

U3A ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

JULY 2022 NEWSLETTER



Welcome fellow Wine group members

After the past few weeks with very strong winds, rain and a cool temperature which certainly did not look or feel like nearly July, hopefully we now enjoy a period of warmer, sunnier weather and those members who have recently been unwell recover fully without delay.

Whilst reading “Age Matters” recently, I was reminded of a previous article (which Chris also used in his recent u3a newsletter) - that **“everyone in u3a should be an involved member, not a customer being served. The u3a is not a service charity where a few provide a programme for the many”**. I hope that these words will remind you all to look at the possibility of you (or a group of you) putting together an event for next year for our wine group. We have already had this year Andrew & Christine Johnson giving us an excellent fun and informative Wine Tasting Quiz, and later this month will enjoy a Food & Wine Pairing Tasting evening, completely organised, researched and cooked by Pippa & David Boardman. So, please think what you could do for our group and let’s have some real participation from our members, after all that is what u3a is really all about.

June Garden Party

As ever this popular event was a great success despite the weather not being too kind, with plenty of delicious food, a good supply of wine and the excellent Garker Street Band playing for a good part of the afternoon. We raised £150 for the RNLI, a great result. As you can see from the photos,

smiles all round and once the wine was flowing, some members stepped up to accompany the Band singing AND dancing! We thanked our wonderful hosts for using their garden again, with a voucher for a local restaurant, as their hospitality is invaluable to our group. Thanks also go to all those who helped with gardening duties prior to Sunday's event.



Happy Revellers



Groupies singing with the Band



The lovely hosts

- **21st July – NOW FULL - A VERY SPECIAL EVENING of Wine & Food Pairing, 5 courses of small plates food with matching wines, arrival at Arts Centre from 6pm for sit down at 6.30pm**

For all those who have booked please arrive for a sit down at 6.30pm.

Please bring the following with you:

- Your tasting glasses (we will be tasting 5 wines but 3 glasses should suffice)
- A bottle of water (the jugs at the Arts Centre are less than clean)
- Your own cutlery, suggest 2 knives, 2 forks and a teaspoon each

We will provide china crockery and napkins.

A group of us will be arriving early to set up the room, lay tables and put finishing touches to the food, and so I would appreciate a couple of volunteers at the end of the evening, to wash up the dinner plates and a few serving platters.

I am very excited about this evening, run by Pippa and David who have put so much effort and work into it, and I just know it will be a memorable event. See you there!

- **11th August “A tour around France” wine tasting with Le Mistral Wine Company. Venue Lostwithiel. **Cost £15pp** plus transport cost tbc. Depart Arts Centre 6pm, leave Lostwithiel 9.30pm**

A minimum of 8 wines to be tasted plus accompanying cheese and charcuterie with this French orientated wine group. Numbers are restricted to the size of the minibus and **we are virtually full.**

Please contact me to confirm there is still space before paying.

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. Our event will take place in the Social Club, Fore Street as Le Mistral are still awaiting confirmation of a new venue.

To book use reference xxxxWGAUG,

**PLEASE NOTE THAT FOR ANY PAYMENTS TO THE WINE GROUP
ACCOUNT PAY INTO ACCOUNT NO 23132587**

- **15th September Members' own Tasting**

Without 5 volunteers to present a wine each for about 10 minutes we will not have a meeting. So please, volunteer!

The wine can be a favourite, something new to you or an unusual grape variety – it can be wrapped up “blind” or shown as is, all with a little research done so you can talk to the group with an informed voice.

Wine Reviews

**L'Occhiolino Sparkling Red 2021, Emilia Rosso IGT, Italy, 7.5%
Laithwaites £9 (as part of a mixed case of 12)**



It is not often one sees sparkling red wine, however we recently tasted a rather unusual Italian deep ruby blend Sparkling wine! Friends brought a bottle when coming for supper on a warm evening, and as it was rather unusual and ready chilled, we thought we should try this straight away and absolutely loved it. (nothing like a sparkling Shiraz at all, very moorish indeed!)

L'Occhiolino (“the wink”) is a Frizzante wine that's been part of life in Italy's Emilia-Romagna since Roman times. It's an anytime sort of fizz, either served in flutes as an aperitif or just as tasty served from tumblers on a picnic, and at 7.5% quite low alcohol. Main thing is to chill it so you can enjoy all the full fruitiness of very ripe black juicy fruit, sweetly spiced flavours with a hint of floral, and mouth-caressing creamy bubbles. Very delicious and certainly one we will buy.

A review from Jenny Skipp:



“We were lucky enough very recently to spend a few days in Central Rome, and ate a couple of times in the hotel restaurant. We had a read through the wine list at our hotel and this one sounded interesting - and the wine waiter seemed to think we had made a good choice.

The **I Frati, Lugana, Lombardia, Italy 13%** was a really excellent find. Ours was a 2021. I enjoyed it with my seafood salad starter, and my main course of sesame coated tuna with an anchovy sauce. The beautiful evening and being able to eat outside obviously made it taste even better. I enjoyed the pure crisp freshness of this wine. There was acidity, but also what I would describe as depth in that the flavours seemed to evolve.

The following day, we ate somewhere else, but only had beer with our meal, so that we could come back to enjoy a further bottle of this wine while sitting in the garden as the sun went down - heaven!

Now I look forward to finding a local stockist, and to perhaps trying a vintage bottle.

I Frati, Lugana Doc (from the Maker's website)

This is the jewel in the crown, the wine that got us known and continues to be the image of the company. A direct thread can be traced back to its variety, the Turbiana, our native vine. Intended to be consumed as a vintage, it expresses the best of itself many years after bottling. When young, it is fresh, linear and furnished with great sophistication and elegance with delicate hints of white balsamic flowers, traces of apricot and almond. Time enables it to evolve, allowing the mineral notes to be expressed with greater

determination, thereby acquiring its complexity with traces of iodates, spices and candied fruit. In the mouth, it is capable of enveloping the whole palate thanks to a significant savoury essence, accompanied by strong, exuberant acidity. When young, a serving temperature of around 10 degrees is preferable, with cold or warm – but delicate – starters and to accompany fish dishes, boiled, steamed or grilled.”

This sounds like a very interesting, but little heard of wine over here, and I would be interested to know if you manage to locate any locally Jenny.

The next is a review for a beer from Chris Crane! I don't usually include beer in our wine group, but as this is an interesting beer matured in barrels used in making Chardonnay, I thought this may be of interest. As someone who does not enjoy beer, I did enjoy my sip of this as it was quite fruity and did have a wine aftertaste.

Siren Brewery, Starry Messenger Barrel Aged Lager. 6.5% £3.95 to £4.50
(per can depending on where it is purchased)

“I first came across Siren Craft Brewery a couple of years ago when at an organised beer tasting where I tried their session IPA Yu Lu brewed with Earl Grey Tea - with strong citrus notes and which has since become one of my favourites. My youngest son had recently introduced me to their “Starry Messenger”, lagered in French oak barrels previously used for maturing Chardonnay It's a unique beer with beautiful floral, grape and apricot aromas. Flavour builds with a honey malt sweetness and a tang of fruits before a dry, crisp length with a touch of bitterness. The finish is actually smooth and long with subtle hints of a premium Burgundian Chardonnay. This is a beer for savouring not for thirst quenching on a hot day.”

Limited Siren Craft beers can occasionally be found in our local supermarkets (Asda), or can be purchased online from:

<https://www.sirencraftbrew.com/>



The Times White Wines for Summer as recommended by Jane McQuitty.
See pages that follow, apologies for quality.

Supermarkets are now all competing quite harshly to get our money for their wines, and so there are some excellent bargain wines to be had for the Summer in every price range as you will see below in the recommendations. A couple of them “punch above their weight”, namely the Macon-Monbellet at £12.75 and the Port Phillip Estate Chardonnay at £19.95, and none of these wines listed will be in stock for long, so do not hesitate!

For those interested, the Red Wines and Rose Wines will feature in this Saturday's Times (2nd July) Weekend Section, so suggest you buy the paper

Our wine critic's guide

Next week
Reds and
rosés

Under £6.50 >>

2021 Peter Mertes Era Grüner Veltliner
Austria, 12 per cent
Tesco £6, down from
£8 until July 4

Bored with the same old, same old summer white wines? Then nab this hand-harvested grüner veltliner from Lower Austria. Fermented cool in stainless steel with lashings of bright, white pepper and citrus-spiced fruit, it's a cracker.



2021 Porcupine Ridge Chardonnay
South Africa, 13.5 per cent
Tesco £6, down from £7.50
until July 4

Boekenhoutskloof's starry western Cape white effortlessly outshone twice-the-price chardonnays at Tesco's summer tasting. Its subtle, smoky scent from a few months of maturation in French oak barrels and elegant bosky fruit makes it the perfect summer garden party sip.



2020 Terre di Vita Organic Pinot Grigio
Sicily, Italy, 12.5 per cent
Waitrose £6.49, down from
£8.99 until July 12

Sunny, fuller-flavoured Sicilian pinot grigio, with rather more to say for itself than those boring, bland taste trips from the cooler north. Bursting with elegant, leafy, floral orchard fruit, this pinot grigio is a real, crowd-pleasing summer sip.



2020 Le Rocher de Saint Victor Picpoul de Pinet
France, 13 per cent
Lidl £6.49

The Midi's answer to muscadet is on every supermarket shelf. Of this summer's crop, Lidl's tastebud-tingling, juicy, lime peel-edged 2020 gets my bargain basement vote: its punchy verdant fruit makes it the ideal choice with seafood.



Great with seafood

Specially Selected Baron Amarillo Rioja Blanco
Spain, 13 per cent
Aldi £6.49

Want a cheap-as-chips food-friendly white rioja? Then Aldi's non-vintage £6.49, effortlessly gets my vote. It's an elegant, nutty, oaky, vanilla pod-scented, French oak barrel-aged joy.



Under £8 >>

2021 Araldica Piemonte Cortese
Italy, 12.5 per cent
thewinesociety.com £6.50

Northern Italy's softly-fruited cortese grape, best known for Gavi, is a handy summer standby white. Snap up the budget-beating Araldica co-op's lively, nutty cortese, its dried apricot fruit and whicker of spice makes it the perfect big summer food white.



2021 Maison du Vin Côtes de Gascogne
France, 11.5 per cent
Co-op £6.50

Mouth-watering, grapefruit-scented Gascon white that leaps out of the glass and is made from the usual mix of floral colombar, enlivened with a good dollop of sparky sauvignon blanc. Any of you after a cheaper French alternative to Kiwi sauvignon will love this citrus blast.



2021 Taste the Difference German Sauvignon Blanc
Germany, 12 per cent
Sainsbury's £8, down to £6.75
from June 29 until July 19

One of Sainsbury's new, limited-edition Discovery Collection wines. A few years back though, who'd have thought that Germany could make a go of this zingy and hugely successful white grape. Made from ten-year-old Rheinhessen sauvignon, there is oodles of refreshing, grassy, green herb fruit.



2021 The Best Vermentino, Terre Siciliane
Sicily, Italy, 12.5 per cent
Morrisons £6.75

The Cantine Settesoli co-op can do no wrong as far as I'm concerned, and this terrific, lime pickle and lime juice-licked vermentino proves the point. It's the sort of zingy, put-a-smile-on-your-face aperitif white that everyone will love.



2021 Aspri Petra Greek Assyrtiko
Greece, 13 per cent
Aldi £6.99

Adventurous but cash-strapped drinkers need to dive into Aldi's increasingly eclectic range, including this awesome single vineyard assyrtiko, from north west Greece. Enhanced with sauvignon, and complete with a smoky mineral twang and steely lemon zest charge, it's a summer steal.



2020 Les Beauchamps Chardonnay
France, 13 per cent
Marks & Spencer £7,
down from £9,
July 19 to August 8

Wait a few weeks and Laurent Miquel's delicious Languedoc-Roussillon chardonnay is a snip at £7. Night harvested, this bouncy yet buttery chardonnay has the creamy fruit and length that white burgundy fans pay a lot, lot more for. Nab it!



2021 Vinho Verde Loureiro Branco, Ponte de Lima
Portugal, 12 per cent
thewinesociety.com £7.25

The Ponte de Lima co-op has long made fragrant, invigorating vinhos verdes, endlessly recommended by me. The latest is a dazzling, spritzly, white flower-scented loureiro grape edition, one of 2021's best £7 or so crowd-pleasing whites.



Best vinho verde

2021 Duo des Mers Sauvignon-Viognier
France, 12 per cent
thewinesociety.com £7.25

A mouthwatering marriage between Gascon sauvignon and Languedoc viognier, sourced from several co-operatives. With exotic, peachy, honeydew melon fruit, it's a good summer party white that will go down well with everyone.



2021 Classics No 8 Soave Classico
Italy, 12.5 per cent
Marks & Spencer £7.50

Not every wine in the Classics range is a winner, but this fruity soave classico from the brilliant Cantina di Monteforte is as good as the garganega grape gets at this price. With easy to quaff, light, floral, lemony fruit, No 8 makes an uplifting summer white.



2021 The Best Touraine Sauvignon Blanc
France, 12.5 per cent
Morrisons £8

Dismissing Morrisons as an also-ran supermarket wine source would be a mistake. Canny wine buying has brought tasty new and old world wines to its shelves including this vibrant, bosky white from Chainier with just enough sauvignon blanc pep and pizzazz to pop up here.



10 Weekend

The expert's favourite bottles from £8

Under £8

2021 The Best Chilean Chardonnay
Chile, 13 per cent
Morrisons £8

I don't love 'The Best' moniker but there's no denying that the wine within, from tried and trusted Cono Sur, is the sort of easy-glugging, yet invigorating chardonnay we all need in our summer wine rack. It's overflowing with rich, buttery, yet verdant sweetly-fruited pineapple and melon oomph.



2021 Found Furmint
Hungary, 12 per cent
Marks & Spencer £8

Enjoy this fine, honey-flecked furmint, grown on volcanic soil, with its fiery, full-bodied, fresh ginger-spiced charm. It comes from an impeccable, historic wine source, Chateau Derezla famous for its dry furmint and luscious tokaji.



2019 Saint Mont Les Cépages Préservés
France, 13 per cent
Sainsbury's £8, down from £10 until June 28

Thirst-quenching and unusual mix of mostly gros manseng, with a dollop of petit corbu and dash of arrufiac, from the foothills of the Pyrenees. What you get from these mature, twenty-five year old vines, partly aged in oak barrels, is a rich, yet summery, herby, gooseberry-scented sip.



Under £12

2021 d'Arenberg The Shepherd's Clock Chardonnay
Australia, 13.5 per cent
Marks & Spencer £9, down from £10 until July 18

Big, bold, buttery Aussie chardonnay, with half the blend aged in old French and American oak barrels, hence its nutty, wallop of vanilla spice. It comes from one of my favourite still family-run wineries situated in the tip-top McLaren Vale region of South Australia.



2021 Grove Mill Sauvignon Blanc
New Zealand, 13 per cent
Co-op £9.50, down to £8.50 from June 29

This summer's star Kiwi is Foley Wines' Wairau valley wonder, from a small, but exceptional vintage. I loved this dynamic, intense, while currant and nettle-charged gem with a judicious dab of tropical fruit on the finish.



Bargain Kiwi

2019 Ancient Lakes, Eight Thousand Lakes Riesling
Washington State, US, 11.5 per cent
Majestic 6 for £9.99 each, £12.99 a bottle

My kind of summer sip, a thrilling, spritzzy, lime zest, kerosene and green apple crunch of a racy riesling; not from Germany this time but from the Olsen Brothers, basalt rock Evergreen Vineyards that lie inland from the Cascade Mountains in the north west of Washington State.



2021 Reyneke Organic Chenin Blanc
South Africa, 13.5 per cent
Waitrose £9.99

From Stellenbosch's Polkadraai hills, Reyneke's organic western Cape chenin blanc is a wonderful summer swig. With delicious, creamy, nutty, lemon meringue pie fruit it's the perfect bottle to pair with fish and seafood dishes. Vegan-approved.



2020 Mâcon-Villages, Les Pierres Blanches
France, 13 per cent
Majestic 6 for £9.99 each, £12.99 a bottle

Majestic has the best Cave de Lugny co-operative-sourced mâcon-villages blend this summer. Snap up six bottles of its rich, ripe, herbaceous fruit-stashed 2020 vintage for under a tenner each before Monday when the price pops up to £10.99 each for half a dozen.



Brilliant Burgundy

2021 Vergelegen Sauvignon Blanc
South Africa, 13.5 per cent
Tesco £10

Ridiculously good value for money and easily a match for sancerre, with its mouthwateringly crisp, refreshing, elderflower and gooseberry green fruit. Hand harvested from Vergelegen's own Stellenbosch vineyards and given an extra polish by being partly aged and fermented in barrel.



2021 Laurent Miquel Albariño
France, 12.5 per cent
Sainsbury's £10, down from £11.50 until June 28

The globe-trotting, modish albariño grape has hit the heights in southern France, care of Laurent Miquel's magic touch. Machine harvesting at night and cool fermentation has produced a steely, mineral-edged, yet zesty, nectarine-scented gem with real punch and personality.



2021 Fiano Mucchietto
Italy, 13 per cent
corneyandbarrow.com
£10.95

Italian sunshine in a glass made from the fiano grape in Puglian vineyards that are just four miles from the Ionian sea, hence its bright and breezy elegance. With the peachy spice you would expect from the grape but with an elegant, steely, lemon blossom-scented twist. Vegan suitable.



2020 Mâcon-Villages Chardonnay
France, 13 per cent
Waitrose £12.99, down to £10.99 from July 13 to August 10

With rich fruit and buttered popcorn-styled oomph, this is a cheap, decent white burgundy. Stock up next month when it drops in price.



2021 Terra Alpina Organic Bianco, Alois Lageder
Italy, 13 per cent
Majestic 6 for £10.99 each, £14.99 a bottle

Unusual Alpine blend from Italy's Alto Adige, Hungary and the Pyrenees; it's mostly pinot grigio, macabeo and xarello, but with a trio of other grapes in the mix too. I loved its cool Alpine, vibrant, leafy, grapey fruit. It's a great aperitif.



Great aperitif

2021 Casa Silva Sauvignon Blanc
Chile, 13.5 per cent,
sundaytimeswineclub.co.uk
£11.99

If passion-fruited Kiwi sauvignon is not for you, check out Chile's new era of cool, coastal, more restrained top drawer sauvignon blancs. Casa Silva has some brilliant bottles, including this fine, lemon grass, tarragon and pea shoot-scented 2021.



2020 Domaine du Vaux Saint Georges Touraine Sauvignon
France, 13.5 per cent,
Majestic 6 for £9.99 each, £11.99 a bottle

A class act, night-harvested, cool stainless steel tank-fermented Touraine sauvignon that gives you a lot of sancerre's floral, nettle nip for a lot less money. A truly elegant, bosky flowering currant gem.



Splash out on wines and fizz over £12

Under £30 >>

2020 Cline Nancy's Vines Viognier

California, 14.5 per cent
Majestic 6 for £11.99 each until June 27, £17.99 a bottle

Knock it out of the park with the Cline family's elegant, Rhône-inspired, exotic viognier, enlivened with a dollop of pinot gris. What you get from this Sonoma gem is a seductive, vibrant, yellow peach, orange blossom and mango-stashed summer white. Vegan friendly.



2021 Mâcon-Montbellet, Mallory & Benjamin Talmard

France, 12.5 per cent
goedhuis.com £12.75

Mallory Talmard and her husband, Benjamin, based at Uchizy, are my kind of mâconnais producers with gorgeously expressive white burgundies that punch well above their weight. This is an elegant 2021 bursting with floral, citrus blossom and lemon zest-styled fruit.



2020 Stellenbosch Manor, Chenin Blanc, Stellenrust

South Africa, 14 per cent
Tesco £14

Knock it out of the park with this terrific 2020 from the Stellenrust estate made from old bush vines. Classy French oak-aged barrel matured chenin with rich, buttery, yellow apple and key lime pie spice like this one make big summer-food standbys.

Best for barbecues



2021 Cape Mentelle Sauvignon Blanc-Semillon

Australia, 12.5 per cent
Sainsbury's £14, down from £17 until June 28

Classic, racy, summer-in-a-glass Western Australian blend, harvested at night and fermented in stainless steel to hang on to every ounce of fruit. With fragrant, flower meadow scents and a perky, lime juice palate, it's a wonder.



2021 Cru Smith & Sheth Sauvignon Blanc

New Zealand, 13 per cent
Tesco £14 down from £17 until July 4

Hit the Kiwi sauvignon heights with Steve Smith and Brian Sheth's magical Wairau valley sauvignon blanc. Its greeny-gold hue leads on to a gorgeous, nutty, green herb hit that has more in common with the gunflint sauvignons of the Loire than it does with New Zealand.



2020 Gini Soave Classico

Italy, 12 per cent
justerinis.com £15.88

Soave can be jawbreakingly dull but not this one. Made from 70-year-old vines, grown on volcanic rock and limestone, this organic soave delivers intense white peach and white flowers fruit with lemony depth and persistence.



2020 Corney & Barrow Mâcon-Villages

France, 13 per cent
corneyandbarrow.com £15.45

The Auvigie family have supplied Corney's with their beautiful white burgundies from vines situated below the giant Solutré rock for decades. The 2020 vintage with its delicious, creamy, citrus blossom-scented style and crisp orchard fruit finish is every bit as good as those that went before.



2019 Port Phillip Estate, Red Hill Chardonnay

Australia, 13.5 per cent
jeroboams.co.uk £19.95, down from £23.95 until July 3

The southern ocean-breezy Mornington Peninsula, south of Melbourne, produces some wonderful cool climate, Côte-d'Or-inspired taste-alikes. Red Hill's volcanic red loam soil chardonnay is a fine example and sings with ripe, toasted almond and quince.

Jane's favourite



2020 Chablis 1.1er Cru La Chanterie, Laroche

France, 13 per cent
Tesco £22, down from £25 until July 4

Domaine Laroche makes some glorious greeny-gold chablis and at this cut price this superior premier cru is great value for money. With a dusting of oak and classic leafy, stony, mineral palate closing on a fine marine note, seafood and sushi will love this.



2020 Les Closiers Châteauneuf-du-Pape

France, 13 per cent
Marks & Spencer £26

Thirty-five-year-old grenache blanc, pumped up with a dollop of clairette and a dab of roussanne, partly finished off in French oak barrels: it adds up to a big-boned, beautiful, candied fruit of a white Rhône. At last, a white that has the guts and body to cope with the punchiest summer menus.



Fizz >>

Specially Selected Sparkling Ribolla Gialla, Spumante Brut

Italy, 11.5 per cent
Aldi £6.99

An unusual summer sparkler made from northeastern Italy's ancient ribolla gialla grape and a welcome change from prosecco. With jolly, candied citrus peel and just-baked panettone-styled fruit, summer parties will go with a swing with this fizz.

Party fizz!



2019 L'Atzar Cava Reserva

Spain, 11.5 per cent
Waitrose £11.99, down to £8.99 from June 29 to August 10

Classy, small batch cava made by the méthode champenoise, matured for 18 months, hence its extra dollop of brioche-charged oomph. At just £8.99, its bracing green apple and lemon sherbet dab fruit make it a rewarding summer garden party aperitif.



Langlois Brut, Crémant de Loire, Langlois-Chateau

France, 12.5 per cent
Majestic 6 for £12.99 each until June 27, £17.99 a bottle

Langlois is now owned by Bollinger, hence the extra sparkle in this crémant as champagne. Mostly chenin blanc, with a good dollop each of chardonnay and cabernet franc, Langlois' lemon curd and lemon peel-zingy fizz gets my thumbs-up.



Bredon Brut Champagne, Cuvée Jean Louis

France, 12 per cent
Waitrose £18.49, down from £27.99 until July 12

Still my favourite cut-price champagne, a bouncy, black grape-led bubbly, mostly pinot meunier, with 20 per cent pinot noir and 10 per cent chardonnay. With easy-drinking, crowd-pleasing, marzipan and white almond fruit, Bredon is the perfect summer party champagne.



Piper-Heidsieck Brut Champagne

France, 12 per cent
Waitrose £26 until July 12; Tesco £35, down to £25 from July 5

Brilliant, big-name bubbly that has got better and better. Pinot noir-led with a dollop of pinot meunier and a dash of chardonnay, it's an absolutely delicious toasted almond treat.



That is all for now,
Regards Amanda