

## Forum Wine Group Report July 2024

For our June meeting we set a new challenge, to sample six different wines from six different supermarkets using six different grapes and imported from six different countries but all costing exactly the same price (to within a penny), £7.99 or £8 per bottle. As usual we tasted four white wines and two reds.

We started on apparently safe ground with a **French** white, the **Elia Cepage Colombard 2022** (9% from **Sainsburys**). Based on the Colombard grape, grown in Gascony, this provides a relatively low alcohol wine but that was not too apparent in the tasting. There was a definite citrus flavour but so much for the good news. General opinion declared this wine a particularly bland number. We moved quickly to our second sample, a **Chilean El Prado Sauvignon Blanc 2023** (11% from **Aldi**). Grown in the meadows of Chile's Central Valley, this was better with a longer finish than the French example. Even so there was a feeling that something was lacking compared to, say, a New Zealand Sauvignon. Things really picked up with our third bottle, actually from **New Zealand**, but a **Gisborne Pinot Gris 2022** (12.5% from **Lidl**); here the higher strength really made itself felt and a number of members loved the 'three 'p' flavours' (pineapple, papaya and peach) promised by the label. We finished our whites with a **USA** example, the **Barefoot Pinot Grigio** (12% from **Morrisons**). Slightly lighter than its New Zealand counterpart, this winner of the 2021 Monterey International Wine Competition was another easy and satisfying drink.; definitely the runner-up among the four whites.

That just left the pair of reds. The **Portuguese Lisboa Bonita 2022** (13.5% from **M&S**) was a pleasant surprise, even for our 'no reds please' brigade. A blend of no less than seven local grapes (Syrah being the only well-known example) made this a really flavoursome experience; a good quaffing wine. In contrast the single variety **Italian Montepulciano D'Abruzzo 2021** (13.5% from **Tesco**), despite its rich, inky appearance, failed to please ("rather thin", "weak finish") leaving the wine from Portugal the clear winner.

The quiz featured wines in the ancient world and proved to be a particularly interesting one.

The July meeting will be our annual 'Summer Fizz' session to be held on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Here's hoping the recent spell of Summer weather continues!

Tim Meacham.