

U3A ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER



Dear Wine Group members

September is here, the month for harvesting grapes in many vineyards.....although I understand this year France particularly is expected to have a historic low yield due to severe Spring frosts and mildew fungus which killed off the buds. Italy on the other hand, had excessively hot weather which has severely affected the harvest, meanwhile South Africa's rainfall has affected its production. In other countries the pandemic has affected labour, so all in all, not a good year for many wine producers. Talking to Charles Wharton recently, he recommended we all buy our Christmas wines now to ensure supply and also protect against inevitable price rises!

Our August Garden Party

30 members enjoyed what turned out to be a glorious afternoon weather wise, for a fabulous Garden Party on 1st August. The band serenaded us, members enjoyed dancing, we all feasted on the lovely array of dishes members had contributed and between us we raised £200 for the Fowey RNLI. Our huge heartfelt thanks go to Chris & Karen for all their hard work and generosity in allowing us the use of their home and garden. THANK YOU BOTH!

Forthcoming Events

September 23rd 6.30pm onwards, Arts Centre Assembly Room, Members' Favourites Tasting – 1 Fizz, 2 whites, 2 reds

Members have kindly agreed to present a wine they have found to enjoy very much, costing around the £10 mark and easily accessible. This hopes to be a very informal and casual tasting, where we can all comment on the wine, score each one and hopefully have a favourite of the evening. We will taste and enjoy a Fizz, 2 whites and 2 reds with cheese biscuits and breads accompanying.

Reminder to book (including those presenting)

Cost £11.50 per member

(no room fee charged for September meetings)

Please pay online by 13th September and quoting as your reference your membership number "xxxxWGSept".

Bank account details as follows:

St Austellu3a Wine Club

Account 23132587 (Barclays Bank)

Sort code 20-30-47

Please confirm to me as soon as you have paid as I need to advise the presenters how many bottles to purchase.

The Spanish evening

Unfortunately the Spanish Group have decided to cancel this event, but hope very much to be able to organise it for next year.

October 28th South African Wines, Old Chapel Cellars, Truro 6.30pm onwards

Cost £25 (plus extra cost for a minibus for those who want transport, tba later)

Ryan at Old Chapel Cellars will again host us in their wine store and present a selection of wines from South Africa in his usual inimitable way. We will enjoy generous measures of 5 wines with some cheeses and bread etc to accompany. There will also be the opportunity to purchase any wines from the shop at a generous discount on the evening.

Please let me know if you will be attending by paying in the usual way (see above) with the reference xxxx/WGOCT, and advise if you would like transport.

NUMBERS LIMITED TO 14 so book your space

December's Christmas Wines & Food social evening will take place on December 16th at the Arts Centre.

Regarding our programme for 2020 One couple have kindly offered to plan a Wine Quiz Night, so let's start the ball rolling and not just sit back and let someone else always organise our monthly events. Perhaps you and a partner or friend could arrange one evening?

One member has suggested holding gin, whisky or rum tastings. This is a great idea, however as far as I am concerned I am happy to organise wine events, but if someone else would plan a spirit or cider tasting, I would certainly offer this to our members.

Members' wine recommendations

David & Pippa Boardmann:

David and I were intrigued when visiting friends recently when they served a **2017 Rapsani Terra Petra**. I have to confess that my heart initially sank,

“Greek wine”, I heard myself thinking Retsina, fortunately I kept that quiet. The wine was smooth, not quite creamy but soft with cherry and earthy tones. Our hosts suggested leather, wild cherry with a hint of tannins. The wine was delicious. Grape: Xinomavro. Alcohol 13.5%, approx. **£22 from The Wine Society.**



Thank you both for this review of quite a rarely known Greek grape variety, and obviously huge step up from the old Retsina. Interestingly as you pointed out when sending the photos, the label on the back is in French – I guess they are hoping for great sales there.

Over the past ten years Xinomavro has become one of Greece's most popular red grape varieties. Planted in northern and central Greece, the variety can be found in four of Greece's Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) including Naoussa, Amynteo, Goumenissa, and Rapsani. In the vineyard the grape is inconsistent and requires careful management, and in the winery close attention and time is required to tame its tough tannins and high acid, but when produced well, Xinomavro can resemble the structure of Barolo with balanced firm tannins and bright acidity, and distinct aromas of fresh and dried red fruits, flowers, tomatoes, tobacco, black olives and spice.

Typically released to the market after at least two years of aging, Xinomavro's notable acidity and tannins give the wines good cellaring potential, and also make the wine an ideal accompaniment to foods. Unoaked versions akin to

Pinot Noir pair well with foods like mushroom risotto, pork and lamb, and oak-influenced styles with game or even dry-aged steak.

Xinomavro is best known for its production as a red wine, but can also be used to make good rosés, aromatic sparkling wines and sweet wines.

Supermarket recommendations this month:

Always remember that when the “buy 6 receive 25% off” offers appear many wines disappear from the shelves.

Rose:

Chateau Barthes Rose, Bandol Provence, France 2019. 13.5% Coop £13

A blend of Grenache, Mourvedre and Cinsault in this very pale rose. A nose of red apple, strawberry and citrus and the palate. Ripe and sweet but a good level of acidity and a warm finish with red fruits that linger. A good summer aperitif but pairs well with Tapas, Grilled Vegetables, Charcuterie, and Mediterranean Seafood, BBQ and all types of Spicy Food.

Flower Press, Rose, W Cape, South Africa 2020 12.5% Marks & Spencer £7

Chenin Blanc based with a bit of Sauvignon Blanc, this gets its peachy colour from the skins and juice of 1% Pinotage. As its name suggests, a floral aroma before a dry exotic palate of passion fruit and stewed apples. Would go well with Tapas, Melon & Parma ham and Prawn dishes.

Whites:

Found range, Moschofilero-Roditis, Peloponnese, Greece 2020 12% M&S £8.50

Dry but ripe floral and honeyed flavours, will suit you if you like Alsace Gewurztraminer or Torrontes. Muscat grapey honey tones from the Moschofilero which are balanced by the Roditis grape, saltiness and lemon. Would pair well with Greek meze, or prawn dishes.

Montes Reserva Chardonnay, Aconcagua, Chile 2020 13.5% £9 Tesco

Great everyday drinking wine. A medley of fully ripe tropical fruit, lychee, melon, mango pineapple and banana, balanced by high acidity and well flavoured vanilla oak spice. Brilliant wine for £9. Delicate salmon dishes, veal or vegetable lasagne would complement the wine very well.

Reds:

Domaine des Ormes, Saumur Loire France 2016 12.5% £8 Coop

Typical nose of herbs, redcurrant and raspberry, this unoaked Cabernet Franc from the Loire shows a hint of savoury leather alongside a saline taste, with plenty of red berry fruits and trimmed grass! Good acidity and a solid backbone of tannin. A great value option at under £10 a bottle and would pair well with delicatessen meats, red meats, game, and cheeses.

Tesco Finest St-Chinian, Languedoc, France 2019 13.5% £9 Tesco

If you enjoy a hearty southern French red, this will give a lot of pleasure. Spicy blackberries and cherries layer with savoury sausage flavours. The ferrous smoky notes are balanced by classic regional herbs fennel, thyme, rosemary and star anise. Red meats, game, blue cheese and pasta dishes would all pair well.

I very much look forward to seeing some of you again next month in the Arts Centre for our tasting.

Regards

Amanda