

Wines Tuesday 3rd June

All our wines today had two things in common, firstly they were all bought from Morrison's, secondly they were all South Africa. We started with a bit of history of the South African wine industry which started with the first settlers in mid-1600s.

Jan van Riebeeck, a 17th Century navigator, ambassador and colonial administrator of the Dutch East Indies, landed two ships in a bay in South Africa which eventually became Cape Town. Initially intended as a staging post for ships this opened the gateway for white settlement in South Africa. Van Riebeeck is reputed to have brought over the first grapes and by 1659 was producing the first SA wine. It was only with the arrival of the protestant Huguenots fleeing from religious persecution in Catholic France at around the same time that the wine industry began to flourish.

As usual we started with 3 white wines and then went on to 3 red wines.

1. Chenin Blanc Morrison's The Best:

Crisp and well balanced, with intense apple fruit and a touch of honey

- 13.5% alcohol
- £9

Grape originally from the Loire, so highly likely that the Huguenots introduced it. Climate change and disastrous harvest have led to a decline in French cultivation so now twice as much Chenin blanc is planted in SA as in France - and accounts for nearly one-fifth of all vineyard plantings, mostly in the Swartland, where today's wine comes from.

Swartland lies north of Cape Town, it has a Mediterranean climate, and prehistoric sandstone and shale soils affect the style and quality of the wines, Vineyards situated at heights that vary from 60m to 300m above sea level, rain in the winter, intensely hot and dry summers with cooling westerly winds, make it ideal for wine.

2. Sauvignon Blanc Morrison's The Best

Lovely zesty fruit with flavours of fresh fig and guava.

- 12.5% alcohol
- £9

Grapes sourced from Sondagskloof in the Cape South Coast, north west of Cape Agulhas where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet - cooler climate. Sondagskloof is a fairly untouched area with only two working farms within a rich biodiversity giving a cool, coastal fruit in the blend to give minerality to the wine. Everything you'd expect from these extreme vineyards, yielding fruit at the lowest altitude in the world, a mere 2.5m above sea level.

3 Chardonnay Morrison's The Best

Citrus apple and tropical fruit flavours with a hint of minerality

- **13%**
- **£9**

Grapes sourced 111km northeast from L'Agulhas, on the Cape South Coast, in limestone soils only 10km from the ocean, creating an alkaline environment giving a steely minerality and beautiful saline thread in the Chardonnay. The great soils, cool mean ripening temperatures and dryer mean rainfall give excellent quality.

3. Pinotage Morrison's The Best

Deep red wine full of blackberry and plum lushness with a chocolatey finish

- **13.5%**
- **£8.75**

Pinotage is South Africa's answer to Pinot Noir. In 1925 a professor at Stellenbosch University crossed the Cinsault grape with Pinot Noir, a difficult grape to grow. He planted the seed and then left for a new job, the garden became overgrown and the fledgling vines seemed lost forever. However, they were saved from the gardeners' shears and the first Pinotage wine was produced in 1941.

4. Shiraz Leopard's Leap

Complex and well-rounded with an elegant tannin structure that culminates in a lingereing aftertaste. Plum and blackberry notes intertwined with understones of cracked black pepper, clove and coriander giving a rich and intense aroma on the nose.

- **13.5%**
- **£8.25**

Leopard's Leap is a big winery in the Franschhoek Valley, a major area of Huguenot migration in the late 1600s. The name comes from the Cape Leopard Trust which seeks to protect the endangered Cape Mountain Leopard.

5. Cabernet Sauvignon Roodeberg Black

Bold flavours of dark fruit, blackcurrant, spice and notes of cigar box. Silky tannins wrapped around blueberry, oak spices and caramelised sweet flavours resonating from the charred cigar notes..

- 12%
- £12

There was an immediate appreciative reaction to this wine from all! The name Roodeberg ('Red Mountain') refers to the red hue of the Boland Mountains of the Western Cape. This particular wine has an interesting history – in November 2018 a raging fire erupted in the winery and the resulting fiery vintage saw a new dark, smooth wine with an intriguing touch of smoke and charred oak.