

U3A ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER



Dear Wine Group Members

Welcome to April!

Here are a few weird, and amusing facts about wines (not an early April Fools!).

1. Grapes are the most planted fruit all over the world.
2. It takes approximately 440-660 grapes to make a single (standard size) bottle of wine. 1 vine produces around 10 (standard sized) bottles of wine.
3. To quench their thirst, people drank wine instead of water centuries ago. During that time, water wasn't clean all the time, and natural fermentation, when the wine is made, could kill germs caused by salmonella and cholera.
4. Apparently, some people have a "fear of wine," and it's called oenophobia.

5. During the early Roman times, it was forbidden for women to drink wine. Wives who were caught by their husbands drinking wine could be killed if caught in the act.....**no comment!!**

6. Women are more susceptible to the effects of wine than men, partly due to biology, as women have fewer enzymes in the stomach lining required to break down alcohol.

7. In ancient Greece, the host of dinner would take the first sip of wine to assure that the wine served to guests wasn't poisoned. This act of courtesy was where the phrase "drinking to one's health" originated (clinking of glasses).

8. There are 10,000 varieties of wine grapes existing worldwide.

9. "Aroma" is the term for the fragrance of young wine, while "Mellow" is for old wine.

10. Wine had been previously kept in goatskin bags. The Englishman Sir Kenelm Digby (1603-1665) invented the dark green wine bottle we all know today.

Who knew.....

I would like to say a big thank you to you, the members of our Wine Group, for your continued support over the past 4 years since inception. It is very satisfying for me when events are full, although this means some members are disappointed, but it shows me the commitment from our Group and how it has grown from the early days in 2019.

Due to the above, the administration has got quite onerous to run the group, and along with spending time sourcing and talking to suppliers and events, I realised it would be a good idea to have ongoing additional admin assistance. I am thrilled to announce that with effect tomorrow 1st April **Sue Osbrink** has kindly agreed to take on the role of **Wine Group Coordinator**.

As such Sue will be:

- the contact person for **all bookings and payments** from members for each group event/tasting, and will then let me know final numbers for each event.
- collating any transport bookings, and payments from members.

- collating attendees plus food contributions for any events other than tastings, eg Garden Party and the Christmas event

Therefore will immediate effect, please email Sue on Sue.osbrink@gmail.com to confirm payment and your attendance for all our events going forward. *If you have already paid **and confirmed to me***, no need to do anything further.

It would also be very useful to have a **volunteer to maintain a rota for provision of food** at our monthly tastings. (see below) so please let me know if you would do this task, many thanks.

- At most in any 12 month period, there may be 8 months of the year where we are at the Arts Centre and require food. To ask for volunteers at monthly meetings for future dates, confirm the budget each month to the volunteer and provide them our "Food Aide Memoire".
-
- To purchase paper plates and napkins (cost reimbursed) and to take along to meetings with our red checked tablecloths (which need a quick wash after each event)

For the remainder of this year we only have September to find a volunteer to do the food, but it would be good to have a Food coordinator in place.

With this help I will remain Group Leader with access to Beacon and produce the monthly newsletter, find and book Presenters for tastings and visits to Producers. This is a fantastic group which simply must continue, and I would hope in the fullness of time another member may be prepared to take over!

External Wine events:

For those who showed interest, and indeed everyone, two suppliers have sent details of their own inhouse tastings. Please contact them direct to ask any questions or book.

Old Chapel Cellars event dates are:

27 April	Blind Tasting with iSight Cornwall
14 June	Portuguese Wine Tasting
5 July	Food and Wine Tasting

Ellis Wharton Wines:

Events will all start with a welcome drink at 6pm and tasting to start at 6:30pm until 9:30pm. Each event will have a selection of wines to taste with food designed to match the products and we host a speaker for each event too.

Friday 14th April. Exton park with Winemaker Corrine Seely. £45 p/p tickets event starting with a welcome drink at 6pm. Meet the winemaker and taste her award winning English Sparkling Wine. This will be a brilliant tasting.

Olivier Leflaive on Fri May 19th May. Starting with a welcome drink at 6pm. This will be lead by Bancroft's head buyer, unfortunately Olivier Leflaive don't have the budget to send a representative to the UK. Ticket price to be confirmed, but have a waiting list already! This will be very popular contact Ellis direct if you are interested soon for this one.

Next is **Tim Wildman MW on the 23rd June for an English Pet Nat** tasting. Tim is flamboyant and very good fun and not scared to create exceptional wines with a different style so this will be a brilliant event too. Price £tbc.

For any of the above, book direct with Ellis Wharton and arrange your own transport.

Review of Wines of New Zealand, by Derek Crookes, Kernowine, Falmouth March 17th 2023

Kernowine, a recently established business offering a wine bar, sales and wine educator in Falmouth whose ethos is local, ethical and sustainable, and is owned by Derek (Del) Crookes a former LBC & BBC1 Radio Newsbeat Journalist, and who came to us and gave a most excellent presentation and tasting. We enjoyed 4 quite different to the usual style whites and 2 delicious reds from New Zealand. Judging by comments afterwards, a brilliant and enjoyable evening from an enthusiastic and personable presenter. Quite a few of us are intending to visit the wine bar in Falmouth, who incidentally, run their own tastings, check out their website <https://kernowine.co.uk/about-us/>

Thank you to Ann Ford and Ann Smith for buying and serving the food for this tasting, so appreciated by all members. Additionally, a big thank you to Chris & Chris Wright who donated cold meats to the evening to accompany our cheeses, a lovely gesture much appreciated.



Anyone wishing to order the wines, contact Del as above.

The wines we tasted:

Wine 1 – Yealands Estate Single Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough 2020 – 12.5% (Vegan) - £20 a sustainably run vineyard

Abundant flavours of snow pea, passionfruit, and blackcurrant leaf, with undertones of ripe tropical and citrus notes. The palate is generous and textured, with a distinctive mineral finish. Enjoy as an aperitif, or with freshly shucked oysters, steamed green lip mussels or goat cheese salad.

Wine 2 – Yealands Estate Albariño, Marlborough 2022 – 12.5% - £19

Showcasing layers of ripe yellow plum, lifted lime blossom and sea spray. The palate is lively with bright acidity and lingering minerality. Eat with grilled fish with fresh tomato salad or fish and chips.

Wine 3 – Greywacke Barrel Fermented Pinot Gris, Marlborough 2020 – 14% - £26 – Kevin Judd who spent 25yrs at Cloudy Bay and brought it to the UK market, now in charge here. Female Maori winemaker, use very low sulphur.

A luscious concoction of pear, candied quince and vanilla cream drizzled with wildflower honey, a dash of rosewater and a sprinkle of nutmeg. Greywacke Pinot Gris is a ripe, opulent expression of the variety made in a voluptuous off-dry style (9g/l RS) that has considerable concentration and a long, textural finish.



Wine 4 – Man O’ War Chardonnay, Waiheke Island, Auckland 2019 – 14.5% - £30. This winery virtually sits on a beach on North Island. This wine had a strange musty aroma, which dissipated somewhat as the wine warmed, and certainly split the group!

This has a wealth of ripe aromas of nectarine and grapefruit with complex layers of baking bread, cashew and flinty elements. Rich on the palate, with a spine of acidity woven in with a ripe citrus finish.

Wine 5 – Churton Estate, Pinot Noir, Marlborough 2020 – 12% (Biodynamic, organic, vegan) - £22. Also recommended was The Natural State White Field Blend from this winery.

The Natural State Pinot Noir is best enjoyed with a slight chill as this accentuates its fresh crisp nature. The Pinot is incredibly aromatic with lush florals and bright red fruits. On the palate, it’s ever evolving. It’s a vibrant and fruitful Pinot Noir to start before seamlessly transitioning into a structured wine, reflecting its true identity and roots. Excellent persistence of length and natural acidity. Drink with strong blue cheese, pate & tarte tatin.

Wine 6 - The Chatterer Syrah, Squawking Magpie, Hawke's Bay 2020 – 13% - £26. Female winemaker who was an ex head winemaker of a Bordeaux Chateau.

Wild dark berry fruit and gentle baking spice with a twist of black pepper and liquorice on the nose. Velvety textured with bright berry fruit and floral flavours. Sustained depth of flavour and texture through the palate with a fine, refreshing and lingering finish. Pair with five spice rubbed duck, salmon with tarragon or roasted beetroot.



Our own events now booking: (to avoid disappointment book as soon as you are able)

FULLY BOOKED AND NOW CLOSED - April 21, Carol Avery presents “A trip through Italy” at Pentewan Sailing Club (opposite the Ship Inn, other side of the water) **6.45pm for 7pm start, finish at 9pm.**

Taxi drop off by Ship Inn or car park, and cross over to the Sailing Club (NB some uneven terrain). Pale blue building in a compound, walk from Ship Inn 150m to the headland where there is a disabled friendly slope to enter the Club House. **BRING A TORCH** for coming out as no lighting.

Take your own glasses. As there is no provision for food at the venue, we will be taking some Italian accompaniments suggested by Carol, not the usual!

NO MEETING IN MAY, (moved to June)

Sunday 11 June, Annual Garden Party - I am, as ever, delighted to confirm the date for our now **annual Garden Party at Karen & Chris home in St Austell** from midday onwards. **NO COST**

Bring a platter of sharing food and a bottle or two of wine, hopefully enjoy some music if we can persuade the Barker Street Band to play, get to know fellow members and generally while away the afternoon in a beautiful garden.

IMPORTANT please email **Sue Osbrink** to confirm your attendance, plus the plate(s) of food you will be bringing (1 per person). Sue will endeavour to ensure a good mix of sweet and savoury, and with the help of Lucinda, a good vegetarian choice too. Sue.osbrink@gmail.com

Additionally if you can help the Friday before (9th) afternoon with some gardening jobs, it would be good to have another garden group assisting Karen & Chris. Last year we did some weeding, grass cutting, brushing and jet washing. Please also let Sue know if you are available to help for a couple of hours. Thank you.

June 23 at the Arts Centre, Wine Tasting Quiz Night by Christine and Andrew Johnson. Arrival 6.45pm depart 9.30pm. **Cost £16pp** to include room fee and food.

After the huge success last year, another chance to enjoy a great evening of fun, testing your general wine knowledge, whilst tasting wines eating cheese and trying to win a spot prize. Christine and Andrew came up with a varied and interesting quiz all about aspects of wine, injected with a lot of humour! No need to be wine experts at all... Ian and Ros Mitchell have very kindly offered to provide the food for this meeting, thank you both.

Pay by May 22, ref xxxxWGJUN23 and advise Sue Osbrink (as above)

July 28 Arts Centre - "An Evening of Spanish Food & Wines", a relaxed evening with Vicki and Terry Howard (max 28 people)

NOW ONLY 2 SPACES LEFT. Vital you contact Sue Osbrink to check they haven't gone prior to payment!

Arrival 6.45pm to sit at 7.15pm, **Cost £18pp to include £1 room fee**

- **NB - Unsuitable for shellfish allergies** in case of liquid leakage from prawns.
- **Dessert unsuitable for nut allergies** (please advise if this is an issue for you and we can provide an alternative)
- Bring your own medium sized bowl (Paella), cutlery and tasting glasses please

Ref xxxxWGJUL23 but you must contact Sue Osbrink prior.

CHANGE OF DATE TO THAT ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED :-

Daytime: August 18 2023, Bosue Vineyard, St Ewe, Tour & Tasting, £15pp - I suggest taxi sharing as it is so local. **Arrival 11am** depart at 2.30/3pm but we are welcome to linger longer especially on a nice day.

Bosue is a small family run local vineyard, growing Cornish grapes and making award winning white, sparkling and rose wines and brandy. The first vines were planted in 1996 as a trial plot with further planting in 1999, 2004 and 2005. They now have 3000 vines of modern grape varieties.

We were due to visit when lockdown hit so had to cancel, and although Bosue no longer offer public wine tours and tastings, they are happy to do so for our Group. In brief we would have a tour, onto the winery for a tasting of their white wines, sparklings, a rose and for the brave their Brandy!! As they are no longer able to offer any food, we can take our own picnic (wet weather contingency in place) to eat during or after the tasting. **Numbers will be restricted to 20.**

Pay by July 18, ref xxxxWGAUG23 and advise Sue Osbrink

September 15 2023, at Arts Centre, Wadebridge Wines present, Wines of the Loire Valley. £23pp to include room fee and food. **6.45pm start**

Another case of Covid cancelling this event I was so looking forward to, as after speaking many times with Sebastien and hearing his enthusiasm (as well as gorgeous French accent!) he certainly knows his stuff. So I am excited to announce this event when we will taste at least 5 wines of the Loire Valley.

Pay by August 10, ref xxxxWGSEPT23 and advise Sue Osbrink

October 20th will be another visit to Ellis Wharton Wines – Topic tbc, £30 pp to include food. Minibus transport cost £13.50pp maximum 16 by bus but venue can take 20. Final 4 may have to taxi share.

Our last visit to EWW was a complete success and we all thoroughly enjoyed the feast they provided as well as some excellent wines, which many of us purchased. More detail to follow.

(nb date a Thursday) November 16th will see another visit to Louisa at Old Chapel Cellars, Truro for a pre Christmas tasting **“Wines for Christmas Gatherings”** – what to drink/serve when the family or friends come over, or for formal dinner parties and large drinks parties. A mix of fizz, red white and dessert wines. **Price pp £30** with nibbles to accompany. Minibus cost £13.50pp maximum by bus 16 but venue can take 20 as above. Judging by the success and purchases from our last visit here, a very popular venue and speaker.

For all bookings please email Sue Osbrink once paid, but if restricted numbers you must contact prior to paying. Thank you.

PLEASE NOTE THAT FOR ANY PAYMENTS TO THE WINE GROUP ACCOUNT PAY INTO ACCOUNT NO 23132587 SORT CODE 20-30-47 “Wine Community” (Barclays bank). Include the reference number given for each event, with the xxxx being your membership number(s)

I had hoped some of you would send in wine reviews again as they were always popular with other members and am sure a lot of you will be pulling corks this weekend, so get tasting and sending please

Meanwhile, here follows a couple of Decanter recommended reasonably priced and easily available wines:

Bowler & Brolly Winemaster’s Lot Classic Cuvee Brut, Hampshire NV 12% £19.99 Aldi

A tasty fizz with a steely line and firm green apple bite alongside good acidity. At £5 more than Aldi’s reliable non vintage Champagne, it showcases home grown quality. Decanter gave this 90/100.

Quintas de Caiz, Encostas de Caiz, Avesso, Vinho Verde, Portugal 2022, 13% £7.99 Lidl

An expressively Vinho Verde from the rare Avesso grape, and is superior to the other Vinho Verde range from Lidl. Juicy and expressive with ripe apple and pear flavours, and a rounded, almost honeyed finish. The spritz is barely detectable and there is a hint of minerality. 90/100 points.

Bodega de Sada, Alta Sada Garnacha, Navarra, Spain 2020 14% £14.49 Laithwaites

The cooling influences of the Pyrenees show in this unoaked red, made from 70yr old vines. Aromatically expressive with violet, perfumed forest fruits and juicy dark plum. There are notes of mountain herbs and fresh acidity too. 91/100 points.

Les Dauphins, Cotes du Rhone Villages, France 2020 14% £9.99 Waitrose

Great value everyday red, easily drinkable and soft tannins provide structure to the plum cherry and bramble palette. A touch of black pepper adds lift and freshness. One for midweek suppers. 89/100 points.

Specially Selected Pedro Ximenez Sherry, Jerez, Spain 17%, £4.99 37.5cl Aldi

A tiny glass of this luscious nectar is dessert in itself. Marshmallowy and creamy with dark brown sugar, but has enough balancing acidity not to be cloying and lingers on the palate. Absolutely delicious!! Serve with dessert or cheese. 90/100 points

Well that is it for this month, I hope to send out a May newsletter before I go away, and perhaps a very short June one on my return.

Kind regards

Amanda