

JANUARY 2016, WineLovers2: Chardonnay and Merlot grapes

Part of the general good humour at the last wine tasting could be because 19 of us tasted 13 different wines made from Chardonnay and Merlot grapes. Many thanks to Kath for calculating the scores and to Jill and Brian for the bread and cheese.

The Chardonnays generally had reasonable scores and the top wine of the evening was the Chablis, with the Macon the second highest scoring Chardonnay. For once, the Old World producers beat the New. The Merlots did well too with top honours going to the Antares Supp'Prive and the second highest score to the widely available McGuigan.

No.	Wine Details	Tasting Notes	Score
1	Oyster Bay, New Zealand, 2013 Chardonnay Scrumpy's £9.99	Pale, mineral, citrus taste with short finish	6.0
2	The Full Fifteen, Australia 2014 Chardonnay Laithwaites £8	A fruity rounded taste with tropical fruits	6.2
3	Macon-Villages France 2012 Chardonnay Unknown £8	Round, smooth subtle fruit & vanilla taste with long finish	7.0
4	Robert Nicolle France Chablis Laithwaites £12	Taste of honey & lime	7.5
5	Barefoot California 2014 Merlot Morrison's £6.99 (offer £5)	Soft blackberry taste, pleasant but not complex	6.6
6	Isla Negra Chile Merlot Tesco £5	A thinner wine with bit of tannin aftertaste	5.7
7	Geyser Peak California 2013 Merlot Morrison's £8	A strong aroma, full flavour of plums & smooth	6.9
8	Marianna Bay Spain Merlot Unknown £7	A fruity wine with strong liquorice tones	5.6
9	Vineyards World of Wines Chile Merlot Tesco £7.99 (£4 offer)	Flavours of cherry, raspberry & leather	6.7
10	McGuigan Australia 2014 Merlot Morrison's £7	Taste of blackberries, oaky, vanilla	7.1
11	Chevalier de Fauvert France 2014 Merlot Pays d'Oc Unknown source £6	Dark fruits with active tannins	6.5
12	Jacob's Creek East Australia 2014 Merlot Morrison's £7	Cherry & plum flavour with longish finish	6.6
13	Antaris Supp'Prive Chile 2014 Merlot £5	Blackcurrant fruity flavour with smooth, spicy finish	7.3

JANUARY 2016, WineLovers4: Chardonnay and Merlot grapes

The top Chardonnay was the Lindemans Bin 65 and the top Merlot (by a squeak) the Tarantino from Italy.

FEBRUARY 2016: New Zealand whites and Australian reds

In February we had tutored tasting sessions, where Alan Hinch introduced a selection of New Zealand whites and Australian red wines. Many thanks to Alan for all the hard work he put in to prepare these tastings and to the *teams* of wine lovers who organised the meetings.

MARCH 2016, WineLovers2: Return to Chile

The Chilean wines we tasted this month seemed generally to please. Only one wine scored poorly - the Viognier - and that was one which I liked!

Top white was the dry Muscat - snip at £7.49 from Majestic and the TH Rarities Maule Valley blend from the wine Society at £11.50. As you will see from the attached consolidated scores and notes, some inexpensive wines scored respectably. Thanks to Kath for doing the scores, David for the door and Jill and Brian for the bread and cheese.

No.	Tasting Notes (All wines sources from Wine Society or Majestic)	Score
1	Single Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc, Errazuriz, Casablanca Valley, 13%, 2014, Majestic, £8.99 A pale aromatic wine tasting of citrus, elderflowers & gooseberries. Refreshing but light. Good summer drink	6.9
2	Luis Felipe Edwards Signature Series, Viognier Reserva, Rapel Valley, 13.5% 2015, Majestic, £6.99 Deeper golden wine with very little aroma. Most did not find it appealing with a musky, metallic aftertaste	4.8
3	Medalla Real Gran Reserva Chardonnay, Leyda Valley, 13.5%, 2015, Majestic, £9.89 A medium straw colour & aroma of pear with a taste of gooseberries & oak.	6.2
4	Days of Summer, Muscat, Itata Valley, 12%, 2014, Majestic, £7.49 A very pale wine. 3 tables liked the taste of apricot , honey & apple & enjoyed it "what a white wine should be", but 1 found it syrupy & sticky.	7.2
5	Lascar Carmenere, Valle Central, 13.5%, 2014, Wine Society, £5.50 A strong red colour with aroma of vanilla & liquorish, tasting of blackberries, plums. Smooth with a good finish. 3 tables liked it a lot , 1 did not-thus the lower score.	6.6
6	The Society's Exhibition Merlot, Valle de Peumo, 13%, 2013, Wine Society, £9.50 A good red colour with fewer aromas than 5 tasting of blackcurrents, vanilla & plums. Universally liked	7.0
7	TH (Terroir Hunter) Rarities, Garnacha - Carinena – Monastrell, Maule Valley, 14.5%, 2011 Wine Society, £11.50 Vibrant red with spicy aroma. Full tasting of forest fruits. Slightly harsh aftertaste that improved with time	7.2
8	Silver Ghost Cabernet Sauvignon, Valle Central, 13%, 2015, Majestic, £4.99 A deep red wine tasting of summer fruits & blackberries. Some found the taste rather metallic, others that it was a good all round drink	6.5

MARCH 2016, WineLovers4: Return to Chile

No.	Tasting Notes (All wines sources from Wine Society or Majestic)	Score
1	Single Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc, Errazuriz, Casablanca Valley, 13%, 2014, Majestic, £8.99 Pale straw colour. Elderflower, celery and gooseberry aroma. Full bodied taste of elderflower, green apple, lemon and gooseberry, fresh zingy taste, long farewell	7.9
2	Medalla Real Gran Reserva Chardonnay, Leyda Valley, 13.5%, 2015, Majestic, £9.89 Straw colour, honeysuckle and grapefruit on the nose, lemon, honey and lime on the tongue, good after taste	6.2
3	Luis Felipe Edwards Signature Series, Viognier Reserva, Rapel Valley, 13.5% 2015, Majestic, £6.99 Pale straw. Heavy, floral nose with hints of honeysuckle and green apple, disappointing in the mouth: bland and rather thin, weak after taste	5.0
4	Zarcillo Riesling, Valle del Bio Bio, 13.5%, 2015, Wine Society, £6.50 Shy bouquet. Honeysuckle, lime and gooseberry on the nose. Good green apple after taste.	6.7
5	Silbador Gewurtztraminer, Valle del Rappel, 13.5%, 2015, Wine Society, £6.50 Aromatic, citrus aroma and palate, lingers in the mouth. Rather thin for a wine of this grape.	5.1
6	Clos des Fous, Pour Ma Geule, 'Burgundy Philosophy' blend, 14%, 2014, Wine Society, £8.25 Deep red colour, vibrant body with notes of black berry fruits and plum, hint of beetroot, tannins quite active. Continued to improve in the glass and probably a good wine in a couple of years.	6.0
7	Con Amigos, Cool Climate Malbec, Valle de Bio Bio, 13.5%, 2014, £6.99 Ruby colour. Hints of oak and chocolate in the aroma. Good fruit in the mouth Blackberry/cherry taste, rich and full bodied. Good farewell.	5.9
8	Lascar Carmenere, Valle Central, 13.5%, 2014, Wine Society, £5.50 Rich ruby red. Rather smoky, burnt toast aroma. Smooth taste of cherries/plums. Gorgeous according to one table but really disliked by another which noted a barnyard taste and obnoxious aroma	5.5
9	The Society's Exhibition Merlot, Valle de Peumo, 13%, 2013, Wine Society, £9.50 Deep purple colour. Good bouquet. Well-structured wine. Smooth taste after taste of black berry fruits. Long farewell.	7.3
10	TH (Terroir Hunter) Rarities, Garnacha - Carinena – Monastrell, Maule Valley, 14.5%, 2011 Wine Society, £11.50 Excellent bouquet. Full bodied, balanced and integrated wine. Blackcurrant flavours and strong after taste. A good wine.	7.9

APRIL 2016, Sock Wine Tasting

We had our annual 'blind' wine tastings in April, where we demonstrated some modest skills development, but concluded in general that we needed 'more practice'.

MAY 2016, WineLovers2: Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris

The tasting was of Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris (or Grigio). The two top wines were the Wine Society's Pinot Grigio and Majestic's Edna Valley Pinot Noir. The one we didn't like much was the Soli Pinot Noir.

No.	Tasting Notes (All wines sources from Wine Society or Majestic)	Score
1	The Society's Pinot Grigio, Veneto, 2015, 13%, The Wine Society, £7.25 Pale straw colour with good nose of melon & green apples. This was a dry almost acidic wine, refreshing ,with a longish finish. The most popular of the whites on all the tables.	7.6
2	Blind Spot Pinot Grigio, King Valley, Aus, 2015, 12.5%, Wine Society, £7.50 A pale colour with "fleeting" nose. A bit bland with less character, tasted a bit of grapefruit/dessert gooseberries. This wine divided opinions on each table; some liked it, others hated it. Remember your choice!	5.6
3	Mud House Pinot Gris, South Island, NZ, 2014, 12.5%, Majestic, £7.99 A medium straw colour with slight floral aroma. Rather sweet with marsh mallow, peach, or pear taste. Short finish.	5.8
4	Soli Pinot Noir, Elenovo, Bulgaria, 12.5%, Wine Society, £9.95 A tawny, brown colour with a toast aroma. Taste was light with a hint of strawberry, sour cherries but not a pleasant taste. Universally the least popular red, with all the tables agreeing & a very low score.	4.5
5	The Parcel Series Pinot Noir Reserve, Marlborough, NZ, 2014, 13% Majestic, £8.99 A good red colour with aroma of burnt oak. Tasted of heather, blackberries & cherry. It was smooth. Opinion divided on whether this was liked	6.3
6	Edna Valley Pinot Noir, California, 14.5%, 2013, Majestic, £9.49 A deep, rich red with strong aromas of blackberry& plums. It was notably different to the previous 2 reds with legs & body & a rich plum & spicy flavour .Smooth & very well-liked by all.	7.8

MAY 2016, WineLovers4: Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris

Our tasting of Pinots showed that we sometimes agree about wines and that occasionally the most expensive is preferred. Our favourite Pinot Gris was the Alsace (at £12.50) and our second favourite was the Pinot Grigio, also from the Wine Society, at £7.25. All three tables were in agreement.

Our top Pinot Noir was the Wither Hills from New Zealand (our most expensive Pinot Noir) and the second favourite was the Californian Edna Valley. All three tables had one or the other of these as their favourite.

No.	Tasting Notes (All wines sources from Wine Society or Majestic)	Score
1	Blind Spot Pinot Grigio, King Valley, Aus, 2015, 12.5%, Wine Society, £7.50 Very pale straw colour. Faint bouquet with hint of elderflower, white peach. Slight elderflower, some acidity in the mouth	6.0
2	The Society's Pinot Grigio, Veneto, 2015, 13%, Wine Society, £7.25 Pale golden colour. Perfumed fruit aromas including apple and elderflower. Pleasant taste throughout. Continued to improve in the glass throughout the evening.	7.0
3	Mud House Pinot Gris, South Island, NZ, 2014, 12.5%, Majestic, £7.99 Pale golden colour. Light fruit aroma. Slightly sweeter than the first two whites, with a hint of melon. Slightly acidic aftertaste. Short finish but refreshing	6.4
4	Black Cottage Pinot Gris, Marlborough NZ, 2015, 13%, Majestic, £8.99 Pale colour. Slightly unpleasant aroma of farmyard (sulphites?). Bouquet improved if decanted several times – but should you have to? – pear notes. Better taste than aroma	6.4

	with hint of melon, but got worse in the glass.	
5	Trimbach Pinot Gris Reserve, Alsace, 13.5%, 2013, Wine Society, £12.50 Golden colour. Pleasant grapey fruit with hint of peach, apple and pear. The sweetest of the whites but balanced by well integrated acidity. Long farewell.	7.6
6	Blind Spot Pinot Noir, Yarra Valley, Victoria, Aus, 12.5%, 2015, Wine Society, £9.50 Clear red colour. Red berry fruit bouquet, slightly musty. Dry, light taste with strawberry notes, hint of damson. A bit mediocre.	5.9
7	Corte Marcelo Pinot Noir, Limari Valley, Chile, 13.5%, 2014, Wine Society, £7.95 Good red colour. Dry wheat, red fruit bouquet with tiniest hint of leather and plum. Medium body, dry with quite a lot of fruit.	6.4
8	The Parcel Series Pinot Noir Reserve, Marlborough, NZ, 2014, 13% Majestic, £8.99 Nice red fruits on the nose including sour cherry. Good taste, pleasant throughout. One table disliked and found it vinegary, earthy and acidic. Divided opinion on one table.	6.3
9	Wither Hills Pinot Noir, Marlborough, NZ, 2012, 14%, Wine Society, £10.50 Ruby red. Pleasant, fruity bouquet with cherry notes. Mixed berries in the mouth. Divided opinion on one table.	7.3
10	Edna Valley Pinot Noir, California, 14.5%, 2013, Majestic, £8.99 Deep ruby colour, purplish red. Good bouquet with cherry and plum on the nose. Good overall. Will improve still further over the next couple of years.	6.9

JUNE 2016, WineLovers2: Central & Eastern Europe

At the meeting, and on closer examination, views were a bit more diverse than I thought - at least about the whites. People either liked a lot, or didn't like the Gruener Veltliner and the Feteascu Regal. There was more or less unanimity, though, that the Ionian Red was the best red.

No.	Tasting Notes (All wines sources from Wine Society)	Score
1	Vina Laguna Malvazija 2015, Malvasia, Croatia, 12.5%, £7.25 A pale flowery wine with honeysuckle, gooseberry & heather aroma. Sharpish, dry taste of apricots, rhubarb & apple. Not so pleasant for some & needs chilling.	5.6
2	Château Vartely Feteascu Regal, 2015, Moldova, 13%, £5.75 Slightly darker with less floral nose. This was the highest scoring white for 2 tables & the lowest for the other so...Taste either was smooth, with notes of pineapple, orange blossom & violets or bland & lingering.	5.9
3	The Wine Society's Grüner Veltliner 2015, Kremstal, Austria, 12%, £7.50 A pale wine with mild fruity nose of pear & peach. Again variation between tables so either a bit dull, watered down taste with unpleasant effervescence or flavours of pear, mango & apple & very palatable.	5.9
4	Pittnauer Burgenländer, Blaufrankisch/Zweigelt/Merlot, non vintage, Burgenland, Austria, 13%, £8.50 Ruby coloured with rubber, blackberry & spicy nose. Agreement that this was the least liked red tasting of blackcurrant, wood & vanilla with rather too many tannins to finish.	4.6
5	Ionos Greek Red Wine, Agiorghitiko, non-vintage, Northern Peloponnese, Greece, 12.5%, £7.50 The surprise of the evening with near agreement by all that it was the best red. A cherry	6.4

	red colour with strawberry, red apple & herb nose. Tasted of chocolate, cherry & blackberry. It was very fruity & smooth with a long finish.	
6	Château Vartely Cabernet Sauvignon 2014, Moldova, 13.5%, £5.75 A ruby wine with raspberry & blackberry nose. Again a lot of difference between tables so ...either smooth, tasting of plums, grass & blackcurrant with hint of cedar wood or antiseptic, woody & harsh with little grape flavour.	5.5

JUNE 2016, WineLovers4: Central & Eastern Europe

There was a bit more agreement than I had anticipated, when I came to add up the scores. Top scoring whites were the Croatian Malvasia wine and the Semeli Mantinea from Greece made from the Moschofilero grape. Everyone scored these wines highly, although one table preferred the Ionos. Many thanks to Maurice and Sue for providing the bread and cheese.

No.	Tasting Notes (All wines sources from Wine Society)	Score
1	Vina Laguna Malvazija 2015, Malvasia, Croatia, 12.5%, £7.25 Good clear colour. Fresh bouquet, notes of flowers, apple, apricot, gorse Fruit flavours, first taste: honey and peach; end taste some mineral notes. Good balance.	6.5
2	Château Vartely Feteasca Regal, 2015, Moldova, 13%, £5.75 Scented slightly soapy bouquet with apple and lime, cherry blossom notes; white peach and lime in the mouth. Acidity dominates the fruit in the after taste, citrus after tones.	5.4
3	Ionos White Wine, Roditis/Lagourthi/Muscat, NW Peloponnese, non-vintage, 11.5%, £6.50 Shy bouquet, quite a dense taste, notes of elderflower, citrus and lime in the mouth.	5.3
4	Semeli Mantinia Nassiakos, Moschofilero, Nemea, 2015, 12%, £9.75 Light fruit bouquet, becoming spicier after a while, good balance of fruit and acidity, rounded, mellow taste, hint of avocado, white peaches, turmeric. Would be good with fish.	6.7
5	Retsina Tetramythos, Roditis, NW Peloponnese, 2014, 12%, £7.95 Grassy, mineral nose. Pine and mineral notes with a bit of light fruit in the mouth and a hint of ginger. Light wine, not much taste, short finish. Became a bit unpleasant on warming.	4.8
6	Borovitza Gamza, NW Bulgaria, 2013, 13%, £10.95 Good fruity bouquet, warm taste with black cherry, plum and blackberry (and strawberry) in the mouth, well integrated, good aftertaste with a peppery farewell.	7
7	The Little Prince, Karavitis Winery, 65%Kotsifali, 35%Mandilari, Crete, 2013, 13.5%, £8.95 Hints of fruit and leather on the nose, smooth (for some, not for others) but a bit 'tarty' in the mouth, hint of tobacco, spice, medium finish.	5
8	Chateau Vartely Individo, Feteasca Neagra, 2013 14%, £7.95 Rich, mature bouquet, good fruit, integrated oak, hint of cedar, good finish, very smooth, would go well with beef.	7.3
9	Ionos Greek Red Wine, Agiorghitiko, non-vintage, Northern Peloponnese, Greece, 12.5%, £6.50 Light nose with hint of sulphur/rubber, flavour a bit thin, lacked the fuller taste of other reds tasted.	5.2
10	Château Vartely Cabernet Sauvignon 2014, Moldova, 13.5%, £5.75 Green elderberry on the nose, not unpleasant, cherry and blackcurrant in the mouth, metallic after taste for some, cheap and cheerful.	4.9

JULY 2016, WineLovers2: Viognier and Nebbiolo

The top Viognier was the 'Elegant Frog' at a purse-friendly £6.50 and the top Nebbiolo was the 2005 Serre Alto Riserva. For once, we preferred the most expensive wine. At £20 normal price, this was the most expensive wine of the evening. Thanks to Kath for the consolidation and to Jill and Brian for the bread and cheese.

No.	Tasting Notes (All wines sources from Wine Society)	Score
1	Elegant Frog Viognier, Aude Valley, Languedoc, France, 13.5%, 2015, Sainsbury's £6.50 Pale colour with strong bouquet of flowers: honeysuckle, apple, grass. Taste of citrus, melon & peaches. This had a long finish. It was universally liked by all.	6.6
2	Serol, De Butte en Blanc, Viognier sur Granite, Urfe, France, 12.5%, 2015, Wine Society, £10.95 Very pale with delicate nose of vanilla & marzipan. Tasted sharper than No 1 with shorter finish but liked for the melon, "summertime" freshness.	6.4
3	Cono Sur Bicicleta, Viognier, Colchagua Valley, Chile, 13.5%, 2015, Tesco, £5.50 Pale colour with weak nose. Slightly tangy taste with pear flavours & a short finish.	5.4
4	Yalumba Viognier, S. Australia, 14.1% 2015, Sainsbury's £9 Pale colour with strong, not necessarily liked aroma of "old socks" lemon & floral disinfectant! The taste was much better of apricots, gooseberries & spice.	5.3
5	Manfredi, Nebbiolo d'Alba, 13.5%, 2014, Wine Society, £7.50 Ruby red colour with almost no aroma with flavours of tar, rubber & cherry. Rather too many tannins in the aftertaste but nevertheless still liked.	6.4
6	Sainsbury's Taste the Difference Barolo, 14.5%, 2012, Sainsbury's £16 (On offer £12) A deep red with black fruit nose plus leather. Tasted of blackcurrants, tar, plums oak casks. Felt to be a complex wine.	6.4
7	Serre Alte Barolo Riserva, 14%, 2005, Sainsbury's, £20 (on offer at £15) A deep red with fruit aroma plus nicotine & tar. Taste of black fruits with violets & spice. A full bodied wine.	6.6
8	The Wine Society's Exhibition Barolo, 14%, 2012, Wine Society, £19 A deep red with black fruit nose. Tasted of blackberries but rather earthy & acidic. Enthusiastically received by one table but disliked by other two.	5.9

AUGUST 2016, WineLovers4: Sparkling Wines

We didn't all taste all of the wines. There were 15 bottles altogether, with 13 different sparkling wines. 5 of the wines were tasted by all and the others were tasted by just two tables each. Bearing this in mind, the only sparkling red of the evening was by some distance the favourite wine of the evening, followed by the rose Garganega and the Tenuta Ca'bolani Prosecco. These were at the more expensive end of the wines we sampled. For once, the two cheapest wines - the Tesco Cava Rose and the Spritzini were least popular.

No.	Brand/Name, year, where bought, cost	Tasting Notes	Score
1.	Vilarnau Cava Brut Reserva, Spain, 11.5%, NV, Ocado, £11.99	Mid straw colour, little aroma, slight sparkle, notes of citrus and pear in mouth, nice package	6.1
2.	Freixenet Rosado, Spain, 2012, 12%, Morrison's £9	A bright juicy rose. Good taste of red berry and apple. Good after taste. Easy drinking	6.5
3.	Tesco Cava Rose, NV, 11.5%, £5	Rose colour, goes flat quite quickly, no nose, dry and quite sharp taste with acidity dominating, red berry and rhubarb notes in the mouth, poor after taste	3.9
4.	Villa Maria Lightly Sparkling Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough NZ, 2014, 12.5%, Morrison's £11 on offer at £8	Very pale. Apples/peaches/gooseberries/elderflower on the nose and tongue. Quite lively. More-ish	6.4
5.	Ronar Brut, Spain, NV, 11.5%, Morrison's £7	Pale straw colour, slight bouquet with hint of pear, lightly sparkling fresh taste, apple and peaches, pear, smoky/woody taste on tongue, biscuit notes as it warms up a little. Some thought a little too much sulphur giving a rubbery note to bouquet.	5.9
6.			
7.	Jacob's Creek, Sparkling Shiraz, NV, Australia, 12.5%, Sainsbury, £10	Medium bodied red. Blackcurrants and blackberries on the tongue. Good bouquet and pleasant after taste	8.1
8.	San Leo Nerello Mascalese Garganega, 11% Waitrose £10.49 (25% off offer)	Rose colour, aniseed and fruity notes on nose, nice sharpness on front of tongue, medium dry, hint of strawberry and sherbert dip/popping candy, dry finish	7.1
9.	Belletti Prosecco, NV, 11%, Aldi, £5.29	Very pale straw, sweet, pear bouquet with vanilla notes, medium dry, peaches, pear with lemon/grapefruit in mouth, significant fizz at the back of the mouth, a bit thin and acidic after taste. Not very exciting	6
10.			
11.	Tenuta Ca'bolani Prosecco, Italy, NV, 10.5%, Laithwaite's £6.99	Very pale straw, gently petillant, vegetal, grapefruit and lime notes on nose, citrus and grapefruit in the mouth, smoother and less sparkling than the Belletti, short finish	6.6
12.	Zonin Prosecco Brut, Italy, NV, 11%, Tesco £9	Strong taste and bouquet of apples and citrus. Taste quite acidic and spicy.	6.3
13.	Veuve Monsigny Champagne Brut, NV, France, 12%, Lidl £10.99, Waitrose £18.99	Pale straw, truffles and dried mushroom on the nose, 'like walking through woods with damp earth and plant smells, taste less distinctive than nose but good: gooseberry and mushroom. Some felt the nose and taste was a bit off.	5.8
14.	Morrison's Cava Brut, 2012, Spain, 12%, £7	Shy bouquet, pleasant taste of apples/peaches/gooseberries. Aftertaste short but pleasant. Quite a divisive wine since two groups didn't like it and found it a bit tasteless	5.4
15.	Spritzini Wild Strawberry and Raspberry Wine Based Drink, 10.5%, Asda £4	Bright pink colour. Very sweet. Not much 'kick'. Nose and taste of melted jelly, artificial flavouring. Better to freeze and make lollies.	3.3

SEPTEMBER 2016, WineLovers2: Tuscan Reds and Veneto Whites

Many thanks to Sue for running the meeting and to Kath for getting the cheese and totting up the scores. I think it's fair to say that you were less than overwhelmed by the whites, although the Waitrose Trebbiano scored well. Generally, we seem to prefer the fruitier and slightly smoky Alsace style pinot gris to the Italian pinot grigio versions. Top reds were the Chianti riserva and the Villa Antorini, also from Waitrose.

Bottle No.	Tasting Notes: Colour, Smell, Taste (beginning, middle, finish)	Average score of 10
1	Pinot Grigio della Venezia, 2015, 12%, Waitrose, £5.52 A very pale colour, aroma of pear drops, dry & lacking body	4.9
2	Villa Flora Lugana, Trebbiano, 2015, 13%, Waitrose, £7.49 A pale, fruity wine that was refreshing, fresh & well rounded with long legs. Popular with both tables.	7
3	Morrison's M Signature Soave Classico, Garganega, 2014, 12%, ££6.25 A pale wine, grapefruit tones but with little body.	5.1
4	Vigneti de Foscario Soave Classico, Garganega, 2014, 12.5%, Waitrose, £9.74 Darker colour. One table felt it was rounded & honey tasting. Another that it was bland, watery with nasty aftertaste.	4.8
5	Cantina La Salute Chardonnay Marca Trevigiana, 2015, 13%, John Clausen, £4.95 A pale wine rather refreshing with tropical fruit, buttery flavour. Equally popular with both tables.	5.7
6	Piccini Chianti Classico, Sangiovese, 2014, 13%, John Clausen, £6 A rich red colour that smelt better than it tasted. Rather astringent.	4.7
7	Waitrose Chianti Classico, Sangiovese, 2014, 13%, £8.99 Differing views in this. One table found it smooth, fruity & well rounded. Another metallic with too many tannins.	5.2
8	Sagrato Chianti Riserva, Sangiovese, 2013, 13%, Waitrose, £7.87 A full black wine with black fruit flavour. Smooth	6.4
9	Villa Antorini Toscana, Sangiovese/Cabernet Sauvignon, 2013, 13.5%, Waitrose, £11.24 A black cherry wine that was full of flavour, smooth with warming palate	6.6

SEPTEMBER 2016, WineLovers4: Tuscan Reds and Veneto Whites

There was quite a lot of disagreement, controversy even! Generally, we liked the Waitrose pinot grigio, disliked the Morrisons version and liked the Trebbiano. But one table really liked the Morrisons pinot. Top red was the Villa Antorini, which was also the favourite red of WL2. Best value for money was the M&S Toscano Rosso at an inexpensive £6. Top whites and reds all scored higher than the most expensive wine of the evening!

Many thanks to Maurice and Sue for providing the bread and cheese.

Bottle No.	Tasting Notes: Colour, Smell, Taste (beginning, middle, finish)	Average score of 10
1.	Pinot Grigio della Venezia, 2015, 12%, Waitrose, £5.52 Very, very pale, Concentrated aroma. Elderflower nose, green apples, pears and citrus in the mouth, smooth/well blended/balanced, lingers on the farewell, improves in the glass.	6.7
2.	Italia Pinot Grigio della Venezia, 2015, 12% Morrisons, £8 Very pale, pleasant apple bouquet which for some fades quite quickly, not much taste, acid dominates, short finish. Others really liked the perfume of the aroma and the fruitiness.	5.1
3.	Morrison's M Signature Soave Classico, Garganega, 2014, 12%, £6.25 Slightly darker colour, apple, citrus/white peach flavours, vegetal notes, could be good as an aperitif. Some felt that it was rather thin and watery.	6.2
4.	Vigneti de Foscario Soave Classico, Garganega, 2014, 12.5%, Waitrose, £9.74 Mid straw colour. Quite well balanced. Fruity: lychees, kiwi, apple, pears, orange, peaches and kumquat were all mentioned. Slightly acid farewell.	6.5
5.	Villa Flora Lugana, Trebbiano, 2015, 13%, Waitrose, £7.49 Very pale straw. Clean, fresh bouquet. Fruity aroma. Off dry, crisp apple and grapey taste, short farewell.	6.7
6.	Cantina La Salute Manzoni Bianco, 2015, 13%, John Clausen, £4.95 Mid straw colour. Grapes and gooseberry in the mouth with hints of candied orange, honey, peaches, apricots and (?) chocolate, Quite a complex taste. One Table really did not like this wine and thought that the wine could have gone over, partly because of the caramel and sweet flavours.	5.9
7.	Piccini Chianti Classico, Sangiovese, 2014, 13%, John Clausen, £6 Mid ruby colour, cheap and cheerful, rather earthy taste, plum and cherry in the mouth, rustic, good with a bbq. Short farewell.	5.3
8.	Waitrose Chianti Classico, Sangiovese, 2014, 13%, £8.99 Intense ruby. Damson, blackcurrants on the nose with a hint of burnt toffee. Silky in the mouth. Good flavour. Dry finish. Some felt, by contrast, that it was a bit weak in taste.	6.5
9.	Sagrato Chianti Riserva, Sangiovese, 2013, 13%, Waitrose, £7.87 More tawny colour than 7 or 8. Good structure. Well integrated tannins. Red cherry and blackberry with a hint of leather. Short farewell. A bit lightweight for some.	6.2
10.	Toscana Rosso, Sangiovese/Merlot/ Cabernet Sauvignon, 2013, M&S, 13%, £6 Ruby colour. Blackberry on the nose. Fruity flavour – redcurrants, blackberry. Good body. Slightly rustic tannins. Quaffable. Bit thin on the finish.	6.8
11.	Villa Antorini Toscana, Sangiovese/Cabernet Sauvignon, 2013, 13.5%, Waitrose, £11.24 Intense burgundy colour. Nose of baked fruit, plum, blackberry, cedar. Slightly dry finish. Well integrated tannins.	6.9
12.	Amicus Toscana Sangiovese/Merlot/ Cab Sab/ Syrah, 2013, M&S, 14%, £15 Very deep plum colour. Black fruit and vanilla on the nose. Slightly oaky but fruity flavour. Long, dry finish. Could well be better in 3 or 4 years' time.	6.3

OCTOBER 2016, WineLovers2: Muscat and Gamay

The reds were more popular in general, but our favourite Muscat was the Chilean (£7.95 from the Wine Society). Particular favourites among the Gamays were the Morgon (from Majestic) and the Brouilly (Wine Society). The Morgon (at £9.89) was only £1.90 more than the same supplier's Beaujolais Villages, which was by some distance the least favoured Gamay of the evening. Thanks to Kath for compiling and to Brian and Jill for the Bread and cheese.

Bottle number	Tasting Notes: Colour, Smell, Taste (beginning, middle, finish)	Average score
1	Koyle Don Cande Itata Muscat 2015 12.5% Wine Society, £7.95 A pale straw colour with strong fruity aroma of peach & elderflower. A fruity flavour of peach & grapefruit that had a good bite & was drier than the aroma suggested. A long finish.	7.3
2	Zibibbo Sicilia, Ottoventi 2015 12.5% Wine Society, £9.75 Very pale with light aroma. Taste of peach & grapefruit was rather light ("bland") & little aftertaste.	6.0
3	Mas Neuf Muscat Sec, 2014 12% Majestic, £7.99 A pale wine with slightly mineral, sulphite aroma. Tasted of peaches, lychees, citrus. One table scored this highest, 2 others lowest!	6.3
4	Beaujolais-Villages 2014 Georges Duboeuf 12.5% Majestic, £7.99 Red plum colour with light aroma of redcurrants & blackberries. Rather thin flavour of cherry & plum but with a strong aftertaste of tannins. Universally the least popular red of the evening.	4.9
5	Domaine Reverdon Brouilly 2015 12.5%, £9.89 Vibrant red wine with delicate aroma of black cherry. Tasted of blackcurrant & cherry. Smooth, silky flavour, drier at the back of the tongue.	6.3
6	The Society's Exhibition Côte de Brouilly 2015 13.5% Wine Society, £8.95 Dark colour with slightly musty nose but full of good fruit flavours of blackberry. Velvety & good finish.	7.4
7	Marius Michaud Moulin A Vent 2014 13.5% Majestic, £8.99 A paler plum colour with subtle aroma of blackcurrants, raspberries & chestnuts. Complex red fruit flavours. One table found it oaky with high tannin.	6.2
8	Morgon 2015 Château de Pizay 13% Majestic, £9.89 Rich purple colour with strong nose of cherry, blackcurrant & woody. Smooth, well rounded with good body. Most popular with 2 tables.	8.0

OCTOBER 2016, WineLovers4: Muscat and Gamay

There was an unprecedented degree of agreement between tables! The favourite Muscat was the Zibibbo from the Wine Society at £9.75.

Particular favourites among the Gamays were last two that we tasted, the Morgon (from Majestic) and the Brouilly (Wine Society). The Morgon (at £9.89) was the same price as the same supplier's Brouilly, which was the least favoured Gamay of the evening.

Thanks to Maurice for the Bread and cheese.

Bottle number	Tasting Notes: Colour, Smell, Taste (beginning, middle, finish)	Av score out of 10
1.	Zibibbo Sicilia, Ottoventi 2015 12.5% Wine Society, £9.75 Pale colour, aromatic and lemon on nose, smooth taste, quite sweet with peach notes and grapefruit, refreshing, light, and smooth, medium dry and citrusy farewell	7.2
2.	Mas Neuf Muscat Sec, 2014 12% Majestic, £7.99 Pale colour, gooseberry, lime and candied orange peel in the mouth, slight spritz at the front, aftertaste a bit acidic; not as long as other whites, Initial rather musty nose (sulphites?) which some found off putting.	5.5
3.	Koyle Don Cande Itata Muscat 2015 12.5% Wine Society, £7.95 Straw colour. Light, flowery aroma with a hint of sherry and oil. In mouth fruity, citrus, fruit salad and grapefruit, peach, kumquat (if we can spell it), dry, rounded, long finish	6.8
4.	Marius Michaud Moulin A Vent 2014 13.5% Majestic, £8.99 Deep ruby colour, caramel, spice and blackcurrant notes on nose, light taste of blackberries, hints of oak and leather, good legs, smooth on the palate, lasting after taste	6.6
5.	Beaujolais-Villages 2014 Georges Duboeuf 12.5% Majestic, £7.99 Blueberry, salt cherry and blackcurrant aroma and taste, bright, lively wine, strong after taste, robust and rustic, lively tannins	6.0
6.	Domaine Reverdon Brouilly 2015 12.5%, Majestic, £9.89 Deep ruby colour, notes of strawberry and rich red cherry, fruity, spices, long farewell	5.9
7.	The Society's Exhibition Côte de Brouilly 2015 13.5% Wine Society, £8.95 Rich ruby red, quite fruity, blackberry on nose, rich and fruity in the mouth with spicy damson, black cherry and blackberry notes. Intense flavours. Silky tannins. Smooth lasting finish	6.9
8.	Morgon 2015 Château de Pizay 13% Majestic, £9.89 Dark red colour. Red cherry and blackcurrants in the mouth, with a hint of strawberry and liquorice, very smooth/velvety	7.7

NOVEMBER 2016, WineLovers2: Languedoc

In November, we were tasting wines from the Languedoc region from the Wine Society. The favourite white was the Sauvignon/Viognier blend (£6.25). The favourite red was the Minervois (£7.75).



No.	Tasting Notes: Colour, Smell, Taste (beginning, middle, finish)	Av score
1	Pèlerin Blanc Pays de Caux, Chartreuse de Mougères Vermentino 2015 13%, £6.50 A floral/elderflower bouquet not unlike sauvignon blanc. 3 tables found the taste was disappointing, nondescript with a short, bitter finish. 1 table found it soft with vanilla flavours thus a higher average score.	6.0
2	Ollieux Romanis Capucines Pays de l'Aude Blanc Sauvignon Blanc 12.5% 2015, £6.95 A mid straw colour with a nettle & gooseberry nose. A taste of gooseberry, grapefruit & elderflower. It improved in the glass as it got warmer. 1 table did not like it, "a non-event & bland" & thus the lower score.	5.7
3	Les Pierres Bordes Marsanne-Viognier 2015, 12.5%, £5.95 A pale wine with very little nose or flavour but not unpleasant. Universally held views	5.8

	about this.	
4	Duo Des Mers, Sauvignon-Viognier Vin de France 2015, 12.5%, £6.25 A classic sauvignon blanc nose ,crisp & floral . Tasted of fresh grass, peach & lychees .A long finish. Universally liked by everyone	7.5
5	The Society's French Full Red, Côtes Catalanes, Carignan Grenache, 2015, 14%, £6.25 A deep plum colour with fruity plum & cherry nose. Tasted of cherry, blackberry but with rather a dry finish. 1 table did not like it because of its sharp after taste.	5.6
6	Saint Chinian Chateau Etienne La Dournie 2013 Syrah/Shiraz 14%, £11.50 A plum coloured wine with cherry, plum, earthy nose. Tasted of almonds, blackcurrants & smoother than 5 but still disappointing.	6.1
7	Minervois, Château Sainte Eulalie 2015 Carignan Grenache 14.5%, £7.75 A plum colour wine with aroma of cinnamon & blackcurrants. Tasted smooth with flavour of damsons, blackberry fruits & with a good after taste. Long legs. Universally the most liked red wine.	7.5
8	Montpeyroux La Pimpanela, Domaine La Jasse Castel 2013 Grenache Syrah 14.5%, £10.95 A dark wine with only slightly fruity nose. Tasted of cherries with liquorice & marzipan. A dry finish which pleased some but not others	6.9

NOVEMBER 2016, WineLovers4: Languedoc

In November, we were tasting wines from the Languedoc region from the Wine Society. The favourite white was the Marsanne Viognier blend (£5.95). The favourite reds were the wine Society's Corbieres (£7.75), The Wine Society's Full French Red (£6.25), and the Minervois (£7.75), also from the Wine Society. On this occasion we preferred the Wine Society offerings to the rather more expensive couple of bottles from Majestic.

No.	Tasting Notes: Colour, Smell, Taste (beginning, middle, finish)	Av score
1	Domaine du Bosc, Grenache, IGP Pays d'Oc, 2015, 12%, £6.25 Light straw colour. Shy bouquet. Hint of spring flowers. Citrus in the mouth: lemon at the front, grapefruit at the rear. Good finish with a lingering acidity.	6.5
2	Chartreuse de Mougères, Pelerin, Vermentino/Sauvignon/Muscat. IGP Pays de Caux, 13% £6.95 Light straw colour. Fresh, sea breezes and citrus on the nose. Green seedless grapes and gooseberry in the mouth. Clean, fresh, smooth finish	6.2
3	Les Pierres Bordes Marsanne-Viognier IGP Pays d'Oc 2015, 12.5%, £5.95 Mid straw colour. Musk on the nose. Rounded and full taste: lemon soufflé, apple, pears. Lingers on the tongue. Would go well with fish or chicken. Improves in the glass.	7.4
4	Duo Des Mers, Sauvignon-Viognier Vin de France 2015, 12.5%, £6.25 Light straw colour. Strong bouquet of elderflower and hedgerow in the spring, hints of pineapple and pear. Lemons and elderflowers at front of taste. Short, mellow finish. Lingers a little then disappears	6.8

5	Louis Latour Grand Ardeche Chardonnay, IGP Ardeche, 2014, 13.5%, £10.99 Supplied by Majestic Mid straw colour. Shy bouquet. Hint of butterscotch. In mouth, butterscotch and vegetal taste, like marrow or squash, hint of peach. One group found it 'caramelised' and didn't like it much.	6.4
6	The Wine Society's Corbieres, AC Corbieres, Carignan/Grenache 2014, 14% £7.75 Intense ruby/purple colour. Blackberry, baked apple and cream soda on the nose, with undertone of cedar wood. Rounded mouth taste. Would go with steak. Good after taste.	7.5
7	Chateau Aiges Vives, AC Corbieres, Syrah/Grenache/Mourvedre/ Carignan, 2013, 13.5% £9.99 Supplied by Majestic Less intense purple (than 6). Blackberry, plum in the mouth. Slightly 'tarty taste'. Hints of oak, pepper and spice. Some red apple. Stronger taste than 6.	6.2
8	The Society's French Full Red, IGP Côtes Catalanes, Carignan/Grenache, 2015, 14%, £6.25 Morello cherry, smoky blackberry on the nose. Black cherry in the mouth, spices and pepper, hint of oak. Smokey, rounded tannins. Lingers on the tongue. Good, full, long lasting flavour.	7.1
9	Château Sainte Eulalie 2015 Carignan/Grenache AC Minervois, 14.5%, £7.75 Similar colour to 7. Blackberry nose. Very fruity mouth taste. Hint of pear, spices, damson. Good balance between fruit, smooth tannins and spice. 'Tastes expensive'. Would improve with age.	7.6
10	Domaine La Jasse Castel, IGP Languedoc 2013 Grenache/Syrah 14.5%, £10.95 Similar colour to 7. Good bouquet of black fruits and Christmas pudding. Raspberry/blackcurrant flavour. Bit of grip in after taste/ or slightly rough tannins – depending on point of view!	6.2

