

u3a ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER



Dear Wine Group Members

It is nearly 2024 and so a Happy and Healthy New Year to you all. I hope you had a good time celebrating the festive season and drank some good wines. Please feel free to send me any reviews of wines you particularly enjoyed, so that others can enjoy reading about them and perhaps go onto buy them.

Chris and I had purchased the box of Christmas Wines which we had tasted at Old Chapel Cellars, and can report that each and every one (bar the Vermouth which we haven't touched yet) was an excellent match for our Christmas day food - particularly having a white Chardonnay as a choice with the main course, which held its own against all the flavours especially the bread sauce. The Pinot Noir of course was also a great match, and the Cremant perfect when opening presents. The Muscadet matched the smoked salmon and that Tawny Port just gave us a very mellow feeling with the cheeseboard!

Review of our Christmas 2023 Event held at the Arts Centre

What a fabulous and fun evening 35 of us enjoyed, thanks to all the hard work put in by the Elves – Sue Smith, Sue Osbrink, Elaine Nelson, Lucinda Davison and Karen Scott. Not only had they made the room look exceedingly festive, but they had purchased the wines, devised two very tricky but great wine quizzes and put together two guessing games for us to solve.



Just some of the wines on offer



The lovely Elves presented me with a bouquet of flowers

Of course and as ever, the array and quality of the food was amazing and we enjoyed a wonderful feast accompanied by some very lovely wines with the theme “Europe” including Port and Madeira. Sue Smith had written a brief note on each wine as below. The first Cremant, a rose, was a real crowd pleaser!

WINES FROM EUROPE

FIZZ

Gratien & Meyer Cremant De Loire

Country - France

Grape - Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Franc and Chenin Blanc.

Refreshing creamy well balanced with hints of red fruit and fine delicate bubbles. Vegan and Gluten free

Mionetto Prosecco

Country - Italy

Grape - 85% Glera

With bubbles of light this wine is soft and persistent with hints of Acacia honey citrus and almond

Cordorniu Vintage Cava

Country Spain

Grape Macabes, Xarel.lo and Parellada

Spain's oldest winery and considered the home fo Cava

This Wine has notes of citrus ,apple,honey and toast.

Vintage,Orgainc and vegan friendly

ROSE

Tesco finest Pinot Grigio Blush.

Country - Italy

Grape - Pinot Grigio

Fine grapes grown in the Dolomiti area of Northern Italy.

Floral aromas lead into crisp refreshing peach and strawberry notes.

Nerello Mascalese Rosato

Country - Sicily

Grape - Mascalese

A little know variety, but picked for its elegant and delicate fresh fragrant notes. With hints of summer berries and herbaceous flavours

RED

Tesco finest Montepulciano D abruzzo

Country - Italy

Grape - Montepulciano

Grown in the highest quality vineyards of the Abruzzo hills overlooking the Adriatic Coast. This inky black Montepulciano is rich and complex with flavours of juicy black fruit, savoury spices and a typical chocolate finish.

Moillard Burgundy Gamay.

Country - France

Grape Gamay

This wine is well structured and strong with delicate red fruit aromas.

WHITE

Casa Roscoli Organic Pinot Grigio

Country - Italy

Grape - Pinot Grigio

Grown on clay and gravel plains in north East Italy it is refreshing with typical flavours of citrus and pears and notes of creamy almonds on the finish. Organic wine suitable for vegans.

Bouchard Grand Conseiller Chardonnay

Country - France

Grape - Chardonnay

Brilliant gold with green reflections. Mayflower and acacia with citrus and exotic undertones on the nose. Vanilla Brioche butter and oakiness and ample long finish.

DESSERT WINE

Lustau Moscatel de Alejandria

Country - Spain (Andalucia)

Grape - Muscat

Subtly sweet yet refreshing wine grown on the atlantic coast in the province of Cadiz. Seductive aromas of roses, honeysuckle, lime blossom . And on the palate white peach grapefruit and succulent lychee.

PORT

Taylor's 10 year old Tawny Port.

Country - Portugal (Douro Valley)

Grape - a mixture of Touriga Nacional, Touriga Franca & Tinta Barroca.

Silky smooth on the palate with delicate wood tones and a rich aromas of mature fruit.

Graham's 10 year old Tawny Port

Country - Portugal

Grape - Touriga Nacional, Alicante Bouschet, Tinta Amarela and Touriga Franca.

Granted a royal warranty by the queen in 2018 this wine has been slow oak matured resulting in nutty aromas hints of honey and figs. On the palate rich fruit flowers mellow with a luscious long finish.

MADERIA

Blady's Duke of Clarence Rich Maderia

Country - Island of Maderia, Portugal

Grape - Tinta Negra Fortified with Brandy

Full bodied with a soft texture and rich complexity. This honours the legend of the Duke of Clarence who drowned in a cask of Malmsey Madeira.

Sue, thank you for organising the wines, an excellent job!



Food food, glorious food....

Terry had “volunteered” to read a Christmas Story, which he had recently written for the Creative Writing Group. They were given a few words which had to be incorporated into their stories, and Terry not only managed this, but gave us a really lovely Christmas Story with obviously some personal anecdotes included. The room was totally silent, which says it all. Thank you so much Terry.



Silence from the room whilst Terry read us his story

We enjoyed a free raffle with 4 superb wine prizes and other chocolate and panettone prizes, and the winners of the quiz and guessing games also received prizes.



It had been suggested by the Elves that we all make a bit of an effort to be “Christmassy” and some members made a huge effort – Sharon particularly but also Mike and Wendy! Well done all of you.

Neil Scott had very kindly given to the Wine Group a magnum of wine that he had been given years ago but hadn’t touched and said he couldn’t appreciate – a 1986 Chateau La Grave Bechard Cotes de Duras- as he thought we may appreciate it, such a kind gesture. Unfortunately when opened at the Christmas event, it had gone way past its best, which is what we thought, but it was still interesting to taste and see the colour of a wine that had “gone over”.



At the end of the evening, everyone helped clear the room in the spirit of the U3a for which the Elves thank you, and I know that everyone had had a thoroughly good evening. Someone left behind a teatowel, and some members on arriving home and washing their tasting glasses realised the glasses were not all matching. So please check your glasses and if you think you may have picked up the wrong glass, or are missing a teatowel do let me know. Thank you.

Here's to next year's Christmas event....any volunteers??!!

2024 Programme

The programme as it stands is attached now with prices, so please start booking, especially where there are limited numbers. Let Sue Osbrink know you would like to attend, pay and she will confirm your place to you (see below).

I am still awaiting confirmation of a few facts from the first tasting of the year hopefully at Fowey, but as soon as information is confirmed I will let you know separately.

Where transport is being used, the cost will be shown at least the month prior. As usual each newsletter will give a little more detail on the event, together with a booking reference.

For any new members, the system is to please email Sue Osbrink on susanosbrink@gmail.com that you wish to book an event, pay the due amount and confirm you have paid. This is essential especially where numbers are restricted, and if transport is being used as the minibus used seats 16 only. Should an event be so well subscribed that we need a coach, I will then look at the costings.

When paying for an event, your reference should be your membership number(s) followed by WG and the month eg xxxxWGFeb.

PAYMENTS TO THE WINE GROUP ACCOUNT PAY INTO

ACCOUNT NO 23132587 (Barclays Bank)

SORT CODE 20-30-47

U3a St Austell

And finally, here are a few wine trivia questions in case you are having friends round on New Year's Eve and want to use them..

1. Could wine save your life?

Centuries ago, people only drank wine to quench their thirst. 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. And so, they drank wine instead of water.

2. When could drinking wine get you killed?

During the early Roman times, it was forbidden for women to drink wine. Wives who were caught drinking wine by their husbands could get killed! How many wine loving ladies would die for their wine?

3. Can women keep up with men when drinking alcohol?

Biologically speaking, no. Of course there are plenty of exceptions! Women are more susceptible to the effects of alcohol than men. And this is due to female biology since women have fewer enzymes in the stomach lining required to break down alcohol, than men. Are there any medics amongst us who can suggest how women can produce more enzymes?

4. Do you know the root of the phrase "drink to one's health"?

This originated in ancient Greece, where the host of a dinner would be the first one to sip the wine in case it was poisoned. Thus, drinking to their guests' health.

5. Is wine healthy?

You need to drink 7 glasses of orange juice or 20 glasses of apple juice in order to get the same amount of antioxidants in a glass of wine. So yes, wine is healthy! (in moderation).

6. Why is a wine bottle 750ml?

Because that's how much a human lung can blow. Early bottle making used the hand-blown glassmaking technique and it was easier and quicker to use a 'lungful'. It could raise a question why a bottle of whisky is only 700ml!

7. How many grapes do you need to make a glass of wine?

About 75 bunches

8. How many grape varieties exist in the world?

10,000 although more are being discovered all the time, so to be precise it's over 10,000.

9. What do James Bond and King Charles have in common?

They both have Aston Martins but King Charles' runs on wine biofuel

10. Where is the highest per capita rate of wine consumption in the world?

The Vatican City

11. What do Tempranillo and Primitivo have in common?

They are both early ripening grapes. The Spanish for early is 'temprano' hence the name Tempranillo. Primitivo in Italian means 'the early one', so the connection is that both grapes get their name from their respective languages for being 'early'.

12. How many US States produce wine?

50 – there is a winery in every single US State.

Enjoy!

Wishing you all a very happy and healthy 2024 and look forward to seeing you at one of our Wine Group tastings very soon.

Amanda

Wine group programme 2024 overleaf

WINE APRECIATION PROGRAMME 2024



| DATE | EVENT | COST & INFO |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| February 9 date to be confirmed | Visit to Johns Wines of Fowey (new wine, spirits shop, offering wine tastings.) Subject tbc | Fowey £tbc pp to include light food (Minibus transport, cost tbc) |
| March 15 | “Call my Bluff” with wine tasting by members Jenny, Mick & Shirley. Loosely based on a Call My Bluff type tasting, with the 3 members above also providing the food. Sounds like great fun! | Arts Centre, arrive 6.30pm for 6.45pm start. £15pp inc room fee, wines, food & fun! |
| April 12 | Carol Avery presents “Volcanic Wines”, Pentewan Sailing Club arrival 6.45pm for 7pm start. Finish by 9.30pm but taxis for 9.45pm. Carol is back again by popular request and will once again lead us on a wonderful wine trip | £27pp including generous platters of food. Suggest taxi share to Pentewan. Bring your own tasting glasses |

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| May 16 Thursday | Visit to Old Chapel Cellars, Truro “Looking at Grape Varietals” 5 or 6 wines to taste, presented by Louisa Fitzpatrick – a very popular and well informed presenter and great location for our members. A chance to browse and purchase afterwards. | £30 pp tasting to include cheese & nibbles (Minibus cost tbc) |
| Sunday, June 23 from midday | Summer Garden Party chez Karen & Chris Scott, St Austell Everyone brings their own wines plus a platter of food to share and enjoy in this delightful local garden. Thank you again, Karen & Chris! | No cost just bring your own wines, glasses and platter of food to share |
| July 12th Friday | Visit to Ellis Wharton Wines “Mediterranean Wines” (without France and Spain) A lovely time is always had at EWW with Jim will be presenting this intriguing topic...I'm thinking a couple of Islands perhaps?? | £30 pp for tasting to include delicious food. Arrive 6.30pm depart 9.30pm (Minibus cost tbc) |
| August 16 | Members' Tasting – 5 members to present a Summer drinking wine of their choice £15 or under. We will taste a fizz, a white, a rose, a red and perhaps a dessert. | Arts Centre 6.45pm start. £17 includes room fee and food |
| September 20 | Wadebridge Wines Subject tbc The enchanting Sebastien returns, and will have wines available to buy on the night | Arts Centre 6.45pm start. £tbc |
| October 18 | Derek (Del) Crookes from Kernowine “Not so usual wines from South America” A second visit from Del, who wants to show us a selection of wines from S America we may not know. | Arts Centre 6.30pm arrival for 6.45pm start. £26pp to include wines, food and room hire |

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| <p>November 15</p> | <p>Members' Favourites for Christmas 5 or 6 members to choose a favourite wine they would serve sometime over Christmas to include a fizz, white wine, red wine, dessert wine and port</p> | <p>Arts Centre 6.30pm arrival for 6.45pm start. £tbc pp to include room fee and food</p> |
| <p>December 20</p> | <p>Christmas Event, Arts Centre Format to be decided by members Volunteers please</p> | <p>£tbc pp to include room fee and wines</p> |