

Forum Wine Report March 2020

The February Wine Group meeting seems long ago, but as the March meeting is after the Forum deadline I am appending a short account. The wines sampled were all on sale in the Lidl post-Christmas 'When it's gone, it's gone' sale. This might have passed but most of the wines can still be purchased, albeit at higher (but often still very reasonable) prices.

Our four whites featured an amazingly good Italian Soave which seemed to be the sale's loss-leading highlight: the 'Soave DOC Classico' was described by a reviewer as 'Clean fresh wine with juicy lemon and chalky minerality. Would pay £6.00.' Our group agreed and were staggered by the price - £3.49! This barely covered the tax! The 'Abellio Rias Baixas Albarino 2018' (12.5% and £5.99) was also excellent with a stony minerality, and the group agreed with a reviewer who valued this at £12.00. Moving to Australia, Chardonnay is not to everyone's taste, but Lidl's 'Coonawarra Chardonnay 2018 (12% and £5.79) found favour with a number of the group. We completed our whites with a sweet French example, the 'Tradition Parcherenc du Vic-Bith 2017 (12% and £7.99), This 'well made fresh wine' showed a sweet ripe peach and orange marmalade character and would make a much cheaper alternative to Sauterne. All four white wines would be well worth seeking out.

Our two reds featured a Chilean Malbec, the 'Viajero Malbec Reserva 2018' (13.5% and £4.99). This had good body and far more depth than the price would suggest. Members detected blueberries and chocolate, while its warm spicy oakiness lingered on the tongue. Equally good value was our Spanish example, the 'Valdearenas Tinto 2016' (13.5% and, again, £4.99) perhaps a more workaday red, but a more full-bodied example than the Chilean wine.

Lidl is in fact becoming the place to buy good value wines and this tasting provided good evidence of why this is so. Our March meeting will feature a trio of Spanish wines alongside their Portuguese equivalents. Anyone interested in joining us for the April meeting should contact Tim Meacham (email address elsewhere in this Forum).