

April Forum Wine Report

For our March meeting we visited Sue's to sample a selection of wines on offer in Lidl's 'Italian Wine Festival'. This was one of our most enjoyable sessions of recent times and helped prove once again that Lidl can provide excellent wines for a very reasonable price.

Perhaps the festive feel was aided by starting for once with a sparkling number, a **Colli Piacentini Malvasia** (11.5%; £6.99). Certainly the fizz was present and all praised the crisp tones of this 'Prosecco alternative' from the Piacenza district; it 'had more about it than a Prosecco' as one member put it. Also unusually, we followed this up with a Rose, a **Mithus Basilicata IGP Rosato 2021** (13.5%; £9.99) from Acarenza, in the south, the 'heel' of Italy. This example of the Negroamaro grape (better known as a red wine grape) was the one relative failure of the day. The promised mineral undertones were there, but left a rather harsh aftertaste and did not find general approval.

That brought us to our two whites. Moving from the deep south to the far north, a **Weissburgunder 2021** (12.5%; £7.99) from Trentino in the Alto Adige proved to be a deceptively simple but extremely refreshing wine. The closeness to the Austrian border made it no surprise that this version of the Pinot Blanc grape had great flavour with a touch of nuttiness. Equally enjoyable was the **Greco Di Tufo 2021** (13%; also £7.99) from the Naples area where the volcanic terrain added a more pleasant minerality than the earlier Mithus. Both these wines would be great for a summer afternoon with friends, and at a very reasonable price.

So we finished with our reds: you can't do Italy without a Chianti and Lidl provided a really good example. The **Medici Riccardi Chianti Montelbano 2018** (13%; £7.99) was appreciated even by the 'non-red brigade.' There was great surprise when the price was revealed, as the mellow flavour and long pleasant finish suggested a quality wine perhaps in the £15 range. I went back for more on the following day but they were sold out! After this the **Duca Di Sasseta Toscana Riserva 2016** (13.5%; £10.99), an example of a self-proclaimed *vino nobile di Montepulciano*, was a slight let down, pleasant enough but no match for the Chianti despite both being from the Sangiovese grape and grown in adjacent areas of Tuscany. All in all however, we enjoyed a nice selection and at a good price.

By the time you read this we will have enjoyed an April tasting of 'unusual world wines'. A report will follow.