



XX Club
Session 113.4
2nd February 2022

California Dreaming...

EDNA VALLEY CHARDONNAY, Central Coast, 14%, £15.99

Edna Valley's vineyards are just a stone's throw from the Californian coast, an area that's famous for its top-quality Chardonnay. You'll find big names like Napa and Sonoma nearby, but Edna Valley Vineyard choose to work within lesser-known wine regions instead – meaning they're where to go for quality and value. White peach. Apricot. Melon. The flavours are ripe, but still deliciously crisp and refreshing. A touch of oak adds a rich roundness and subtle spice.



LOUIS MARTINI CABERNET SAUVIGNON, Sonoma County, 14.5%, £19.99



Louis Martini first voyaged to America from Italy with the goal to make the very best wines in the world. His quest led him to California. The Louis Martini winery was one of the first five to be built in Napa after prohibition. Several generations later, they're a part of the renowned region's winemaking history. It offers a welcomingly round mouthfeel with ripe notes of red fruit and cherry. Delicate hints of dark chocolate and oak spice on the finish add layers of elegance and freshness, offering a rich yet balanced expression of the varietal.

ELYSIUM BLACK MUSCAT 2017, 15%, £13.99 (1/2 BOTTLE)

Quady Elysium Black Muscat is a sweet red dessert wine made by Quady Winery in California. Founder Andrew Quady's change of career from making fireworks to making wine began when he moved to California's San Joaquin valley in 1975 looking for change in lifestyle whilst studying oenology at [UC Davis](#). He began producing the Quady Essencia Orange Muscat. It was an instant success and until 1985 he could not make enough to satisfy demand. Today Quady is the foremost American winery specialising entirely in dessert and fortified wines, as well as some interesting vermouths, and continues to win medals worldwide.

This wine was first created in 1983 when Andrew acquired a quantity of Black Muscat grapes. The grapes were originally intended to be used for making sacramental wine for a local church but the church ceased operations (some sort of divine intervention on behalf of Quady!). Black Muscat is just one of many underappreciated muscat grape varieties. In Europe it is known as the table grape variety, Muscat Hamburg, and it is one of the very few black skinned muscats.

It is made a bit like a mistelle such as [Pinot des Charentes](#) or [Floc de Gascogne](#). The grapes for this wine are allowed to ripen fully, when ripened to about 25 brix, it attains a rose-like aroma and lychee like flavour. After harvest the grapes are crushed, chilled and allowed to macerate. Fermentation is then stopped with the addition of wine spirit. This means the sugar is not fermented into alcohol leaving a naturally sweet drink. The addition of alcohol means that the finished wine is usually bottled at around 15% abv.

The rose-like aromas of the wine led to it being named Elysium, Greek for heaven. The label was designed by Andrew's wife Laurel and the heart was drawn by artist Ardison Phillips.

FONSECA TAWNY PORT, 20%, £12.99

Fonseca Tawny spends three years ageing in small wooden casks, generally holding about 630 litres.

As it matures in cask, Tawny Port gradually loses the deep red 'ruby' colour of youth and takes on the seductive amber hue known as 'tawny'. At the same time the wine becomes progressively smoother and mellower, its aromas gaining in richness and complexity.

After the three years of ageing the wines are then blended together a few months before bottling for balance and harmony. Fonseca tawnies are bottled for immediate drinking.

TASTING NOTE

Tawny-red colour fading to brick on the rim. The seductive nose displays aromas of apricot and plum with mellow undertones of butterscotch and spice. On the palate, the rich jammy flavours are lifted on the finish by an attractive crisp acidity.



All wines from Majestic