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**A Tasting of English Sparkling Wines**

**at the Merchant Taylors’ Hall**

**Tuesday 29th May**

Presented by Oz Clarke, United Kingdom Vineyards Association Wine Communicator of the Year, 2016

**Classic cuvees**

**1. Hattingley Valley Classic Reserve**, 12%. 50% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir, 19% Pinot Meunier, 1% Pinot Gris. Acid 8.7 g/l, sugar 7 g/l. Hand-harvested and whole-bunch slow pressing. 15% of the juice was fermented in old white Burgundy barrels. Ageing on the lees in stainless steel tanks was used to soften the wine before bottling. There was a partial malolactic fermentation to reduce the acidity. The wine was blended before bottling, using 18% of reserve wines, of several vintages. In the bottle, the wine spent at least 18 months on the lees, and at least 5 months on the cork before release.

**2. Furleigh Estate Classic Cuvée 2013**, 12%. 46% Pinot Noir, 40% Chardonnay, 14% Pinot Meunier. Acid 8.9 g/l; sugar 10 g/l. Hand-picked grapes were whole-bunch pressed to obtain the finest juice. The wine went into bottle after seven months, spent at least 18 months on the lees in bottle, and was released after a further two months after the dosage.

**Blanc de Blancs**

**3. Ridgeview Blanc de Blancs, 2013**. 12%. 100% Chardonnay. Acid 8.5 g/l, pH 3.05, sugar 8.8 g/l. A late budburst helped reduce the risk of frost damage. Whole-bunch pressed. Yeast from Institute Oenologique de Champagne. Fermented in stainless steel and French oak barrels. 100% malolactic fermentation. A minimum of 42 months on the lees in bottle.

**Blanc de Noirs**

**4. Exton Park Blanc de Noirs NV**, 11.5%. 100% Pinot Noir. Méthode Britannique. Acid 10.56 g/l, sugar 10.1 g/l. Made from 100% Pinot Noir grapes, of which 15% are from the young recently planted vines, and the rest from the more mature vines of earlier plantings. From different terroirs in the vineyard and from vines of different ages. Used wines from several past vintages. Average time on lees in the bottle, 15 months.

**5. Camel Valley White Pinot Brut, 2014**, 12.5%. 100% Pinot Noir, using only the free-run juice. Acid 10.4 g/l, pH 3.27, sugar 12 g/l. To retain fruit aromas and flavours, the juice was cooled to 4°C before fermentation, where the temperature never rose above 13°C. In bottle, the wine spent at least 24 months on the lees for fruit freshness and a fresh yeast character.

**6. Furleigh Estate Blanc de Noirs Brut 2014**, 12%. 88% Pinot Noir, 12% Pinot Meunier. Acid 7.8 g/l, pH 3.2, sugar 10.3 g/l. Hand-picked grapes were slowly crushed in a special pneumatic press to obtain the best juice. Fermentation was in temperature-controlled stainless steel vats. There was exposure to oak barrels from Cognac. More than 18 months lees contact in bottle.

**Rosé de Noirs**

**7. Camel Valley Pinot Noir Rosé Brut 2014**, 12.5%. 100% Pinot Noir. Acid 9.4 g/l, pH 3.14, sugar 9 g/l. The grapes were crushed to retain more of the special fruit characters that are unique to grapes grown in England, with the by-product of a delicate pink colour. Only the free run juice is used for the sparkling wine, with the pressed juice going to still wine. The juice is cooled to 4°C to retain the delicate fruit aromas. The fermentation temperature was only allowed to rise to 13°C, resulting in more fruit character in the base wine. This wine spent 12 months on the lees.

**Demi-Sec**

**8. Nyetimber Demi-Sec NV (multi-vintage)**, 12.0%. 100% Chardonnay. Acid 8.5 g/l, pH 3.0, sugar 40 g/l. 20 to 30% reserve wine. No oak. Does have a malolactic fermentation. Minimum of 36 months lees ageing in bottle.