

U3A ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER



Welcome Wine group members

We are now officially in Autumn, but I remember the intense heat during August when we all looked forward to rain appearing for our gardens – similarly for the vineyards around Europe when looking at their parched soil. Now is the time when grapes should be on their way to being fully ripened and growers working out when best to harvest, however after drought conditions, many in Europe have already harvested almost a month early, and are predicting lower yields as a result. Meanwhile perhaps we here in the UK, are wondering whether summer rosé wines are still suitable or should we shortly move onto fuller, richer wines as Autumn deepens? At least we have some tastings planned for over the next few months where we can certainly try some fuller bodied wines.

Change of Day for our meetings in 2023

Jonathan at the Arts Centre has informed me that he has taken a weekly Thursday evening booking for the Assembly Room starting in September, (however he will honour our September and December bookings) but next year we will have to have a Friday evening for our meetings. Whilst I understand his financial position, I was very “disappointed” this was presented as a done deed without any prior notice. Therefore, for next year’s programme, when using the Arts Centre we will start at 6.45pm on a Friday evening (this gives us time to set up following the preceding class using the room until 6pm). We will have to see how this works out and my apologies in advance. When going out to tastings sometimes we have to go with a date they dictate, other times I can still try for a Thursday evening.

On the subject of external tastings, I am heartened that so many are booked a couple of months in advance, but of course then some members are left disappointed. I would urge you to book as soon as you can if you have an interest in any tasting. Many of our venues are small and can only accommodate a maximum number, then we have to balance the cost of a 16 seat minibus versus a larger coach, if the coach can even access the venue. I am always looking for ways to maximise attendance and reduce cost, for instance with Old Chapel Cellars they have a maximum of 20, and 4 members choose to go by taxi (virtually same cost), so I can fill a 16 seat minibus rather than the more expensive coach. Regardless of the above, keep attending our tastings and try new wines!

Review of “A tour around France” wine tasting with Le Mistral Wine Company.

It was unfortunate that Le Mistral were forced to give up their existing shop premises in Lostwithiel just as their new larger shop space fell through. However, they used the Social Club in Lostwithiel to host our wine tasting on one of the hottest evenings during August. Eddie McGee with help from his brother, gave us a 9 bottle tasting (2 rosé, 3 white and 4 red) touring around regions of France, of the wines they import from small producers which are of a much higher quality and therefore price, than that found in “bulk supermarket type” wines. It was interesting to taste these wines and appreciate the quality, and orders were placed on the night with a 10% discount and free delivery.



1. Starting in Provence with a Rosé, Cuvee Colete 2021 from Cotes du Provence in the Var. 12.5% £20 ideal aperitif
2. From Chateaux de St Martin another Rosé, Cru Classe Eternelle Favourite 2019 (in a beautiful bottle) 12.5% £27 silver medal winner excellent with seafood
3. Moving to the Pay d'oc an unoaked Chardonnay from Carcassone, Les Pins St Chinian 2014, Comte de L'Orgeril 13% £15 light, fruity great aperitif

4. From Macon, a Chardonnay Les Terrasses from Comte de L'Orgeril 13%, £25 with very light oak, a good wine and a step up from the previous wine
 5. Moving to the Cote du Rhone. La Blanche 2019 13%, £19 a Viognier and White Grenache, full bodied and pairs excellently with food such as Chicken Chasseur or hard cheese.
 6. To the reds. Cotes de Beaune, A Clou Aurues St. Romain Pinot Noir 2017 £42, Organic, earthy peppery. A good match with charcuterie or a light duck dish.
 7. From the S Rhone Valley, Noemie Robin Gigondas 2020, 14/5% £33. A blend of Syrah, Grenache, Mouvedre, dry silky spice with good fruit balance. Needs food, steak or game, and a strong cheese.
 8. From the Languedoc, St Chinian Les Pins 2014 14.5% £37. A Syrah and Mouvedre blend, needs rich gamey or lamb dishes.
 9. And finally, to Lusac, St Emilion - Ch. de Coulat, 2019, 90% Merlot 10% Cabernet Franc, £21 A savoury wine to pair with beef or venison. Produced on the right bank in Bordeaux.
- A great and diverse selection of wines with interesting facts and comments from our hosts. I look forward to hearing whether they are successful in finding suitable premises.

Future Tastings

SPACES NOW FULL 15th September, Members' own Tasting, Arts Centre arrival for 6.30pm

This should be a great evening with 6 wines to be presented and tasted, some will be tasted "blind" and I don't know the wines other than the dessert wine. A huge thanks to the following who have volunteered to do this and Shirley for offering to do the food. See you there.

Chris & Karen Scott	2 white wines (blind tasting)
Chris & Chris Wright	2 organic reds (blind tasting)
Janet Harvey	1 Dessert White Wine (blind tasting)
Chris Crane	1 Dessert Red Wine

October 20th Old Chapel Cellars, Truro - Argentinian Wine Tasting
Cost £25 pp to include 5 wines with accompanying nibbles. Transport cost to Truro return **£13.50pp**.

Depart Arts Centre 6pm prompt, for a start 6.30pm Depart again 9.30pm (hoping we may be able to do a Penrice pick up at 5.50pm again, tbc)

Old Chapel can only accommodate **20 members and only 2 spaces remain** so first come first served and I suggest **you check with me that there are spaces**, prior to payment. (I will be on holiday in 2 weeks' time until just prior to this visit and need to tie everything up).

Return transport costs now **confirmed at £13.50pp** so please pay that cost now in addition to the cost of the event. (If you have already paid for the event, please just pay the transport cost.)

To pay quote your membership number(s) xxxxWGOCT

17 November, Ellis Wharton Wines presents “Wine for Christmas” at their Indian Queens shop, to include cheeses, nibbles and breads etc £25 per head. Further info on wines to follow.

Depart Arts Centre 6pm prompt, for arrival and start 6.30pm departure again 9.30pm.

Return transport to Indian Queens **cost £13.50 pp**, please pay now for those already booked, or include with your booking fee.

If the last tasting at EWW is anything to go by, this should be another very enjoyable evening with the opportunity for wine inspiration and to purchase your Christmas tipples and food goodies.

Please advise Shirley Salliss once you have paid for this event plus transport at shirley.salliss@btinternet.com, who will be coordinating numbers for me whilst away.

To book quote your membership number(s) xxxxWGNov

15 December Christmas Social Evening, Arts Centre from 6.30pm
Cost for wines £pp tba.

Usual form, everyone to bring a sharing platter of Christmas food and the Wine Group will purchase wines to include a fizz, whites, reds, Madeira or Port and Dessert wine.

Through The Creative Writing group, a Ghost Story will be commissioned for the evening, which used to be a Christmas tradition and which will be read out by Terry Howard. In addition, I hope The Garker Street Band will be playing Christmas numbers for an hour or so, donations for the RNLI. Afterwards we can continue with our chats and socialising.

As we have some funds remaining from last year's raffle, I will be buying **4 rather special raffle prizes** this year, so no need to bring a prize with you. Just bring some cash to purchase tickets!

As with all bookings for our events, please let me know once you have paid so that I can keep track of numbers especially where transport is required. Once we have confirmed numbers to the venue and requested an invoice, or purchased our in-house wines, the cost of wines and food is committed and therefore we cannot unfortunately offer refunds.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT FOR ANY PAYMENTS TO THE WINE GROUP
ACCOUNT PAY INTO ACCOUNT NO 23132587 SORT CODE 20-30-47
"Wine Community" (HSBC bank)**

Regarding the possibility of an English Spirit Distillery Tour, I have now looked into this in more detail with costings. To include suitable snack food and the increased coach prices to Launceston, make this a very expensive trip coming up to Christmas. Therefore perhaps something to look at again next year, or to visit individually.

"Volunteered" evenings for next year's Wine Group.

A Wine Quiz Evening

Back by popular request after the enormous success of the initial event this year, and the generosity of Christine & Andrew Johnson, this will take place sometime in the Spring/early Summer. Further details to follow.

A Spanish evening of Wine and Food

Members Terry & Vicki Howard have most bravely and kindly offered to run this evening sometime next Summer, where they will bring their "big pans"

and cook a delicious Paella (with variations for vegetarians and non-seafood eaters). Cooking will be done outside the Arts Centre, but bought in to serve. Tapas and a Spanish dessert will complete the meal, and each course will have matching wines. Anyone with particular Spanish wine knowledge perhaps could offer to present this part. I am very grateful to them for this and more details will follow. They will be looking for volunteers to help serve starters and dessert, and someone to prepare some tapas.

Two events and something to look forward to, ***run by members for our members***. Brilliant!

Finally, there will be no newsletter in October as I am away, but I will see those booked onto our October visit then.

Enjoy the remnants of the summer sun, and regards

Amanda