

Wine Group Report – April by Tim Meacham

In recent months Majestic Wine have been offering some interesting 'Bin End Sales' and their February venture allowed the group to sample some rather nice bottles at knock-down prices at the March meeting (although with one interloper as will be I

We started with something quite unusual for us, a genuinely sweet white wine! This was a **Huella De Chile Moscato 2022** (12.5% and £6.99, down from £11.99). The Wikipedia account of Chilean wines only mentions the Muscat grape once at the end of its final paragraph. Actually this was rather a nice drinkable sweet wine with its self-proclaimed 'fresh palate leading to a lush finish of honey and candied fruit.' Most members preferred our second drier bottle, a **Skouras Mantinea 2024** from Greece (12% and 9 Euros 99 cents from the vineyard). This had a real fizz to it provided by the little-known Moschofilero grape and confirmed what we already knew that recent Greek wines are a true revelation. By a sheer coincidence, having purchased a bottle of Skouras wine from Majestic for this session I then found myself a week before the meeting actually visiting the Skouras vineyard in the Peloponnese where I purchased a second bottle, the one we actually sampled! Back to Majestic we then tried an Italian white, a **Coste Domini Veneti Soave 2021** (13% and £10.00, down from £14.99). This was based on another unusual grape, the Gargegna, and was possibly the highlight of the day: very easy drinking, this one. That contrasted with the powerhouse final white, the **Clos de la Casse Anjou Blanc 2022** (14.5% and £9.99, from £14.99). 'Wow, that packs a punch!' one member cried. Easy drinking this was not. 'It's quite hard work', another member opined, and, while admiring the clear depth and complexity of the Chenin Blanc wine, we found this our least favourite of the day.

As always, we finished with a couple of reds. Both found favour, even with the anti-red brigade. Firstly, the Argentinian **MV Mendoza Malbec 2022** (13.5% and £6.99, from £12.99) was nicely balanced, not over heavy and good value especially at the bin end rate. Even smoother however was the **Colinas del Itata Cinsault 2022** (13% and £12.99, down from £18.99). This second Chilean wine of the day featuring our third lesser-known grape, (the Cinsault) was from a very high-altitude vineyard in the Rolling Hills of Itata, 450 km south of Santiago, first planted in 1551. A little pricy maybe, but this went down very well with our red wine enthusiasts.

All in all, we agreed that Majestic had produced a fine variety of very different wines at a very affordable price.