

U3A ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

early MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER



Although not quite May...

I was going to wait until our return from holiday to do a “late May” newsletter containing a review of the Ellis Wharton event next week. However, I wanted to tell you about a couple of events coming up, and give you time to think and book, or let me know what you choose. Assuming I get some reviews from the Ellis Wharton tasting next week, I will send them out on my return.

Forthcoming Events

- **May 19th Looe Valley Vineyard tour and tasting, depart Arts Centre 11.10am, depart Looe 14.45pm for return journey. FULLY BOOKED**

I am looking forward to seeing those members who managed to secure a place on this visit, a vineyard I have not visited but whose owner is certainly a very passionate enthusiast. Please wear appropriate footwear for walking around vines, and outer clothing according to the weather as we shall be having the tasting with cheeses on the outside covered terrace. In addition, please bring your u3a lanyard with your emergency contact details on the back.

Report of the event to follow in next month’s newsletter and perhaps then those who didn’t manage to book, could visit independently, you can book on line.

- **Sunday 19th June - June Summer Garden Party from 1200 midday
4 Tremena Road, St Austell, NO COST**

Usual form, a gentle social afternoon and chance to chat to fellow members - everyone to bring a large sharing platter of food, plus their own wines.

We will have the wonderful **Garker Street Band** in attendance again to play music for a few hours, donations on the day to the Fowey RNLI so please bring some cash.

Please let me know if you are attending and what food you will bring. Just as a matter of interest in case of bad weather, does anyone have a marquee or similar that could be used on the day?

In addition, I am asking for volunteers to help prepare this garden in advance - grass cutting, weeding and other light manual jobs will need to be done. I would like to hopefully have a small working party in attendance on the Thursday and Friday afternoons prior (16th and 17th) say 2-4pm, plus help on arrival on Sunday to put chairs out. If you can spare an hour to help on the 16th or 17th please do let me know.

- **21st July - A VERY SPECIAL EVENING of Wine & Food Pairing, Sit down to 5 courses, Arts Centre 6.30pm. Cost £21pp which includes the £1 room fee.**

Members Pippa & David Boardman have kindly volunteered to run this entire event, around the fascinating subject of pairing food to match wines. We will enjoy 5 wines (including a sparkling and dessert wine), with a matching cold “small plates” **tasting menu**.

From the brief details I have, the food sounds delicious and the whole event something not to miss, so do get in the diary now. When booking please let me know once paid, and if you have any specific food **allergies**.

Bookings open now. Ref xxxxWGJUL

- **11th August “A tour around France” wine tasting with Le Mistral Wine Company. Venue to be confirmed. Cost £15pp plus transport cost.**

A minimum of 8 wines to be tasted plus accompanying cheese and charcuterie with this French orientated wine group.

I know that the Lostwithiel Wine Group are often to be seen holding their tastings with this company, and by all accounts a great evening. (We were to have this event at Le Mistral's new venue in Lostwithiel, which unfortunately has been delayed/postponed, but they are meanwhile using two venues in the town and venue will be confirmed nearer the time.)

To book use reference xxxxWGAUG and let me know once paid.

- **15th September Members' Tasting, Arts Centre 6.30pm**

We still need some volunteers please.... An opportunity for members to show a favourite wine, a wine that dazzled them, a memory from a holiday or a wine which is a great match to specific food they enjoy. Ideally 5 wines for the evening.

Already 2 members have volunteered, so **do let me know if you are brave enough and willing to present one wine**.... you are among friends! Our last members' tasting showed some very excellent wines under £10 which everyone thoroughly enjoyed and many then purchased locally. I am told the presenters enjoyed doing their research and uncovered very interesting facts and figures!

PLEASE NOTE THAT FOR ALL WINE GROUP PAYMENTS, PLEASE PAY INTO ACCOUNT NO 23132587

Wine Reviews

I have been sent two reviews from Janet Harvey as below which make interesting reading as Janet doesn't just review wines she has enjoyed, she also tells us about wines she has tried but simply did not like, equally if not more important. It is members like Janet that make our Wine Group what it is – often contributing, not only reviews but offering help too. So, please do send me reviews of wines you have tried whether you enjoyed or otherwise, it is all interesting reading! Thank you Janet.

Il Papavero Prosecco Rose Brut 2020 (originally from Laithwaites)

As I learned at a recent meeting of our group, until 2020 Prosecco was not permitted to be pink. Having acquired this bottle last year as one of a half dozen of Proseccos on special offer, I have belatedly realised the purchase was trailblazing. Now I have tried it I wish I had bought more: it's the best of the bunch by some measure. Moreover I have been unable to find any source of supply currently in the UK. I don't know if this is due to its

popularity, difficulties in production, challenges of delivery including Brexit or a combination of two or more of these things!

The winemaker for all the *Il Papavera* (“the poppy”) wines is Scipione Giuliani. He sources grapes from appropriate different regions of Italy and has in the past produced whites, including a good Pinot Grigio, and a rich red Primitivo using grapes from a tiny vineyard in Puglia. For the new prosecco he sourced Glera grapes from Northern Italy, adding just a touch of Pinot Noir to provide its blush.

This fizz is lively, and nicely dry, with a good mousse, creamy mouth feel and faint initial aroma of apples. The flavour, however, is of ripe strawberries with slight citrus overtones. The label also mentions “subtle anise tones”, which I confess passed me by but others might pick them up. This wine is probably best for spring and summer drinking as it is potentially multi-functional, working well as an aperitif but also potentially a partner for fish, pasta, salads and most desserts.

Pink Duck Montepulciano 2021 <https://www.laithwaites.co.uk> £10.99, or £9.99 as part of a mixed case of 12.

This review comes with a warning: I appear to be greatly outnumbered when it comes to appreciating this wine. It has won awards and the maker, Sam Trimboli of New South Wales, has a prestigious reputation and gets great reviews for all the wines from his vineyard. Nevertheless I found this wine insipid.

It’s made from Montepulciano grapes with just a little Vermentino, which supposedly confers “an extra lemony zip”. Somehow I missed the zip. The aroma is apparently a combination of raspberry, strawberry and sweet grenadine, but I found very little aroma, even after taking a generous swig. The flavour is, very faintly for me, of cherries. It’s dull on its own and completely overpowered by any food, however mildly flavoured.

The most positive thing I can do is draw your attention to the wine’s label, which I found pretentious to the point of hilarity. It commences “The Duck says: ‘Be in the now, be in the moment, for this is where all of your strength exists’. The Duck loves the gentle motion of slow-moving water; a message to go with the flow. The Duck invites you to the river for a picnic and a day of relaxation: it sees you are enjoying a glass or two. If only the Duck knew this elegant Montepulciano ... it would ask, may I have a glass too?”

I have encountered Australians who strongly appreciate wine but I did not realise this trait was also present in their ducks!

Janet, a brilliant assessment of two very different wines, and I loved the duck quote...utterly ridiculous and probably the idea of a highly paid marketing executive!

Here is a review of a wine Chris and I enjoyed last night, when trying to find a white from our stock to pair with fish and chips – we realised we have been drinking a lot of whites recently and from those left most were too rich or heavy. However when we found this Tuscan Vernaccia we thought we would “give it a go”, and were very pleasantly surprised.



**Teruzzi Rondolino, Vernaccia di San Gimignano DOCG, 2019 12.5%
Waitrose £7.99 (was £9.79)**

Vernaccia di San Gimignano is a historic Tuscan grape, from the beautiful town of San Gimignano, and has been known since 1200. It has so much importance that Dante mentions it in the “Divina Commedia”. One of the first great connoisseurs of wine, Sante Lancerio, Pope Paul III’s personal wine shopper and sommelier, puts Vernaccia at the top of Italian wines, so much so that in 1541 he ordered 80 barrels for a papal supply-party.

And the Vernaccia di San Gimignano has always remained there, it has never left and rarely took root in other areas. The wine produced from this noble grape was the first in Italy to be awarded with the DOCG and among the first to be recognized as a DOC.

We found this wine to have a delicate nose of apple, with crisp citrus flavours, but on second or third sips soft fruit (peach) and a delicious stony minerality appeared, followed by a hint of almonds. It cut through the fish and chips with a good balance of acidity without making the mouth suck in, with a good length. I think it would be a pleasant aperitif. It did make a change from a Muscadet, Chablis or Sauvignon and at a decent price. PS the fish and chips from Harvester Seafood fishmongers (Thurs, Fri, Sat) takeaway was excellent!

Regards

Amanda