



# WSWS

NEXT MEETING IS ON:

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April**  
7:30pm for 8:00pm start

West Surrey Wine Society  
<http://www.westsurreywinesociety.org.uk>

April 2010 edition

## Massaya wines from Lebanon - Mark Bedford (Caviste)

Following a gap in our programme with the cancellation of the March meeting, this definitely is a wine tasting **not** to be missed. Come and experience one of the great wine stories of our age. In Marks' words:

*Two Lebanese brothers return to their broken homeland with the vision to restore their family's property in the Bekaa Valley and to commence the distillation of Arak, the national spirit. After early success they "catch the vision" of fine wine, restoring and extending the ancient vineyards. They go on to forge partnerships with two of the great French winemaking families - the Bruniers of Châteauneuf-du-Pape and the Hébrards of Saint Emilion. All three families work together, feeding off each other's excellence, to bring pleasure to wine drinkers the world over.*

As part of this tasting, the Massaya wines as well as the 2 french wines will be compared, and in addition, we'll be able to see the impact of time on the top class Massaya Gold through a vertical tasting. So in addition to our normal "pre meeting" wine, we have **9** wines instead of the usual 8: 6 from Massaya, 2 from the "French brotherhood" – plus an Arak!

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) Massaya Classic Rose 2009              | 2) Massaya Classic White 2008                   |
| 3) Massaya Classic Red 2007               | 4) Massaya Silver Red 2005                      |
| 5) Ch. Trianon St. Emilion Grand Cru 2004 | 6) Massaya Gold Red 2005                        |
| 7) Massaya Gold Red 2000                  | 8) Domaine Vieux Telegraphe, Le Telegramme 2007 |
| 9) Massaya Arak                           |   |

This tasting definitely has something for everyone – vertical tastings; comparatives across continents; history and passion. You'll not be disappointed. The wines being shown for this tasting are all over £10 each, with a number priced well over £20, making the tasting exceptionally good value at £15 members; £18 guests. It would therefore be very useful if members could advise David & Kim (by e-mail) whether they intend to come to the tasting, and whether you are bringing guests or introducing potential new members – all welcome – we just need to ensure we open the right number of bottles!.

### Diary notes

<b>Make a note of the following dates, (WSWS <u>always</u> meets on 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month unless stated) mystery pre-meeting wine at 7:30 onward; meeting commences at 8pm</b>	
<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2010</b>	<b>Massaya wines from Lebanon – Mark Bedford (Caviste)</b>
<b>Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2010</b>	<b>Alsace wines - Christopher Fielden</b>
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010</b>	<b>AGM and Wines from Washington &amp; Oregon - Andrew Williams, (Arblaster &amp; Clarke), rescheduled from March</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>No meeting</b>
<b>August ( date to be agreed)</b>	<b>Summer party</b>

## **May meeting – advanced notice**

Our May meeting will concentrate on wines from the Alsace region of France, and our expectation is for more expensive wines than normal. In order that we can better estimate bottles, it would be helpful if members could indicate in advance whether they plan to attend the meeting. We'll be including a column on the attendance sheets for the next few meetings, and it would be great if members could indicate their intentions.

## **Comments from the Cape**

While on their recent trip to South Africa, Peter and Frances Smith took time to pull together the following notes of visits to vineyards and wine tastings. The current exchange rate is circa £1=R11

We can't share the weather, the sun, sea and superlative scenery with you, but we can share a few reflections from over 3 months in-depth wine drinking in the fairest Cape (with the Garden Route an official 'water stressed area' after the worst drought for 150 years, drinking water was not an option!).

Wow - how commercial the Cape has become! In the classic Paarl / Stellenbosch / Franschoek area wine seems almost secondary at many of the estates, with a huge array of other attractions – posh restaurants and bistros, conference centres, wildlife parks, art galleries, motor museums, horse riding to mention a few. They nearly all charge for tasting and many now offer different levels. For example at Fairview the basic tasting costs R20 but if you want to taste the better quality wines you pay R60. Far less commercial and less crowded and almost as scenic is the Robertson/Ashton region along the Breedie River. This is where to go if you want to do some serious tasting and not be caught in touristville.

For once we did little wine tasting – we did spend 3 days in Franschoek but only managed a couple of estate visits (otherwise engaged visiting Cape Point and lazing by the farm pool). Of course we could not pass Fairview without popping in for a few minutes but our focus was neighbouring Seidelberg estate owned by the affable Roland Seidel where we spent a most pleasant morning with marketing manager Carol Maggs who took us through the range. The star for value and drinkability was the fruity, chewy 2006 Shiraz (R71). We also enjoyed the sparkling Chardonnay Brut, the Un Deux Trois (Cab C, Merlot and Cab F blend) and the Roland's Reserve Range. This estate and its wines are well worth visiting and as it's next door to Landskroon and Fairview you don't have to go far to have a great day.

Our own drinking was really an extended trial as we set out to try a wide range of wines at R25 - 50 a bottle. We wanted to see what qualities were available at these prices and hopefully discover a few that we could get seriously addicted to. My notes show that we drank at least 40 different wines – mainly reds - between 25 and 50 rand. Yes - there really are some excellent wines in this price range and we did go back to our favourites a few times – just to check. Remarkably there were none that were not enjoyable; - I doubt you could say that about 40 equally priced wines from many other countries.

Wines at the lower prices were pretty light which meant the whites scored over the reds. Above R35 you can find some really nice fruity reds that are excellent value and for just R10 more some seriously good wines. So which were the stars that passed the 'want to drink again' test? Among the whites - Alexander Fontein Sauv Blanc (R39) and Chenin (R28), Van Loveren Sauv B (R35) and Graham Beck Sauv B (R49). Stars of the reds – McGregor Shiraz (R28), Landskroon Pinotage (R39), Van Loveren Pinotage and Cab/Shiraz (R40), Bon Courage Shiraz (R44) and Spier Pinotage (R49). I don't think you can beat either Van Loveren or Bon Courage for producing an all round range of great value for money wines and it is no coincidence that both are from the rapidly improving Robertson region. We did of course drink some lovely more expensive wines – Fairview Primo Pinotage, Seidelberg Roland's Reserve Shiraz, Bon Courage Inkatha Cabernet (all over R100) and of course my all time favourite that old traditional Jacobsdal Pinotage – wild yeast and open vats - a snip at R61.

(Prices are all pre the South African budget which increased the duty on wines at the same time that a lot of producers put their prices up – commeth the world cup!)

### Who's who in the Committee?

Graham - The money man

Peter - Events co-ordinator

Sallie - Committee Chair

Kim & David - Editors (retiring from Committee in June)

Geoffrey - Secretary & all things snail

**2 (or more) Vacancies - go on, fill these gaps!**

### Continuing request for committee members

The February newsletter contained an explicit (but polite) plea for members to volunteer to join the Committee. Regretfully, nobody has (to date) put themselves forward to assist in the workload.

The opportunity has not been lost, so if anyone out there is willing, but nervous about increasing their investment in WSWS, they are encouraged to talk to any of the existing Committee.



### Christmas feedback form

The January WSWS newsletter contained a small feedback form. The objective was to illicit members' views on the Christmas meeting, and whether members wanted to continue with the same type of theme in 2010, or whether an alternative was desired.

We requested the feedback in January while our party was fresh in everyone's minds. Regretfully, with the exception of the Committee, we received only one response. Our conclusion therefore is that the feedback request was not sufficiently obvious, hence this follow up request.

On the last page of this months' newsletter, you'll find a feedback request form.

The form is structured so there are differing options on each line (like an "either / or" choice). All we need members to do is to put one cross (X) on each line – against either the left hand, or right hand choice. We will then be able to collate the views of members, and use this in our deliberations for Christmas 2010.

Clearly we will not be able to fulfil every member's exact preference, but we hope to be able to offer something that is in keeping with the vast majority of wishes.

Simply complete the form and hand it to a committee member at the next meeting you attend (whether that is March, April, or even May).

Your thoughts are valuable – make them count – please fill in the feedback form.

### **CHRISTMAS FEEDBACK FORM**

Each line has 2 opposing views – put an "x" in the choice that fits your views best

		X		X
<u>Location:</u>	We love Blacknest; keep it there		Time for a venue change.	
<u>Style</u>	A meal is great		Let's do something different	
<u>Speaker</u>	Great idea – please repeat		Rather not have a speaker	
<u>Quiz</u>	Bring it back		Let it rest in peace	
<u>Raffle</u>	A bit stale – let's drop it for next year		Excellent idea – helping others	
<u>Wines</u>	We like the easy and affordable style		More exclusive wines please	
<u>Cost</u>	£30 / £35 is about right		Too expensive – no more than £25	

Other comments? Add them in here.

## **Caviste are our guest speakers in April**

### **Annual Caviste Burgundy Festival – Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May**

For the third year running Caviste will be welcoming some of Burgundy's finest winemakers to Hampshire for our annual Burgundy Festival Tasting and Dinner. With nine of the region's leading young growers, together with forty wines from the 2008 vintage on tasting, this year's Festival promises to be an even greater treat than in previous years.

2008 in Burgundy has been described by some as the 'miracle' vintage - saved from the decidedly tricky conditions throughout the growing season by an Indian summer that both rescued and ripened the troubled grapes. Those vigneronns that rose to the challenge in the vineyards have produced truly exciting wines that exhibit intense flavours and are finely balanced – and we are privileged to be able to gather some of the outstanding talent from the region to showcase some of the great wines of the vintage:

Christian Moreau, Chablis ~ Virgile Lignier, Morey Saint Denis ~ Vincent Bouzereau, Meursault ~ Bruno Colin, Chassagne Montrachet ~ René Lequin-Colin, Santenay ~ Marc Bachelet, Dezize les Maranges ~ Mark Haisma, Gevrey Chambertin ~ Patrick Piuze, Chablis ~ Michel Cheaveau, Pouilly Fuissé

#### **Festival Tasting: 11am to 3pm**

Ashe Park Estate, Andover Road, nr. Overton, Hampshire, RG25 3AF **£10** per head

Our nine visiting growers will be at the beautiful Ashe Park Estate near Overton during the day, where you will be able to enjoy a tasting of their superlative wines - and the opportunity to gain a unique insight into the special characteristics of the vintage. Please click [here](#) to view the full list of wines on tasting, encompassing the crisp, mineral intensity of Grand Cru Chablis in the north, through the Côtes de Nuits and down to the rounded, nutty flavours of the Mâconnais in the south. Tickets for the tasting are **£10 per head**, (redeemable against Burgundy 2008 en primeur orders) and are available to purchase at Caviste shops or to order by telephone or e-mail ([info@caviste.co.uk](mailto:info@caviste.co.uk) / 01256 771080).

#### **Festival Dinner: 6.30pm start** Oakley Hall, Rectory Road, Oakley, Hampshire, RG23 7EL **£100** per head

In a slight change to our previously published details, our Burgundy Festival Dinner will be held at nearby Oakley Hall, where, in the company of our wonderfully entertaining winemaking friends, we will be celebrating the vintage in style with a four course meal and canapés, accompanied by wines brought from the growers' own cellars. If you've clicked on the link to our video from last year's event then you'll see what a very special occasion this is – a real opportunity to relax with the winemakers over great food and wines and to join with them in their winemaking songs from the vintage. Attendees to the dinner will also be able to enjoy a pre-dinner tasting of the forty wines from the daytime tasting. Tickets include dinner and wines. Bookings can be taken through our shops, or by contacting [info@caviste.co.uk](mailto:info@caviste.co.uk) / 01256 771080.

#### **Burgundy 2008 En Primeur Opening Offer**

If you are a fan of Burgundian wines, you may be interested in our initial opening en primeur offer from the Burgundy 2008 vintage which can be viewed by [clicking here](#). All the growers represented are producing wines that are both excellent and reflect an integrity of origin, tasting exactly as they should given where the vineyards are planted. The French word 'terroir' says it all and really can only be poorly translated into English. Volumes are limited, reflecting the small but outstanding harvest of grapes that was the overriding feature of the vintage. Should you require assistance with your selection of have any questions on the wines, please contact Mark Bedford at [markbedford@caviste.co.uk](mailto:markbedford@caviste.co.uk) / 01256 772231.