

U3A ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

AUGUST 2021 NEWSLETTER



Dear Wine Group members

I trust this finds you all well, and after the night we had last night I am sitting here watching the rain and wind knocking all the flowers to the ground, and particularly thinking of our Garden Party hosts Karen & Chris. The forecast looks good for Sunday, but should that change later today, I will contact you again.

For those 30 members coming to our Garden Party on Sunday 1st from 12 noon, I look forward to seeing you there where we can enjoy not only the beautiful garden of Chris & Karen Scott, the excellent range of food we are taking along, but in addition, the sounds from the **Garker Street Band**. It promises to be a lovely day, so fingers crossed the weather is in our favour. Please remember to bring your own cutlery, crockery and glasses in addition

to your food contribution, and serving implements for your dish. On this occasion I think it prudent to not share wines generally, but of course if you choose to share amongst your group, that is totally up to you.

Wine Group Events:

Knightor Winery visit

Thanks to all who came to Knightor Winery, your support is appreciated and I hope you all felt it was a great start to our Wine Group starting slowly once again.



For those members who didn't come, after a very interesting explanation of how Knightor produce their limited quantity wines (most sold within Cornwall) from David the winemaker (pic above) we tasted 4 of their wines. We started with their Portscatho vineyard Rose Vintage 2014 £28, followed by the Trevannion 2019 £18, then the Roseland Rose at £17 and finally the Pinot Noir 2018 at £17. Knightor produce quite a few other wines as well as 4 types

of Vermouth, and all are available from their “shop” on site. During the Summer on Friday evenings, Knightor are having Pop up restaurants on site, when you can sit in their courtyard to eat your food and purchase drinks as well as having a wine tasting should you wish. Well worth a visit and check out their website.

Members’ Wine Reviews:

Filos Estate, Aspri Petra Single Vineyard Assyrtiko, Macedonia Greece 2020, 13%, £6.99 Aldi

Back in May this wine was mentioned in our newsletter under the wine recommendations from supermarkets. As it had been recommended in Decanter wine magazine and always keen to try a new wine, we sourced a bottle to try.... In short a winner!

Assyrtiko grape hails from the island of Santorini where the roots of the Assyrtiko vine can reach up to 18m in the black, ash-rich soil, giving the resulting wines great minerality. Over the past 25 years, Assyrtiko has also increasingly been planted on the Greek mainland, which is where this particular blend originates in NW Greece. Mainland wines are more aromatic, with an edgy character, and rounder with a more discreet minerality. Here, Assyrtiko has been paired with 10% Sauvignon Blanc. This gives a pale crisp dry wine, with aromas of wild herbs, some minerality, rich body and excellent balance. This wine is produced with zero herbicides and is vegan. I believe a 100% pure Assyrtiko would be much drier and more lemony. We opened it to accompany lemon baked fresh hake, new potatoes and asparagus and it held its own. The following day with a tiny amount left, I can confirm it went well with Crab Linguini also. Greek meze, halloumi, sardines and chicken dishes would go well too I think. For the price a bargain and has made us look for other Greek wines we may well enjoy. A long way from the rough Greek wines of the 70s!



Supermarket wines: (these are recommended by Decanter magazine)

DV Catena, Historico Chardonnay, Mendoza, Argentina 2019 £12 Tesco, 13.5%

These grapes are sourced from stony vineyards at 1,000m in the Uco Valley. A lovely cool character to the nose with marked minerality. Textured and slightly saline on the palate, with ripe yellow fruits and sweet vanilla spice.

Maison No9 Rose, SE France 2020 £19 Tesco 12.5%

US Rapper Post Malone's Provence style rose will go down well with those who love the classic, dry pale Provencal style. Easy to enjoy the intense floral flavour, honeysuckle with a touch of rose and juicy strawberry fruit. Crisp and refreshing.

Alamos, Malbec Rose, Mendoza Argentina 2020 £7.99 Waitrose, 13.5%

Fresh and fruity rose will be a crowd pleasing style for a summer BBQ. Crisp acidity balances the ripe strawberry and cherry fruit, with creamy lemon citrus notes. A great value option.

Aldi Specially Selected Riesling, Marlborough NZ, 2014 £7.99 Aldi 13%

A hidden gem among Aldi's new range, super value for an aged Riesling that has a 1.7% Pinot Gris added. Complex aromas and intense flavours of roasted lime, jasmine and lime curd on toast (!) with a great texture and mineral acidity. Lipsmacking with a hint of sweetness on the finish. (*this is certainly one we will be sourcing as we recently tasted a 2013 at a much higher price and loved it*)

Tesco Finest Barolo, Piedmont, Italy 2017 £17 Tesco 14%

Translucent in the glass, a delicious chewiness and savoury, leathery perfumed red fruit aromas. Good weight of fruits, robust tannins and the trademark Nebbiolo acidity. Let it breathe for an hour prior to serving. Mushroom risotto would be a delicious match.

Marks and Spencer Found Pais, Itata Valley, Chile 2019 £9 M&S 13.5%

This historic grape was introduced by Spanish conquistadors and gives a soft acidity and red berry flavour. Rustic, ripe and lightly spiced fruit.

Going forwards:

It seems like an opportune time to think about the future of this Wine Group for the rest of this year and beyond, as the Arts Centre I believe, will be available to us again from September and although not ideal it is somewhere we have used in the past. If however you know of somewhere better that allows alcohol to be consumed, and is a very low cost please do let me know.

I would like to ask YOU as members of this group, for your input as to what you would like from the Wine Group. This group is for everyone and all your ideas are essential - I am simply a convener and should not be the only one thinking up ideas and planning.

- Do you want tastings at the Art Centre, where we purchase for instance, supermarket wines and some members volunteer to give a little 5 minute talk on their favourite wine (and do you have a budget on the price of wines)?
- Do you want to have "wine experts" come and talk and present their wines? This may be a slightly higher budget.
- Do you want to go out to wine merchants' premises, or producers' for a tour and tasting?
- I have looked at other u3a Wine Groups and the majority generally meet in smaller groups in members' homes, where they take turn to buy and present wines with a theme (eg French whites), for a certain

budget. This is probably not relevant for our numbers, but we could potentially do similar in the Arts Centre as an example.

So, if you have an idea and would be prepared to organise it either alone, with my help, or perhaps with a friend/partner please do let me know. Let's try and make this a vibrant group with many varied activities all connected with wine.

Meanwhile for information, Old Chapel Cellars in Truro, where our group enjoyed a particularly interesting tasting just prior to Covid arriving last year, are having bi-weekly tastings in their shop for the next few weeks. We went to their first, a "Summer Evening" tasting where we were given a Rose on arrival followed by 5 generous sized wines to taste, with a very interesting talk from Ryan. The next is **5th August "Argentinian wines"**. Whilst Covid numbers are high, there is no food, numbers are limited with a decent distance between each table and the door remained open for ventilation. £20 per person, book online through their website. 15% discount given on the night on all their wines and spirits in the shop.

I have talked to Ryan about a possible visit for our wine group later in the Autumn for a u3a wine tasting and he is happy to do one. Whether we use a coach or make our way by train and foot, or taxi share is something we can consider, but if you would be interested please let me know.

This brings me to another point. Please confirm that you **do wish** to continue to receive this newsletter by the end August latest – we have 60+ members in the group but only ever a maximum of 30 who come to events. If you are happy to read about wine and not attend, that is fine, but I suspect some are on this list who really no longer should be. By 1st September I will delete any members who have not confirmed their wish to continue to receive this newsletter.

I will continue to send a monthly newsletter out, so please continue to send in reviews as we do not meet that often and I know many of us enjoy reading about wines others have tried, even if we won't purchase ourselves. Knowledge is key and sometimes a useful review comes into its own for a particular occasion.

Enjoy your day whatever you may be doing. Chris and I with some friends are off to Trevibban Mill near Padstow, for a wine tasting and lunch, at least it is inside and we can watch the weather from there!

Regards

Amanda