

## The sweet smell of Viognier and socks

21 May 2006 by JR

Tamlyn Curtis of Sunny writes: Great and I would like to thank you for a delightful evening on Thursday 18 May (the [South West/West/West Coast Challenge wine tasting](#))

From the start the excellent smell (fairly strong) of socks and raincoat of the procession was strongly familiar and evocative: a wonderful contrast to the event at hand. We thoroughly enjoyed the wines, the interesting talk, the discussions and the similar aromatics I have ever been served by. I hope the World Challenge event raised lots of money - please tell you post the results! If they have a website tracking that up, it would be lovely to see how they fare.

Please thank the World Challenge Ladies on our behalf, and a huge thank you to you for the invitation.

It was a great pleasure for me to meet the Curtis and other jancisrobinson.com fellows last Thursday night at the fundraising wine tasting that was held in the gym of South Hampstead High School to raise funds for a challenging educational trip to Vietnam planned by 15 girls or 16 for the summer of 2007. Thanks to a great deal of hard work on the part of the girls, wines generously donated by the retailers listed below, glasses loaned by Majestic, and first class unseasoned cheese offered by Patricia Michelson of La Fromagerie, we raised a total of £3,200 which is certainly more than the girls expected. As Tamlyn says, the evening beverage sommeliers added greatly to the event and valiantly claimed that although they didn't taste a drop, they enjoyed listening to my talk about the individual wines and general trends in the world of wine - not least the issue of stoppers.

This was the one disappointing aspect. All of the wines except the last two (which were screwcapped) and the Saverini which had a natural cork, were stoppered by plastic corks. This meant that we ended up at this charitable fundraising event having to pour whole bottles of surplus wine away because, once opened (with great difficulty) it was impossible to re-stopper those with synthetic corks. What a waste!

We took a straw poll of favourite wines and the most popular were the Nord Sud Viognier (a previous [wine of the week](#))

and the Yellow Frog Steau/Viognier. The wines we tasted were:

### WHITES

Fiano di Sicilia 2005 Cantina Saverini, Sicily 15 Drink 2006

Majestic £4.99, or £3.99 if two bottles of Italian wine are bought

Compass grape variety obviously now flourishing in western Sicily (see also Pinarello). Masses of flavour and interest for the price but much more body than acidity - to be drunk this summer.

Siglas Aenyriko 2004 Saverini, Greece 17 Drink 2005-07

Vulkar Wines <http://www.vulkarwines.co.uk> £3.99

Very sleek, dense, mineraly lemon notes. The volcanic island makes its presence felt with a bite on the finish.

Gobelsburger Grüner Veltliner 2005 Kamptul, Austria 16.5 Drink 2006

Wabasca £5.49

The low temperature fermentation seriously will dominate the fruit but CIV still picks aromas are beginning to emerge. A good price at Austria's signature grape variety.

Laurent Migaut Nord Sud Viognier 2004 Vin de Pays d'Oc, Languedoc 16.2 Drink 2006

Majestic £5.99

Great value for a wine with more than a hint of Condrieu depth on the mid palate and finish. Inevitable, classic aromas of blossom and dried apricot.

No benefit in keeping this though.

### REDS

Sauvignac Rouge 2005 Reserve des Vignerons, Loire 15 Drink 2006-07

Majestic £4.99, or £4.49 if two bottles are bought

The 2005 vintage opens in much in evidence in the plump and satisfying co-fermented Cabernet Franc. A useful wine to serve 2004 in summer. Bracing and chunky.

Gran Lopez Garnacha/Tempranillo 2004 Campo de Borja, Spain 15.5 Drink 2006

Wabrow £3.95

Wabrow are about to move on to the 2005 but this is still very much alive and kicking. A big, spicy barbecue wine.

Percephe Ridge Syrah 2005 Coastal Region, South Africa 16.5 Drink 2006-07

Wabrow £5.50

I loved this wine, more than most others I drink. Intense and savoury leather and liquorice notes and a much deeper, more stable looking colour than previous vintages. The diffusion line of Syrah pioneer Marc Kent at Stellenboschhof (to which Brad Court gave me a pronunciation guide).

Yering Ping Shiraz/Viognier 2005 Yarra Valley, Australia 16 Drink 2006-08

Majestic £5.95, or £5.99 if no bottles are bought

Tim Conner's take on the Côte Rôtie recipe was much enjoyed by the crowd. I found it a little less seductive than previously but there's no shortage of food. Not sure I agree with the back label that it will last seven or eight years though.

With only very many thanks to everyone involved with this. I forgive the folks who gave an unreservedly helpful pep on learning that he'd won the Grand 1000 of the 2005. I believe the girls will be tracking their progress online next summer (at they will) and will try to remember to supply the link.