However, on a happier note I'm sure I learnt at medical school that: "you've only got a drink problem if you drink more than your doctor." I couldn't seem to find that recommendation when I looked it up on the NHS website recently, researching for this renowned journal however, so don't quote me on that!

Anyway, I digress. Let's get back to the matter of lone wine drinking. Consuming a full 750ml bottle of wine isn't the answer any more, particularly when having a 16 month old means that reveille at 0600hrs is considered a lie-in. Not to mention the health-related dangers of drinking to excess (you never know, my boss could be reading this). Now of course, you could just say: "put the bloody cork back in the bottle and finish it tomorrow." Sure, that's an option, and much wine probably doesn't decondition terribly in 20 hours. But if like me, you enjoy drinking wine with some time spent in bottle, then that does rather limit the life of a bottle once opened. What's to be done? Let's spend a few moments considering some of the options and please do note that I'm not on any sort of commission, nor do I own any shares in wine storage devices.

The VacuVin Wine Saver system has seen good use in our house well before my son was even a twinkle in my eye. The system consists of a "vacuum pump [which] extracts air from the wine bottle and re-seals the bottle with a rubber stopper....The vacuum seal will prevent the oxidation process which causes the deterioration of the wine. The design is highly durable and will tolerate regular prolonged usage. The stoppers can easily be cleaned in the dishwasher." To quote the manufacturer. It costs about a tenner including a number of the stoppers and I have found it to be a good option for still wine. No good for sparkling though.



Taking things up a notch, we move onto the Coravin. “Unlike other wine preservers, which only delay the oxidation of your wine, the Coravin Wine Preservation System is designed to pour wine without removing the cork, so wine always tastes like it has just been opened—even years later,” according to [caravan.co.uk](http://caravan.co.uk), “The non-coring Coravin Needle gently passes through corks without displacing cork material. Once the Needle is removed, the cork simply expands back to its normal shape. As wine is extracted through the Needle, it is replaced with pure Argon gas, ensuring oxygen never touches the remaining wine, keeping it as fresh as the day it was bottled.”

Now, this is a seriously good system but it is very expensive. I was fortunate enough to pick one up off Gumtree.com second hand but in brand new condition for much less, back when my wife was pregnant. It since transpires that the impetus for the designer to develop the Coravin was his own wife’s pregnancy. Have a look at the Coravin website for more info. I must say the beauty of this device is that it allows you to draw out a glass of a really good bottle, without having to remove the cork, yet keep the remaining wine in the bottle, in good condition. It’s pure genius. And, the argon gas sparklers whilst again not cheap, are on special offer several times a year and that’s the time to stock up. And each canister lasts a long time (I’m afraid I haven’t recorded how many glasses I can get out of a canister). But, I’d say if you’re opening bottle of wine worth more than £12 and you don’t want to drink the whole bottle, then it’s worth using a Coravin rather than the VacuVin. I’ve found it really good to be able to have a glass of a couple of different wines at the weekend without having to pull corks and empty bottles. And I think it also means that you can taste some of your better wines on occasions when you wouldn’t ordinarily have pulled the cork, allowing you to enjoy them again at another time.

And the team at Coravin have an answer for everything; ‘what do you do about those pesky screw caps I hear you cry?’ Oh, they have a system for those too (though that’s a separate system and I haven’t got one of those so cannot comment on how that works, [alas.coravin.co.uk](http://alas.coravin.co.uk)



But what about sparkling wine? Neither of the two aforementioned devices can be used with sparkling, unfortunately. Forget about putting teaspoons in the bottle, you can get affordable stoppers which clip to the top of the fizz bottle and keep your wine relatively fizzy.

Let us not forget about an older solution to this issue though; the half bottle. Whilst the 750ml bottle is perhaps the usual format for wine, I certainly have some half bottles at home. Admittedly it's a more common format for sweet wines, but many merchants offer table wines in halves (or indeed magnums etc.). And whilst the half bottle is a format that can work for one person, it's also a decent amount for two people, if you're after a midweek sharpener, or indeed as part of a weekend wine journey perhaps.

On the topic of bottle sizes, let me finish with some good news. It's rumoured that following Brexit Champagne could be sold once more in bottles containing an imperial pint, once the most popular Champagne bottle size allegedly banned by Brussels in 1973. Indeed, Winston Churchill supposedly favoured Champagne by the pint, declaring it "enough for two at lunch and one at dinner." Well, if it's good enough for Sir Winston.....

**John Dalton      Leeds   Section**

### **Nigel's Summer Selection**



Five of us toddled round the cliff-top in Whitby to spend a convivial, socially distanced wine-tasting evening with our hosts, Colin and Ann Livsey. Nigel Green brought half a dozen wines for us to try – his 'Summer Selection'. He introduced each in his usual engaging way. We began with a Ventisei Bianco 2017, before moving to a Mt Arthur Reserve Chardonnay, 2017, a Gruner Veltliner 2017, a Whispering Angel Rose 2015, a Morgan Roche Briday, 2017, finishing with Barbera D'Asti Bricco 2016. These complemented well the meal Ann had kindly prepared for us, following the Whitby way of tasting wines with food. My favourites were the first and last wines tasted, and fortunately Nigel was able to supply half a dozen bottles of both. The evening was not the same as a regular sommeliers' meeting, but was a most enjoyable substitute, giving us a great night out brightening the general Covid-19 gloom. Thoroughly



recommended pending the return to some kind of new normality.

**Nick Tilley   Whitby   Section**

## Whitby Section Report

After six months of frustrating lockdown we decided to "dip our toes in the water" and have a (Covid compliant) meeting.

Our venue was the popular Sanders Yard Bistro where that ubiquitous and very popular presenter - one Nigel Green - treated us to his "Summer Seducers".

He presumably thought he would seduce us better by wearing what appeared to be a wig, complete with flowing curls, (see photo) - thanks to a "locked down" barber!

Our welcome wine was a quirky Italian sparkling Ventisei Bianco - with a beer bottle type cap.

Canapes were nicely washed down by an intermediate wine from the Cote Du Rhone and our starter of Greek mezze was much enjoyed with an Italian pinot bianco and New Zealand sauvignon blanc.

The main course of stuffed chicken breast was complimented by a seductive Chianti Classico 2015 and a Les Perrieres Cote de Nuits-Villages 2015.

We concluded with an excellent moscato dessert wine (perfect with the tarte au fraises) from the Estate Conte Emo Capodilista - owned by the same Italian family since the Middle Ages.

Our grateful thanks to Nigel for a seductively enjoyable evening - and probably our last this year in view of the ever spreading Three Tier Lockdowns!



**Fred Richardson**





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  - All Text in Comic Sans MS is by the Editor.
- The magazine is also available on the Guilds Website.

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