

TASTED

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by **MARKUS DEL MONEGO & ANDREAS LARSSON**

100% BLIND

BORDEAUX : TWO BEST SOMMELIERS OF THE WORLD TASTE BLIND

INTERVIEW WITH MARKUS DEL MONEGO AND ANDREAS LARSSON

TASTED - According to which criteria did you rate the wines and which are the determining points of your evaluations?

Markus del Monego - We tasted using the international 100 points system, which is internationally well known and accepted.

Andreas Larsson - According to the international 100 point scale. I judge the wine for its overall quality that is to say purity, aromatics, structure, length, complexity, concentration, typicality, potential and longevity, but also its drinkability, something that I feel is very important.

TASTED - What are the features that really distinguish a correct from a good and a good from an excellent wine?

MdM - There are three aspects: first of all, the typicality of the colour for each grape variety, region and vintage. Secondly, the aroma profile. The more complex a wine is, the higher is the rating. Last, but not least, the taste. Mouthfeel and length are as important as balance. And in the end, the better wines show more typicality of terroir/origin than simpler wines.

AL - Correct wines are clean and fruity with a touch of character. A good wine must have more character, concentration and structure. A great wine should have more structure, character - it needs to display personality, to have a beginning, middle, and an end; often a great wine makes you say - wow!

TASTED - Could you please describe the conditions under which the wines have been blind tasted?

MdM - We have tasted in our tasting laboratory [caveCo / Essen / Germany]. Single boxes for the tasters guarantee a quiet tasting atmosphere without any influence from a third party. The wines have been served in glasses, so even the shape of the bottle was hidden, which guarantees a neutral tasting. In addition, the interior climate condition of the laboratory is controlled (temperature, humidity etc.). These conditions follow the DIN 17025 for blind tastings, therefore a high reproducibility of the results is provided.

AL - Markus has said it all.

TASTED - What influence do these conditions have on the reproducibility of the tasting conditions?

MdM - As the conditions are the same for every tasting, the reproducibility of the tasting results is made much more probable and therefore, more relevant. My company, caveCo, is accredited for organoleptic analysis; therefore we need these neutral conditions.

AL - It is a good way of tasting under completely blind conditions and not being influenced by the surroundings.

TASTED - What distinguishes a blind tasting under ideal conditions from a tasting carried out, for instance, directly at a winery?

MdM - Although good tasters can be quite objective even when knowing the name of a wine, there is a certain influence which will work subconsciously. Therefore an attractive label, a famous name or a well known vintner can influence the result. Blind tastings are the only way to have a really neutral tasting.

AL - It is very difficult to judge a wine if you taste it at a "great" winery, one will inevitably be biased by the atmosphere.

TASTED - Do you believe that even professional tasters can be influenced by things like the environment, a particularly friendly and luxurious welcome at a wine estate and if yes in which way? Or at the contrary, by specifically nasty and poor tasting conditions?

MdM - Tasting is a subjective art and there is the permanent battle of good tasters to be as objective as possible. I think that objectivity can be reached up to 80/85%, but there is always a hint of subjectivity remaining. The more a taster is influenced, the higher the level of subjectivity can be.

AL - Yes, as I just said. In addition, one is often confronted with tasting rooms that are too cold or too hot. I hate tasting with the air condition on as it is dehydrating. I hate tasting from bad wine glasses, and there are a few other things I don't like,... so yes there are many ways that can affect one's tasting. ■

CÔTES DU RHÔNE

92 | MONTIRIUS LE COS

2010 Vacqueyras

AL - Very intense nose that offers new oak, smoke, meat, dark berries, pepper and tobacco; the palate is very rich and concentrated with beautiful meaty and roasted notes, plenty of tannin, extract and dark, inky fruit, very good length - a serious wine indeed. **92**

MdM - Dark, purple red with violet hue and black centre. Meaty character, juicy fruit, minerality and almost smoky tones. Great and complex nose. On the palate well structured with very good length and well balanced tannins. A northern Rhône nose combined with southern Rhône taste. **92**