

u3a ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

JULY 2023 NEWSLETTER



Dear Wine Group Members

As I sit and start this newsletter, probably a week before I finally send it, we have had no rain to talk of for the past month at least. Our garden is desperate for water, and I can imagine vineyards all over the Country are praying for rain. I read that vineyards in S France who were dreading results due to the drought conditions there, now have an irrigation system taking water from the Rhone on an impressive scale. In addition, some Mediterranean vines are reaching their limit with global warming, as although vines do not need a lot of water, they do require a certain amount! Let's all hope the rain comes soon in those parts that need it most, including our gardens and allotments.

As an aside on this subject, there are 6,000 variants of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc vines produced by an Italian Research Institute, to help the

country's wine industry adapt to changing climate. Variants are being screened for traits such as water use efficiency, frost tolerance and resistance to disease.

The Annual Garden Party



Well, as usual, Chris and Karen were the ultimate hosts for our Wine Group. I cannot underestimate the appreciation we all have for them, their home and garden, which they throw open to us all with gay abandon, ensuring our afternoon is perfect. They even ordered just the right weather, slightly overcast but warm, with the sun appearing later on. The Band, with its two new singers, (one is a backing singer with Erasure) were excellent and a fabulously relaxed, chilled time was had by all. Food lived up to previous years and our high expectations, with great choice and restaurant quality food (although for next year definitely need more desserts instead of cake). We raised over £100 for the RNLI via the Band, and they were delighted with that. Photos are on our Wine Group Gallery on the website, many taken by Karen using her “empty mirror” prop which was great fun. Big thanks for those who helped with the garden preparation, and to Sue for organising the food contributions.

Chris and Karen, in a wild moment, have offered their garden for next year! Thanks to you both yet again.



Review of Wine Tasting Quiz Night

Before I give a review of the Quiz Tasting evening, I must just say how grateful I am for our members who put themselves forward, make a huge effort and run an evening/afternoon such as the Garden Party and Quiz Night. How lucky we all are in the Wine Group to have two extraordinary events in one month, run by members for members. Brilliant!

Last night's (as I write) the Quiz and Wine Tasting evening organised by both Christine and Andrew Johnson, (although sadly after her knee operation, Christine could not make the event) was a complete joy and utterly fantastic evening. Only a select few members there (another holiday month), but that made the evening much more sociable where we could easily interact with each other, with two teams of 4 and one of 3. Andrew presented not only 5 excellent wines to taste and guess blind, but alongside him pouring the wines, had managed to find an exhaustive amount of quiz trivia and knowledge to cover 6 different and varied categories, as well as Wine related

equipment test. Who knew there were such things as Wine Condoms??? (used for storing uncorked wines).



I have never known the room so quiet as everyone was concentrating, racking their brains and memories to find the knowledge we had been told in the past few months on visits and previous tastings, to come up with wine related answers. The wine music section had most of us fooled, but Chris excelled with his music knowledge. We had cryptic clues, anagrams, Champagne knowledge, grapes, countries and general wine knowledge to fathom out. Absolutely excellent range of questions, with a couple of spot prizes of bottles of the wines we had tasted, 2 bottles for the winning team, and 1 for the runner up. Andrew, thank you so very much, it was a memorable evening. I am sorry we just ran out of time, and couldn't have time to spare to discuss the wines in more detail, mainly due to taxis coming early because of the Eden Sessions. The wines we enjoyed, with their full price shown as below. All came from Waitrose with 25% off the shown price.

- 1. Cave de Turkheim Crémant d'Alsace Cuvée Brut, 12.5% £13.99 France**
- 2. Camel Valley Bacchus, Cornwall, 12.5% £16.99**
- 3. Waitrose Loved & Found Treixadura, 12%, £8.99 Ribeiro region, Spain**
- 4. Stellenrust Old Bush Vine Cinsault, 13.5% £9.99, Stellenbosch, S Africa**
- 5. Brazin Old Vine Zinfandel Lodi, 14.5%, £15.99, California, USA**

A sample of one of the questions is below, with a guide to tasting notes (first section has been filled in correctly by Andrew)

So what are you tasting?

	Grape variety	Country	Price	Tasting notes
Wine 1	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	France	£13.99	j
Wine 2	Bacchus	UK	£16.99	g
Wine 3	Treixadura	Spain	£8.99	i
Wine 4	Cinsault	South Africa	£9.99	c
Wine 5	Zinfandel	USA	£15.99	a

Grape variety			
Bacchus	Chardonnay	Cinsault	Malbec
Pinot Noir	Primativo/ Zinfandel	Rechsteiner	Sangiovese
Sauvignon Blanc	Shiraz / Syrah	Treixadura	Viognier
Argentina	Australia	Bulgaria	Chile
France	Italy	Lebanon	New Zealand
South Africa	Spain	UK	USA

Price £7.50 – £8.50	£8.50 - £9.50	£9.50 - £10.50	£10.50 - £11.50
£11.50 - £12.50	£12.50 - £13.50	£13.50 - £14.50	£14.50 - £15.50
£15.50 - £16.50	£16.50 - £17.50	£17.50 - £18.50	£18.50 - £19.50

Tasting notes –

<p>a) Big, bold aromas of spice and mocha fill your nose, while intense flavours of plum and chocolate, rich tannins and vanilla mocha notes rock your palate. Serve with saucy ribs or spicy, meaty pizza.</p>	<p>b) A creamy palate of melon and citrus fruits with the classic minerality. Crisp and dry with pure, tongue-tingling freshness and crisp lemon fruit flavours, this is a powerful wine.</p>	<p>c) An elegant wine expressive of red berries, strawberries and spice. The palate is medium-bodied with fresh summer fruit, cedar oak and a lingering finish. Matured in small French oak barrels for 12 months</p>
<p>d) A rich, spicy blend combining blackberry and red forest fruit flavours, with a hint of honeysuckle. Well-integrated French oak supports elements of mulberry and rosemary on the palate providing a long, lingering finish.</p>	<p>e) Intense purple in colour with touches of bright violet sparks, offering aromas of plum jam, ripe red fruits and subtle hints of cool mint. Juicy and fresh on the palate with delicate round tannins and a long, elegant finish.</p>	<p>f) Ruby red with violet hints and an opulent bouquet. Bursting with ripe blackberry fruit and sweet baking spices, this is rich, full-bodied and beautifully balanced.</p>
<p>g) A fresh & fruity dry wine, bright with a grassy hue. Bursting with elderflower, lime leaf, gooseberry and honeysuckle flavours on the long, refreshing palate.</p>	<p>h) It has delicate aromas of lime, green apple, kiwi fruit and some vegetal notes. Mineral notes give the wine a pleasant mouthfeel, balanced with good acidity and a citrus fresh finish.</p>	<p>i) Smooth and silky with delicate floral aromas, this fragrant wine has an elegant and complex nose with notes of white fruit and citrus, perfectly balancing freshness and richness.</p>
<p>j) This is a high quality sparkling wine with a secondary fermentation in bottle which gives finer bubbles and greater complexity, together with flavours of fresh green apples and a lovely cream finish.</p>	<p>k) A flirt with green pear on the nose followed by delicate citrus notes and a good balanced acidity. Crisp and lively on the palate with a persistent mousse. This stunning sparkling is perfect for celebrations.</p>	<p>l) Pale gold in color with medium aromas of pear, yellow apple, yeast, brioche, toast, lime and lemon. Dry with high acidity, medium alcohol and body, delicate mousse, medium+ flavor intensity, and a long finish.</p>



Before going onto remaining events for this year, can I just ask that in general please don't book taxis home before 9.30pm. There will be times when perhaps the presenter finishes by 9.30pm, but then is a good time to socialise and chat, and more importantly help clear away (in the ethos of the u3a). It would be good if more members stayed to help put tables away, clear debris and brush the floor if needed – many hands make light work!

A reminder of the forthcoming events to book for. More information can be found in previous newsletters as well as on our u3a Wine Group webpages.

NOW FULL: July 28 Arts Centre - “A Casual Evening of Spanish Food & Wines” Arrival 6.45pm to sit at 7.15pm. Would suggest taxis at 10pm.

PLEASE BRING cutlery, tasting glasses and a **medium** size bowl each for your Paella.

Only 3 spaces left: August 18 2023, Bosue Vineyard, St Ewe, Tour & Tasting, £15pp – Make your own way there. **Arrival 11am** depart at 2.30/3pm but we are welcome to linger longer especially on a nice day. Take

your own picnic food to enjoy while having the wine tasting. Only 20 people max. Not now open to the public, so a private tour and tasting for our group.

Pay ref xxxxWGAUG23 and advise Sue Osbrink

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

Wonderful Loire valley wines minimum of 5, presented by the very French Sebastien. Thank you Margaret & Mark who have kindly offered to do the food for this evening.

Pay by August 10, ref xxxxWGSEPT23 and advise Sue Osbrink

October 20th visit to Ellis Wharton Wines – SPAIN off the Beaten Track, a tour around Spain, (no Rioja, Ribera or Priorat) £30 pp to include a minimum of 6 wines and accompanying Spanish nibbles. Minibus transport cost £13.50pp – a maximum of 16 by bus but venue can take 20. Final 4 may have to taxi share.

November 16th a visit to Old Chapel Cellars, Truro for a 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.

December 15th Wine Group Christmas Social Evening cost tba, Arts Centre. 6.45pm start. Everyone to bring a platter of Christmas canape style finger food. Wine Group to purchase wines.

For all bookings please email Sue Osbrink on her new email **only**:

susanosbrink@gmail.com 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)

Do check out Ellis Wharton & Old Chapel Cellars websites, as they are both holding regular in-house wine tastings at their premises often with Producers of the wine there, and some excellent wines will be sampled.

A couple of recommended easily available wines, if not sold out! (by the way Tesco currently have their 25% off 6 wines in addition to some already discounted wines = a bargain price)

Bowler & Brolly, Specially Selected English Sparkling Rose Brut, Surrey England NV £15.99 Aldi, 12%

Made for Aldi by Denbies, excellent value pink fizz is a blend of 49% Seyval with Pinots Meunier and Noir. Tart red berry notes with ripe citrus and orchard fruit. Delicious for Summer.

Filos Estate, Chardonnay, Florina, Macedonia, Greece 2022, £8.99 Aldi, 13%

Lovely single vineyard Chardonnay from same producer who very successfully made the Greek Assyrtiko which sold out in Aldi every time it was restocked. Great intensity of green apple, white blossom and creaminess with a citrus acidity. This will age well, so buy if you see it.

Santo Isidro, Nico de Pegoes Rose, Setubal, Portugal 2021, £7.99 Waitrose, 12%

Castelao grape, salmon pink colour with strawberry and peach aromas. Delicate strawberry and cream palate, with good acidity and crisp citrus. Great value summer “sipper”, or with light fish dishes and salads.

Co-op Irrestistible La Courbe, Valais, Switzerland 2022, £10 Co-op. 13.5%

Blend of Pinot Noir and Gamaret from Valais. Floral, blueberry and rose potpourri on the nose, herbs dark cherry on the palate with earthy spice. Cocoa and plum towards the finish.

Some members have kindly offered to do the food for a tasting. As we only have one month left this year when we need food volunteers and Margaret and Mark have offered to cover September, I am going to hope that those who offered don't mind being held over to the New Year when we will need volunteers again. I will ask Sue Osbrink to keep a note of any food volunteers and allocate them once they have confirmed their attendance at the month's tasting. So thank you to the following, and if anyone else could put themselves forward for a month do let Sue know:

Mick and Jenny

Mike and Wendy

I have many copies of Decanter magazine, should anyone wish to have a few to read. In addition there is a new **Bordeaux Guide 2023** recently out. Just let me know and I can bring to a meeting.

Well that is another month of excellent wine meetings. I hope we can all continue to enjoy this lovely sunshine (but with some rain every now and then), and look forward to seeing you at our July event or whenever you are able to make the next tasting.

Kind regards

Amanda