

The big hitters

The wine that stood out most of all at the Oxford Wine Company was the Domaine Les Yeuses Les Epices Syrah Pays d’Oc 2009. Assistant manager Aljoscha Wright said: “It has balance and great texture, with subtle spice and warm fruit.”

Account manager Louise Ferreira was impressed by the sweet dessert wine Domaine Chiroulet-Vent D’Hiver 2009 from Vin de Pays des Côtes de Gascogne. “The slightly savoury aspect of the fruit brings complexity to the peach and nectarine characters,” she said.

Isaacs enjoyed the Domaine Gayda Chemin de Moscou, Syrah/Grenache/Cinsault 2008, due to its “elegant structure and finely integrated tannins”, he said. “The Fournier Père et Fils Cuvée mmm Sauvignon Blanc 2010, from Val de Loire, was also a huge hit.

“Overall, we felt the standard of these wines was high. The presentation of the wines was largely good and we felt the wines could represent good value,” he added.

With Oxford Wine Company’s consumers, the most popular of all the wines was the Fournier Père et Fils Cuvée mmm Sauvignon Blanc 2010 and they saw it as a great alternative to Kiwi Sauvignon Blanc. The Domaine Les Yeuses Les Epices Syrah Pays d’Oc 2009 was also a winner. One customer said: “Lovely, slightly peppery taste, not too overpowering.” Another added: “Very smooth and delicate.”

The Domaine Gayda Chemin de Moscou Syrah/Grenache/Cinsault 2008 was a wine the company will consider stocking alongside the Fournier Père et Fils Cuvée mmm Sauvignon Blanc 2010.

However, O’Keeffe stuck firmly to his established IGPSKUs. “While a couple of the wines were of interest, we have to put our commercial head on and assess the ‘larger pic-

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Above: customers get stuck into tasting the IGP trophy winners at Hangingditch



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ture’. Given that we have been buying from many of our estates for more than 10 years, there has to be a very good reason to switch. Were the wines that much better than our existing suppliers in order to justify an opportunity cost? ‘No’ is the honest answer. However, it’s always good to have a plan B,” he said.

Hangingditch is looking to stock it’s favourite wine of the tasting, the Château d’Estoublon Grenache Blanc/Roussanne 2008. Comments from the tasting group ranged from “orange peel and zest, perfectly balanced and fantastic,” to “baked-apple nose, with a creamy mouthfeel and a great finish.” Hosty

thought the wine was “brilliant”.

“We’ve spoken with the supplier already about this wine and hope to list it in the new year,” he said.

Yates’s personal favourites for whites were the Domaine de Saint Andre Folies d’Ines, Viognier/Roussanne 2010, IGP Collines de la Moure, which she says has “fantastic, rich, ripe fruit, great acidity and depth; a lovely food wine”.

For reds, her preference was the Domaine Gayda Chemin de Moscou Syrah/Grenache/Cinsault 2008. “The Syrah really shows through here and you could be in northern Rhône, it’s really full on and has great longevity and cellar potential.”

For Wilson it was the Domaine Gayda Chemin de Moscou 2008, which it already stocks, and its consumers, the Cambridge University Blind Wine Tasting Society, were of the same opinion.

Taylor and her consumers plumped for the Domaine de Saint Andre Folies d’Ines, Viognier/Roussanne 2010 and the Château d’Estoublon Grenache Blanc/Roussanne 2008.

“The nice thing about the tasting was being able to introduce our consumers to the more unusual white grape varieties, most of them never having tasted them before,” she said. ■