

u3a ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

SEPTEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER



Dear Wine Group Members

Welcome to our September Newsletter, and I see we are three quarters of the way through our Wine Group year – where has that time gone?

While the heavy rainfall in July may have been unwelcome to some it came at the right time for wine producers in England, who are predicting bumper harvests after perfect weather this year. This is down to a good Spring, when the frost came at the right time, and plenty of sun in June. Then, just as it got so very dry, “the rain came”! To finish off, winemakers are now hoping for a sunny August (not happened) and September to completely ripen the grapes, before harvest in October. Our recent visit to Bosue confirmed this, so fingers crossed for them.

Growers are expecting the highest and best yields to date, boosting the burgeoning wine industry in the UK. There are now 943 vineyards across Great Britain, producing 12.2m bottles in 2022, a large rise on the 5.3m bottles in 2017. Additionally, exports are up from 4% to 7% and it is predicted

production will reach 25m bottles by 2032, with 7,600 hectares (18,800 acres) of vines planted.

Waitrose Head of Trading for Wines, reports that red wine has defied its usual summer dip and now equals sales of white wine. People are not so seasonally obsessive about what they drink anymore and don't worry about having red wine in the Summer or even drinking it cooler. He recommends chilling red for about 30 minutes and trying lighter styles such as Beaujolais, unoaked Pinot Noir and unoaked Grenache, Saumur rouge and other Loire Valley reds. Cold accentuates the textural elements so when the wine is chilled you will notice the tannins more. Therefore wines aged in oak and deeper in colour, probably not suitable for chilling. Light in body red wines have a lovely fruity style and are delicious on the cooler side of room temperature.

Just before I forget, Waitrose is currently offering its "25% off 6 wines or more" – and if you can find a wine you like, already discounted in addition, some great bargains can be found. Happy wine hunting!

Review of our visit and tasting at Bosue Vineyard



On a mizzly misty morning we arrived at Bosue Winery, at what seemed in the middle of nowhere, down a very narrow track, but in fact is only a few

minutes from Heligan. Paul Sibley the owner at Bosue greeted us at his beautifully situated vineyard at St Ewe and throughout our visit made us very welcome. An ex- Surveyor, on retirement Paul and his wife Liz decided to plant some vines (almost on a whim) in 1999. Other vines were planted in subsequent years and now over 2,500 vines of modern grape varieties exist.

The sun did not quite “shine”, but it was quite warm, as we meandered through various areas of planting of grapes within such a stunning landscape. All looked laden with grapes, some quite ripe already, others a way to go, but as Paul explained, he is expecting a bumper harvest this year (see my note earlier) and may well be selling some of his grapes to other Cornish producers. Similar profit, no work!!

Photo below showing how his grapes are developing currently.



Paul went into detail about how he chose where to plant different varieties - Rondo, Regent, Solaris, Johanniter, Phoenix and Orion Grapes. They face South, and have gentle sloping plots, and with prudent planting of windbreak foliage seem to have ideal conditions with the Cornish climate for good crops. He covered every aspect of growing of the grapes, and later how Bosue produce and bottle (by hand) the finished product totally grown from grapes from Cornwall.

Bosue can produce around 2000 bottles per year, but this year could easily exceed this, from a very small, very hands on couple who have the luxury of not needing or wanting to expand, or do the tourist route with many visitors (maybe the next generation will). Their Sparkling White and Rose are generally sold to very local restaurants, no advertising or media is required. They also sell from Bosue itself, just call in advance to say when you may be arriving.

Sitting on their terrace overlooking the vines, an idyllic setting, we tasted a White Sparkling, followed by their Rose Sparkling, then a still white, and a still rose. They took the decision to concentrate on what they do well, and not try to produce red wine, unsuited really to the climate. Later in the tiny "production area" we tasted their extremely smooth and silky brandy, after eating our own picnic lunch.

Bosue rely on volunteer pickers sometime in September, possibly Fridays and Saturdays between 6th September and 29th September this year, depending on conditions. If anyone is interested in helping harvesting the grapes, please email Paul on paul@bosuevineyard.co.uk and he will contact you direct nearer the time. It sounds like a hard, but very rewarding day with food and drinks provided, and perhaps a bottle to take home. Another very enjoyable and interesting visit.

A reminder of the forthcoming events to book for...

Beforehand however, just to make you aware that you should receive an email from Sue confirming your place(s) at any event once you have notified her of payment. If this confirmation is not forthcoming and to avoid disappointment, please check she has received your original mail.

October 20th visit to Ellis Wharton Wines – pay by September 18th

Some spaces left. If minibus is full, local taxi fare very comparable to minibus cost and Sue can advise and coordinate sharing.

SPAIN off the Beaten Track, a tour around Spain, 6.30pm to 9.30pm (no Rioja, Ribera or Priorat) £30 pp to include a minimum of 6 wines and accompanying Spanish nibbles. Every event at Ellis Wharton has been a sell out, where we have tasted amazing wines at a reasonable price, plus the

most delicious “nibbles”. A chance to purchase wines and their other goods at the end.

Minibus transport **cost £13.50pp** –once the minibus is full, Sue is happy to coordinate other members so that a taxi share could take place, approximate cost using A2B would be £25 each way – so if 3/4 shared even cheaper!

Minibus pick up either Penrice at 5.50pm or Arts Centre at 6pm, for arrival at Ellis Wharton at 6.30pm. Departure again from EWW at 9.30pm with drop offs in reverse.

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. Another lovely cosy venue for what has been most interesting and varied tastings in the past, again with delicious bites.

Price pp £30 with nibbles to accompany. Minibus cost £13.50pp maximum by bus 16 but venue can take 20 as above.

December 15th Arts Centre. 6.45pm start. Cost for wines and room booking £14pp.

We have a very **kind group of members**, who are collaborating to run this event, with a totally open theme, so watch this space. Meanwhile we have a budget to adhere to, and the cost pp is as above. I know it will as ever, be a great social event with good food and plenty of wines! So please do book so that the group can start planning. I believe we will all be taking a plate of food, but that there may be a theme....

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

susanosbrink@gmail.com

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)

Regarding next year's events, this is YOUR group and so before I start to plan, this Wine Group needs your participation:

- a) **Some Members to volunteer** to run an evening for February or March next year, any subject connected with wine. You can get a group together to do this, and you need no experience, just enthusiasm, see the Christmas event above for motivation!
- b) Any input as to what subjects – countries, grapes, you would like to see if I can find presenters to come to visit us.
- c) In the past we have visited Polgoon vineyard near Penzance, Knightor near Eden Project, Looe Valley Vineyard. We have not visited Camel Valley as they discourage group visits. I am happy to plan a revisit to any of these based on the majority, let me know.
- d) If you know of anyone willing to come and present a wine tasting, please let me know, or feel free to plan the evening yourself in conjunction with the external presenter.

Currently the only plans in the pipeline is another evening from Carol Avery in April, covering Volcanic Wines, a new and interesting topic.

There is a new wine shop in Fowey called Johns, who are starting to plan wine tastings in their shop during the Autumn, and I am talking to them about a tasting for our group in Fowey, sometime early next year.

Chris and I shall be away at the end of September and early October, and so there will not be time before the Ellis Wharton visit to put a newsletter together, so please ensure you have booked your place (& transport) to the final two outside events of the year. Do confirm with Sue that there are places on the minibus prior to paying, if they have all gone she will keep a note of who wants to come in the hope of a taxi share there and back at a similar cost.

Regards Amanda