

Keepers Dinner

June, 25 2018

M/Y Zeus

By invitation of John Cristodoulou

The host of the dinner kindly presented the spirits to reflect the motherland of the Keepers.

Whistlepig Farmstock, Rye Whiskey,

Crop 001

Established in an old dairy farm purchased in 2007, this Vermont craft Whiskey focuses on the terroir dimension: Rye, Water, White Oak all coming from Vermont. Master Blender Dave Pickerell's credo is to make the whole greater than the sum its parts, blending the "Triple Terroir" Rye Whiskey with older Canadian Rye Spirits and even older American ones. Crop 001 is the first release of this annual Limited Edition.

Nose : cinnamon, dill , dry prunes . Palate : pepper, cardamom, honey . This is very nice sample, but a bit too straight and not enough elegant on my point of view .

William Grant and Sons

Ghosted Reserve, Blended Malt Scotch

Whisky, 26 years

The mid 80s crisis saw a number of firms closing, some of them never re-opened. Their heritage still exists, such is the case of this Ghosted Reserve, a blend averaging 26 years of Malts coming from the now-closed Inverleven (1991) and Ladyburn (1975).

Nose : you get melon, peat, gooseberry and vanilla seducing the olfactory sense.

Palate : again gooseberry, orange marmalade, mango

This is a very light , elegant , satin whisky , which deserves a lot of respect .

Crown Royal XR Extra Rare, Blue,

Canadian Whisky

This is the rarest Crown Royal Whisky, a Master Series handcrafted from extremely confidential batches, some of them from the now-closed La Salle Quebec Distillery.

Nose : light and delicate vanilla and dates

Palate : shows dry, with roasted pineapple and melon finishing .

Nice warming sample ,but a bit too straight and rich in alcohol flavor.

Gordon & MacPhail, Macphail's Finest

Highland Malt Whisky, distilled in 1959 & 1960

A blend of Highland Malt Scotch distilled in 1959 and 1960, birth years of HRH Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson, this special vatting was released in 1986 for their Royal Marriage. Gordon&Macphail know-how in the making has 123 years tradition and was rewarded by the participation of HRH Prince Charles in 1998 at the re-opening of their Single Malt Distillery Benromach.

I sadly could not find my records for this whisky ,but still believe they should be included in the tasting notes because of their unique blend and excellent balance (which I still remember). So you would find below the notes of the presenter :

Pronounced, with sweet honey scents intertwined with smoky earth and dried flowers such are the initial fragrances that greet the nose. It is a very complex bottle bringing with it a dry palate but having creamy texture along with aromatic spices. There is a high level of tannins, however they are extremely fine giving an elegant finish, long and buttery, lingering with spices. Lots of umami, savoury aftertaste. ©

Midleton Very Rare, Irish Whisky, 2017 release

Master Blender Barry Crockett created this rare blend of ages ranging from 12 to 25 years in 1984, Triple distilled in the purest Irish tradition, this mostly awaited 2017 annual release still carries the signature of Barry Crockett and benefits from the nose of nowadays Master Blender Brian Nation.

Same story again , but this whisky I had tried several times before and believe them to deserve the honor to be considered the iconic Irish whisky . I also have nothing important to add to the notes of presenter:

Fresh, airy initial burst with hints of vanilla, citrus peels, apricots, tangerine and honey. Smooth and silky with off-dry impression, subtle spiciness as well as elegant fine-grained tannins. Apricots, honey, citrus come along on the palate, a juicy bottle, offering both body and elegance. ©

Zivania, Cypriot pomace Brandy, Loel

Zivania means "pomace" in Cyprus. Its tradition dates back to the 15th century. Nowadays it is distilled from a mix of local pomace and local wines of Xinisteri and Mavro grape skins, meaning black grape.

I believe our Host (who been born in Cyprus) been very brave to put this brandy alongside with some world's finest brown spirits , but nevertheless it was interesting experience to taste it.

Nose: spicy almonds , strong raw alcohol flavor

Palate: herbal, very "straight", raw alcohol, fresh bred ,

Interesting , but not my piece of cake. However deserves a lot of respect , provided came from the area with not so strong traditions of top level brown spirits production and consumption .