

# U3A ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

## NOVEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER



Hello wine group members

Just saying the word November usually conjures up shorter winter days, long walks, log fires, autumnal colours in the trees, bonfire night and many other evocative memories, however with this warmer weather still around we are not there just yet. Additionally, we would normally be craving warming stews, casseroles and rich red wines which I have to say has not come here yet either. October was Rioja month and for those Rioja aficionados amongst us, I hope you drank well and continue to do so!

I recently read that our friends **Ellis Wharton Wines** (to whom we are visiting later this month) won Decanter's 2022 Retailer Award for South West England Regional Wine Shop and had a great write up for shifting from purely on-trade sales to their new site we now know, with a great range of wines. Well done EWW.

**Knightor Winery** have a **free local's wine tasting offer** running throughout November on Saturday & Sundays. Everyone with a Cornwall postcode can enjoy a complimentary wine tasting, just take along something that shows your address with postcode and turn up to sample their collection of wines. What a great offer. (They are open for tastings Saturday 11-4, Sundays 1-4 but due to an overwhelming response you must now book 01726 851101)

### **Change of Day for our meetings in 2023**

As previously reported in a separate mail, starting in February 2023 we have to use Friday evenings with a 6.45pm start at the Arts Centre, and the hoped

for Charlestown Church Hall unfortunately can only also offer Friday evenings but at a higher rate, so for the time being we will remain at the Arts Centre.

However, if someone/a couple are willing to run an evening and find an alternative venue at a reasonable cost as a one off, I am perfectly happy to run with this arrangement and we can cost the venue hire into the cost of the evening.

### **Review of Old Chapel Cellars' Argentinian Tasting from Oct 20<sup>th</sup>**

19 of us visited Old Chapel Cellars for an evening of Argentinian delights, presented by Louisa and Jake, and what a wonderful evening we enjoyed. Stepping into the cosy Chapel surrounded by hundreds of bottles of wine, to laid out tables and Louisa very ably talking to us about Argentinian wine production in general (5<sup>th</sup> largest producer), climate, importance of the Andes vineyards way above sea level etc. We went onto the 5 wines with Louisa talking us through the grape variety, colour, nose, taste and many other fascinating facts. At the end of the evening there was time to look around and purchase wines with a 10% discount on the night (we certainly did), and also to see the enormous stock of wines at the back (over £100,000 worth). Interestingly they import direct from the vineyard and know the wine makers very well, have farm storage and bonded storage in Wiltshire and have recently been accredited a BCorp for their high standards of social and environmental performance and sustainable policies.



#### **1. Iris Doble Torrontes 2020, 13% £10.99**

100% pure Torrontes from N Mendoza using the higher quality picked grapes. Very pale yellow. On the nose tropical notes of chamomile, melon, orange blossom, jasmine. On the palate, fresh with moderate citric acidity (good to accompany food especially spicy or sweet chilli). Lovely to taste a “different” grape which was extremely enjoyable.

## 2. Lancatay Chardonnay, 13.5% £12.99

100% Chardonnay from Mendoza. This medium-bodied Chardonnay has a slightly buttery note, tropical fruits like passion fruit and pineapple with a hint of toffee on the finish. The palate smooth and silky with light oak (4 to 6 months).

Pair with pork or rich fish like salmon or tuna.

## 3. Soltano Merlot 2019 13.5%, £12.99

One of the wines from Soltano that Chapel Cellar stock, and who make wines selling for over £70+ bottle. A beautiful dark velvet colour with excellent legs. 70% French 30% US oak. On the nose, jammy fruit aromas with red fruit like plums and cherries. Subtle mineral notes with aromas of chocolate, smoke and tobacco. In the mouth, it is intense and complex with rounded tannins. Pair with any dishes that include particularly steak but also roast chicken, mushrooms and parmesan. I think this wine reignited many members enjoyment of Merlot and many said "its great, not like Merlot as we know it"!



## 4. Sottano Malbec Organico 14.5% £13.99 certified organic

100% Malbec, Very dark burgundy colour, long legs, Aromas of ripe red fruits – blackberries, blackcurrants. Delicate chocolate and vanilla notes from the oak (8 months in new oak 70% French 30% US) Good structure and velvety tannins give a long, elegant finish. Pair with grilled meats, BBQs, steak.

**Sottano Winery** is located in one of the most unique wine regions for growing high-end grapes in Mendoza. Thirty kilometres away from the City of Mendoza and on the way to Chile, Sottano Winery enjoys the magnificent Andes Mountain Range as its backdrop.

## 5. Dragon de Vino Malbec, Staphyle, 2019 14%, £20.99

Using premium 100% hand picked Malbec grapes, aged longer in oak. Purple-red colour, aromas of wild strawberries and trace minerals from the mountains. In the mouth, silky, slightly dry, delicious. Pair with bbq pulled pork

*"Dragon of Wine, was inspired by the incredible landscape of Potrerillos. Its omnipresent pre-cordilleran mountains, the road from Cacheuta winding along the water of the lake, from the tunnel to enter the most unexpected vineyard in Mendoza. All this made me think about the magic of the terroir and its derivation in the noble Malbec Wine that this bottle contains. My work, dedicated to the Territory".  
Carina Fernandez*

All in all a brilliant visit and I have asked Louisa if we can book a return visit for another excellent tasting in the Spring. She has suggested a Spain & Portugal tasting....



**Next Visit** now only 1 space with transport, but still space to make your own way there (taxi share?)

17 November, **Ellis Wharton Wines presents 6 “Wines for Christmas” at their Indian Queens shop, to include cheeses, nibbles and breads £25 per head.** Depart Penrice 5.50pm and Arts Centre 6pm prompt, for arrival and start 6.30pm departure again 9.30pm. Return transport to Indian Queens **cost £13.50 pp**

If the last tasting at EWW is anything to go by, this should be another very enjoyable evening with interesting and perhaps unusual wines, together with the opportunity for wine inspiration and to purchase your Christmas tipples and food goodies. If you wish to go **contact me please**.

**15 December Christmas Social Evening**, Arts Centre from 6.30pm, Cost for wines £14pp to include the £1 room fee **booking ref xxx WGDec**

Usual form, everyone to bring a large sharing platter of finger Christmas food ready plated. The Wine Group fund has purchased the wines to including a fizz, 2 different whites, 2 different reds, Madeira and Port. Due to being finger food, no salads or similar please. Suggested list as below, but not limited to this if you have a favourite Christmas party food item to bring. We need a good mix of savoury items, sweet treats, cake (Xmas) and so please email me confirming payment and with what you can bring to avoid duplication. For those unable to cook, there are many Christmas party pieces readily available from decent supermarkets.

Cheese board	Mini vol au vents
Mini quiches	Mini toasts with pate
Quiche slices - vegetarian	Blue cheese bites
Sausage rolls	Savoury platter
Smoked salmon nibbles	Focaccia with brie
Selection of meats	Fruit kebabs
Cooked sausages	Mince pies
Pigs in blanket	Marzipan fruit cake
Stuffed eggs	Stuffed dates
Mixed Canapes	Home made Stollen
Cheese & pineapple!	Panetonne

Through The Creative Writing group, a Ghost Story (the reading of which at Christmas used to be an old tradition) will be commissioned for the evening, and which will be read out by Terry Howard. In addition, The Garker Street Band will be playing Christmas music for the first 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 **some 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

**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)**

**Programme for 2023 (3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month generally but there will be exceptions)**

This is your group and I would like to hear if you have any ideas for our monthly meetings whether something new or revisiting somewhere we have been before. A few kind members have volunteered their services to run an evening event and found a new potential speaker:

### **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. 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 (perhaps July), 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 and cook/prepare starters and a dessert with a Spanish theme.

Two events, ***run by members for our members***. Brilliant!

A couple of ladies separately, have mentioned the possibility of presenting at a rosé evening, which would be great perhaps in the summer, so if they are still keen please let me know and I can put you together to plan a tasting evening.

**Carol Avery** who gave a brilliant wine tasting presentation last year in Pentewan, has agreed to present for us next April “**A travel through Italy**” and I am sure it will be another great evening, hopefully in Pentewan at another venue she has found.

Meanwhile I will put a draft programme for the first half of the year together to publish by the end of this year. Again if you have an idea, please investigate and let me know. I have thought of vineyards over the border in Devon, but

this would entail a very long minibus/coach journey (slow) or train with complex onward transport to the venue. Am still pondering.

## **Wine Reviews**

I think everyone used to enjoy reading members' recommendations and reviews on wines they have recently drunk, so please do send some in for the next newsletter.

Local supermarkets seem to be having random wine discounts not publicised in advance (Tesco 25% off 6 bottles) (Waitrose 1/3 off certain wines) and many others, so it is a good idea to shop around. Additionally more and more wines from Aldi and Lidl are recommended by Decanter Magazine, and have a Decanter award label on the shelf next to the description of the wine. These are often very reasonably priced but surprisingly good and I would urge you to try some.

Meanwhile a few **recommended at £11 and under**,

### **Cotin Jaillet, Blanc, Cotes du Rhone, France 2020. Lidl £5.99 12.5%**

Fleshy peach stone fruit and white flower fragrance, unknown blend but tastes as though there is some Viognier in it. Refreshing and fruity, medium weight. Good with a chicken salad or creamy pasta dish. A real bargain at this price.

### **Wine Society's Sicilian Organic White, Sicily, Italy 2021 £8.50 The Wine Society 12.5%**

Great value, uncomplicated every day drinking. This own label organic white is a blend of 80% Grillo and 20% Carricante, and offers great character for the price. Unoaked, crisp and fresh with white flower aromas, stone fruit and a hint of almond, with a touch of minerality.

### **Robert Oatley, Signature Series Chardonnay, Margaret River, W Australia 202 £11.50 Coop 12.5%**

A lovely oaked Chardonnay with a vanilla, pineapple, apple and pear nose, a buttery palate with citrus acidity to refresh, leaving vanilla and ginger notes to finish.

### **Collin Bourisset, Macon Rouge, Burgundy, France 2020 £6.99 Lidl 13%**

A blend of Gamay and Pinot Noir, this is an easy drinking, unoaked red with plenty of strawberry and raspberry fruit. Tangy and appetising, good with charcuterie.

**Waitrose, Loved & Found Caladoc, Languedoc, France 2021 £7.49**

**Waitrose 13.5%**

Grenache and Malbec, unoaked and fragrant and aromatic, with juicy blueberry and red berry fruit. Good with lamb.

On a final note, our visit to Old Chapel reminded me to restate that we obviously pay our suppliers including transport at least a month prior. When we buy wines in house for a tasting, it has to be done in advance in order to cost the evening accurately. Therefore and regrettably it is not possible to give refunds for cancellations once these supplier payments have been made or wine already purchased. I can suggest if you have to cancel at a later stage, you offer your place to someone direct and sort out any payment with them. Therefore, if there are spaces which have been paid for after the event has closed and no one to replace the original member, I can only offer them free of charge to members for a "donation", as it would be too complex otherwise. I hope everyone understands this.

That is it for this month, see you at Ellis Wharton or hopefully, at our Christmas event...have I just mentioned the C word??

Regards,

Amanda