



News

WSWS

West Surrey Wine Society

<http://www.westsurreywinesociety.org.uk/>

Next meeting: Monday 19th November
7:30pm for 8:00pm

November 2007

Spanish wines from A&A Wines (www.spanishwinesonline.co.uk)

Some wine merchants sell primarily to Joe public (whose range of expertise is variable) while others sell "to the trade", where the delivery of consistent quality is paramount. Our November tasting will be "fronted" by Andrew Connor, co-director since formation in 1984 – so they must be doing something right! The tasting will feature 6 interesting but lesser known wines, and finishing with 2 classic vintage Riojas – demonstrating that Spain can produce world wines in a classic or modern style.

Wines for November:

Mas D'Alsina Barrel-Fermented Cava

Albarino Valdemor 2006

Finca La Colina Verdejo (Oak Aged) 2006

Monasterio de Palazuelos Rosado

Taurus Roble (Toro)

Rioja Bordon Reserva 2001 (Rioja)

Paternina Gran Reserva 1994 (Rioja)

Senorio de Andion 2001 (Navarra)

Learning the lingo (thanks to A&A):

CAVA

Spanish Cava is a white or Rosado sparkling wine. It is strictly controlled in terms of production and labelling and can be of the very highest quality. It is made in the same way (Traditional Method) as champagne and is a fabulous alternative. Reserva / Gran Reserva Cavas are top quality.

"NEW STYLE" WINE

This refers to the influence of the new world wine styles on Spanish wine (notably Australia). These wines are fresh, young, innovative, exciting and in great contrast to the classic, more traditional Riojas. They often use named grape varieties (e.g. Merlot, Tempranillo and Albarino) and are hugely popular.

ROSADO

Spain makes top quality rose wines. They are making a huge comeback and are extremely popular all year round (not just the summer months). If you haven't tried one recently then now is the time to do so. They are bright and fresh, full of flavour and most importantly – dry.

CRianza

Applies usually to red wines. The wine has spent at least one-year in oak and therefore has a much prized characteristic oaky flavour. These are lovely wines to drink on their own or with food and can be very well priced.

RESERVA

In good years, the best wines are often classified as being of reserva potential. Wines are aged for a minimum of three years for red wines and two years for white and rosé wines. The red reservas must spend at least one year in oak, the others a minimum of six months. In Rioja only ten percent of the wines are sold as reserva which explains their premium price and why they can be in short supply.

GRAN RESERVA

These are either wines that have been chosen from an exceptional vintage or a blend of reservas capable of further wood aging. The minimum age is five years with at least two in oak. Many will have an additional year before bottling and several more years cellar aging. White and rosé gran reservas are rare. This category makes up a tiny proportion of overall production in Rioja but is the most highly prized throughout Spain.



Christmas party Update

Well it's not long now until the Christmas party (**17th December Blacknest**). Not only will there be a good selection of wines, but then there's the food (menu attached) and the fun and games of the **raffle** and **wine Quiz** – so, pull out all those WSWS newsletters from long ago and brush up your knowledge.

The cost will be £28.50 per person (the same as last year so even better value for money), and we need to know numbers at the latest by 3rd December, together with your choice of food.

So, how about booking your places at the November meeting and kill two birds with one stone! Book the date in your diaries, bring along some friends / potential members and make it a night to remember. The menu and booking form are at the end of the newsletter.

Thoughts on the October tasting:

It's not often that you can find something good enough to seduce a winemaker away from his vineyards in the middle of harvest, but we did it at our October meeting. The opportunity to tell WSWS about the wonder of English wine was just too tempting an offer for Roger Marchbank, Chairman of the UK Vineyards Association, owner and chief winemaker of Setley Ridge Vineyard in the New Forest and winemaker to Lord Montague at Beaulieu Vineyard.

In addition to tales of good harvests in Hampshire, Roger started the evening with an excellent brief history of winemaking in the UK starting with the Romans' arrival in AD43 with vitis vinifera in their backpacks, via bouts of paleo-climatology, European economic history and changing social mores and status symbology to where we are today. He also touched on current and expected EU wine industry regulations and all that in less than 15minutes; it was heady stuff, very enthusiastically and knowledgably presented too. Beware, the EU's 26,000 hectolitre 5year average production volume threshold rule and its implications for the UK could well form the basis of the Xmas Party Quiz.

An excellent evening, missed by some but enjoyed by many...Continued on page 8 (Private eye style)

Promoting others – Wine tours

Occasionally WSWS receive details from wine tour promoters asking if we can promote their offering to our membership. That led us to think that maybe members who have good memories of tour organisers may feel disposed to pass on details to other members – through the newsletter of course.

Have you been on any such tours that you think were good value ? let us know!

Promotions – “special offers”

Committee members also receive quite a bit of “spam” from various companies advertising the special offers that they are running. Rather than bombard members with what many may think of as “clutter”, we plan to run a final page in future with all this type of stuff on.

Let us know your thoughts - through a letters section maybe?? Two examples of such items are included in this newsletter.

david-finch@ntlworld.com or snail to the usual address.

EARLY DIARY PLANNING NOTICE :

What? 20th anniversary meeting of WSWs

When: Saturday August 16th 2008

Where: Quinnettes, Churt (<http://www.churt-pc.gov.uk/quinnettes.htm>)

Special food, special wines (if it's the 20th anniversary they **HAVE** to be special)

Further details to follow, but this is a **"MUST – ATTEND"** event, so book it in your diary.

CHARITY EVENT – reminder

Rotary Club of Farnham Weyside International Wine Tasting Evening

28th Nov 2007, Crondall Village Hall, 7.30pm

£15 per person including buffet supper, and of course, the tasting itself. A selection of wines, their presentation, and the food are all being supplied by Waitrose Farnham.

Proceeds of the evening are in aid of Sarah's Fund, Uganda - about which you can read more at www.amerysabroad.blogspot.com

Tickets £15 can be obtained from Brian Lowe (01252 794702, brianglowe@aol.com) or Frank Golding (01252 721320, fgolding@tiscali.co.uk).

From the mind of Sir Alexander Fleming:

**"If penicillin can cure those that are ill,
Spanish sherry can bring the dead back to life"**

How thought provoking !

Did you know ?

Penfold's Grange – that £100 a bottle stuff from South West Australia is actually blended from wines sourced from all over South Australia

Sampling notes – from the editors

In every walk of life, there's a \$64,000 question – and in the wine world, it has to be this:

What's better – buying better wines in average years, or buying average wines in better years?

Like all such questions, there's never a right answer, and for wine lovers, there's even more complexity – is it for drinking now or at some point in the future!

And the crux of the matter- if you only buy a few bottles, there's only so many times you can open a fresh bottle to test to see what was the right time for that special bottle.

By the way, there was 1 spelling mistake last month. For a minimum £1 donation from you to charity – NCH, we'll show you where!

And we'll donate £1 for each one found in this edition by each member! – so get looking (boy – this could get expensive!).



Wanted – New Treasurer

After a number of years, David Rathmell has decided to hang up his blankety – blank cheque book & pen and sign out of the Committee.

So here's a chance for all those who are in to high Finance, or just wanted the experience of paying with someone else's money - Contact any member of the Committee for further details

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Make a note of the following dates, (3rd Monday of the month unless stated) mystery pre-meeting wine at 7:30 onward; meeting commences at 8pm	
19th November 2007	Spanish wines presented by Andrew Connor A&A Wines
17th December 2007	Christmas party at Blacknest Golf club – oodles of fun with wine, food, raffles, and great company
21st January 2008	Syrah / Shiraz from around the world, Richard Staines C.G. Bull & Taylor
18th February 2008	Caves de Pyrenne (provisional)
17th March 2008	The return of Neil Somerfelt (Laytons)

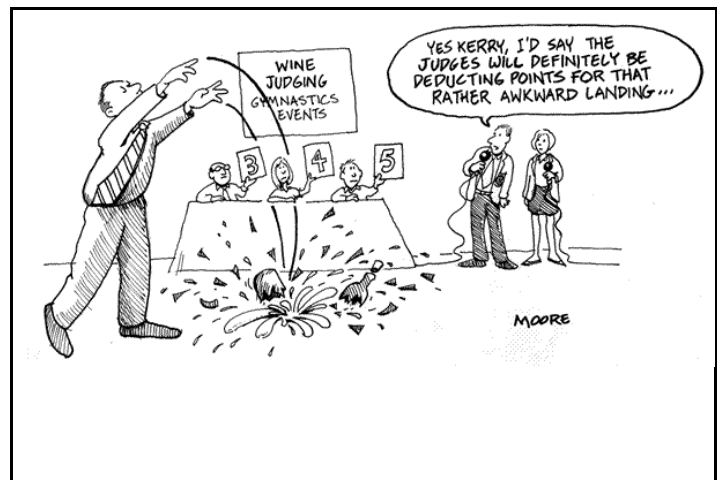
Who's who in the Committee ?

A good question which deserves a good answer

Peter Godwin	Our leader
David Rathmell	The money man
Sallie Payne	Membership Secretary
Geoffrey Matthews	Secretary & all things snail-mail
Peter Smith	Events co-ordinator
David & Kim Finch	Editors in training

Additional help:

Graham Parlett	The web master (tekkie)
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The Promotions bit

A serious tasting of at least 40 wines in the “walkabout” tasting format (not tutored) is being run on Friday 9th November at The Georgian House Hotel High Street Haslemere by The Haslemere Cellar. Timed from 6.30pm to 9.30pm, the wine list is impressive. Tickets at £5 (five) can be refunded against orders placed. To find out more, contact Richard Royds 01428 645081 (richard@haslemerecellar.co.uk). Don't forget to tell him of our newsletter as your source.

Haslemere Cellar undertake a range of tastings - For example:

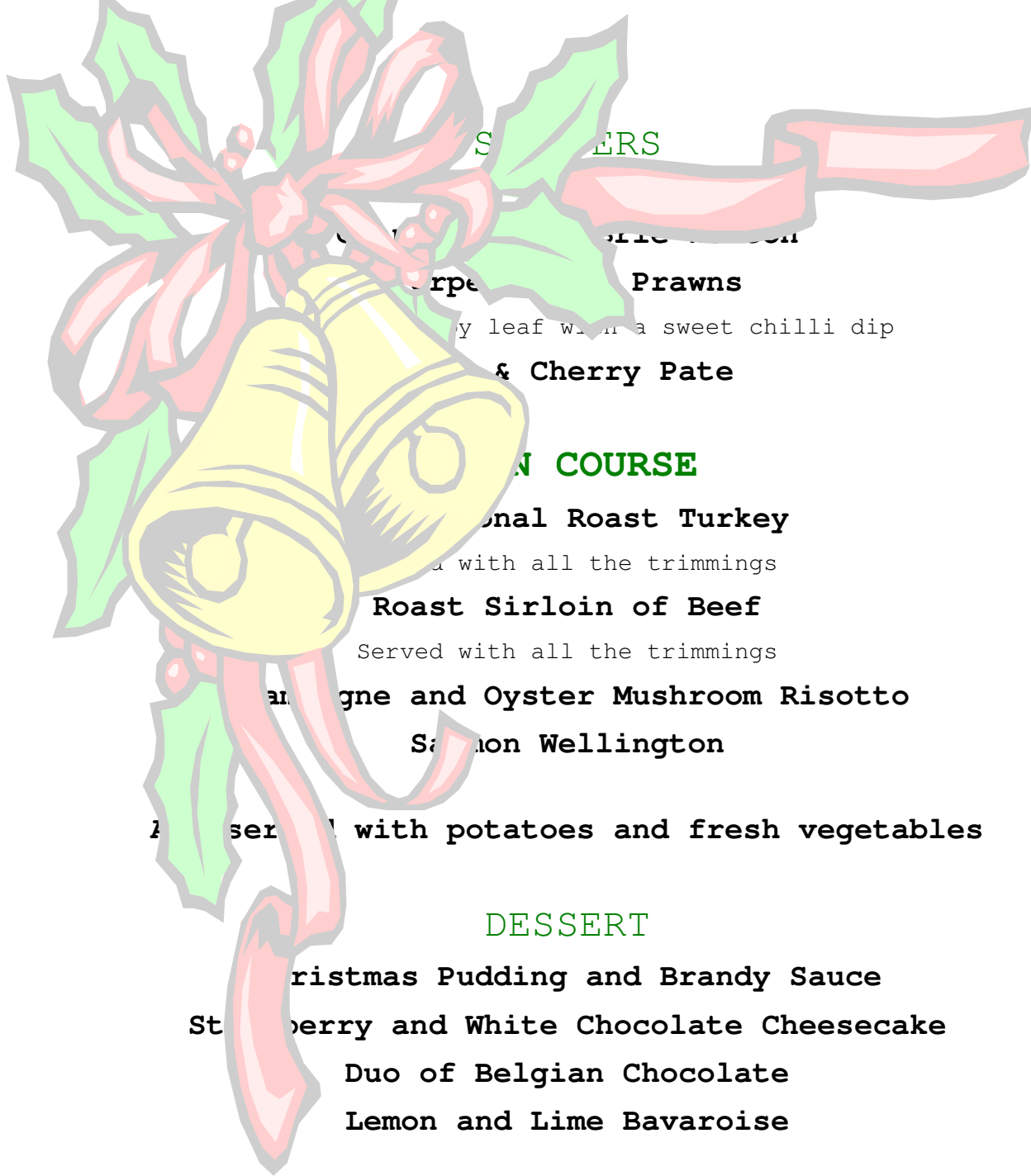
Wednesday 21st November 7:30pm Luxury Champagnes £49

Wednesday 28th November 7:30pm Chateaufneuf-du-Pape 3-way vertical tasting £49.00

Tours:

Loire Valley Breaks (www.loirevalleybreaks.com/winebreaks.htm) provide fully escorted tours in English, with a maximum 8 people per trip. Information provided to WSWs suggests the tours can be tailored to the requests of those taking part. Those interested should contact Mark Willes of Loire Valley Breaks 00 33 247 933 589

WSWS members taking part in these events do so at their own risk. Neither WSWs editors or the Committee accept any responsibility should these promotion events fail to meet the expectations of those taking part, for whatever reason.



STARTERS

1 **Smoked Salmon**

2 **Scallops with Prawns**

Served with a holly leaf with a sweet chilli dip

3 **Smoked Salmon & Cherry Pate**

MAIN COURSE

1 **Traditional Roast Turkey**

Served with all the trimmings

2 **Roast Sirloin of Beef**

Served with all the trimmings

3 **Wild Mushroom and Oyster Mushroom Risotto**

4 **Salmon Wellington**

5 **Roast Chicken served with potatoes and fresh vegetables**

DESSERT

1 **Traditional Christmas Pudding and Brandy Sauce**

2 **Strawberry and White Chocolate Cheesecake**

3 **Duo of Belgian Chocolate**

4 **Lemon and Lime Bavaroise**

Coffee and Mints

Christmas Party Reservation Form

Please reserve meplaces at £28.50 per head for the Christmas Party on Monday 17th December.

Names:

Please indicate the number of items listed above that your group requires, and return the completed form together with your payment in full to David Rathmell by 3rd December.