

U3A ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

MARCH 2020 NEWSLETTER



Dear Fellow Wine Members

I was delighted to realise our Wine Appreciation Group has now been going for a full year; we had our inaugural meeting last March with the first tasting at the Wine Store in Charlestown, last April.

Within our group tastings and events, not only do we taste wines that perhaps we would never think of buying, finding new grape varieties we have never heard of, or just generally enjoying the wines, I think we all gain so much more - friendship, a good social occasion and more importantly we have FUN. Everyone has an enjoyment of wine which acts as the catalyst for making friends and getting to know each other better, and for this I am grateful to each and every one of you. For anyone who hasn't yet been to one of our tastings but has been thinking about it, there is no requirement to have any particular knowledge of the subject, as we are all learning together, just enjoy the wines!

REVIEW OF THE WINE STORE, CHARLESTOWN, TASTING FRIDAY MARCH 6TH 2020, FRENCH REGIONS

Thank you to everyone who came to The Wine Store on Friday evening to a tasting of French Wines and a special welcome to our four new members who came to their first group tasting.

With 21 of us, Gina from the Wine Store led us through a comparison of wines from the Loire, against wines from the Rhone. The wine selection included the main grape varieties from the Regions including some varieties barely heard about but giving interesting characteristics to the wine. Unfortunately I felt the food offering was not of a similar standard to that we enjoyed last year, nor sufficient, and have given The Wine Store appropriate feedback.

To the wines:

Impetus vintage 2011, Cremant de Loire brut, De Chanceney 12.5%

Chardonnay 80% Chenin Blanc 20% £21.50

Made in the Champagne method (made as a still wine with the dosage added in the bottle and aged for 48 months before being disgorged.) Beautiful golden yellow colour, bubbles were fine creamy and persistent. The nose opened with notes of candied lemon, yellow peach, mint and was enhanced by toasted bread and mocha nuances. Long finish with notes of dried fruit. Certainly a good alternative to Champagne.

Domaine de Verger Muscadet de Sevre et Mains sue Lie 2018 12%

100% Melon de Bourgogne (a grape I have never heard of) £17

Broadly organic Muscadet from 100% Melon de Bourgogne. Organic practices followed in vineyard and winery but not certified. Made by Pierre Luneau-Papin at Domaine du Verger situated at Le Landreau in the Western Loire, 20km south east of Nantes.

Vines are grown on sand and gravel which not only give the wine a mineral, slightly salty aspect but also the capacity to age. This wine has been kept on the lees for more than 4 months with no racking or filtering prior to bottling.

A pale yellow in colour. The nose is packed with zesty hints of white flowers and lime. On the palate smooth and buttery with excellent concentration. The finish is fresh and clean making this a good accompaniment to fish and seafood. Not as dry as I remember Muscadet de Sevre.

Domaine du Moulin Camus, Gamay 2018 13%

100% Gamay grape £13

This is an unusual red, made from vineyards in the Muscadet region: an area known almost exclusively for white wines, but made with Gamay grapes. This is not, however, some shy and retiring light red it was eminently drinkable, however split opinion as our “heavier red drinkers” thought it too light, others thought it great. Nose of dense fruits of blackberry, morello cherries & victoria plums, with a satisfyingly full mid-palate, but none of the acidity you find in less expensive Gamays.

Pic below: some of our group at The Wine Store Charlestown, waiting for the next wine to be poured!



We then went onto the Rhone wines:

Cotes du Rhone Blanc 2018, Domaine de la Janasse 13.5%

Grenache Blanc 50%, Clairette 15% & Blourboulenc 15% (both regional grapes), Viognier 10% Rousanne 10% £20

Firstly, a surprise White from Cotes du Rhone as we know the reds so well, and secondly my personal favourite wine of the evening.

This white Côtes du Rhône from the Domaine La Janasse is made of an unusual and uncommon blend that is surprising yet very clever. Bourboulenc, Clairette, Grenache Blanc, Roussanne and Viognier work together to offer fresh flavours that combine power, delicacy and acidity! In this highly successful vintage, it is a little pearl of a white Côtes du Rhône to enjoy - and after purchasing some I certainly shall!

Ventoux, Delas 2018 14%

Grenache Syrah Organic & Biodynamic £15

Stretching along the Rhone river, around the limestone outcrop of Mount Ventoux, this appellation covers 6,400 hectares (15,808 acres) sharing the same climate and same grape varieties as the neighbouring Cotes du Rhone vineyards.

Its colour is a deep ruby red, with a predominately berry-fruit bouquet, this wine shows the full aromatic power of the Grenache and Syrah grape varieties whilst retaining the freshness imparted by well-controlled wine making. Stainless steel malolactic acid fermented, it will drink perfectly well by itself, but also has enough body to sit alongside hot or cold gammon ham, turkey or a rib of beef. Beautifully ripe tannins balanced with immaculate forest fruits and gentle peppery spice. Again opinion was split as to this red.

Finally, a dessert wine and I think I can safely say, a hit with everyone! Delicious, not oversweet or cloying.

Delas Muscat de Beaumes de Venise, La Pastourelle 2017 15%

Muscat grape, Organic £13.50 (half bottle)

Pale golden hue, with intense floral bouquet. On the palate, an elegant freshness but full bodied with lingering fruity & floral aromas on a melony finish. Was served with Stilton on toast and was perfect together.

April 3rd Tasting. Sebastien Emery from Wadebridge Wines presenting “a Spring selection, comparing Old World to New World wines.”

The very passionate and very French, Sebastien Emery will talk us through this choice imparting some of his very extensive wine knowledge. From my chats with Sebastien this should be a great evening. Bread, cheeses and biscuits will accompany the wines.

St Austell Arts Centre, Assembly Room, April 3rd from 6.30pm. Cost £12.50 pp, please pay on line and confirm to Shirley before 23rd March as we need to give final figures and budget then.

Eddie’s Restaurant Tutored Wine Tasting luncheon May 6th from 12.30.

I have now offered the remaining tickets to general U3A members in St Austell, but if any of our Wine group members still want to attend please let me know soonest. Menu choices to follow later once numbers finalised.

Camel Valley trip September 9th, self booking onto the 5pm Grand Tour.

You should all have received information in my previous mail with a link to book. Anyone who hasn't had the link let me know, and for those who are still to book or who haven't confirmed your attendance to either myself or Shirley, please do so. We will organise transport according to numbers. Many thanks.

shirley.sallis@btinternet.com for confirmation you have paid for monthly meetings, visits etc.

For online payments:

St Austell U3A, Barclays Bank

20-30-47

Ac 23132587 (REFERENCE eg WatersMar)

BOSUE VINEYARD TRIP JUNE 10th

Date changed to June 10th. More information to follow.

I am attaching an updated Programme for the Year with any changes now incorporated.

Best regards, happy drinking!
Amanda