

# **u3a ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP**

## **AUGUST 2025 NEWSLETTER**



Dear Wine Group Members

Firstly, I must just belatedly say how sad I was to learn that Anne Harris had passed away. She joined our Wine Group about a year ago and enthusiastically attended every month where she really enjoyed herself and was always full of thanks afterwards. I know many of you were friends of her and we shall all miss her. Chris has sent further information out in his newsletter.

When I set up the Wine Group back in early 2019, I envisaged one day a year when we could all meet somewhere beautiful, have a picnic, everyone taking a platter of delicious food and a bottle and to just chat, circulate and have a wonderful afternoon. The Wine Group Garden Party was thus made into an event, by courtesy of Chris and Karen Scott who volunteered immediately and on August 9<sup>th</sup> 2019 we had our first Garden Party. They had both worked so very hard on their garden, to make it an idyllic setting for us all to enjoy, as well as taking over the downstairs of their lovely home. Words cannot really describe our appreciation of that gesture, which has continued annually since, other than the lockdown period. I know how much work both before and during the Garden Party was put in, not to mention the washing and clearing up. However the time has come for Karen & Chris to pass the baton on, they have given so much to us over the past six years, it is time they attend the Garden Party as guests and not hosts. Karen and Chris I hope you know how much we all appreciate you for giving us a fabulous event for so many years.

Luckily for us, Mark and Lin Stephenson immediately offered their new home at Kingswood View, Trewiddle to us for next year. They are currently in the throes of landscaping and hope to have a wheelchair suitable garden ready in time. This is another very generous gesture for which I would like to thank very much, and I look forward to seeing the finished results of the landscaping at the end of next month. The Garden Party shall live on!

## **Review of DAYTIME VISIT, Atlantic Vineyard, Newquay.**

On what must have been one of the hottest days in July, a group of us headed by minibus to the recently established Atlantic Vineyard near Newquay. This has been run part time (weekends) by husband and wife James (Jim) and Caroline who have been working full time from Weston super Mare, but moving down permanently the day after our visit with two young children.

Caroline's father an entrepreneur by the sounds of it, bought the plot of land and with some research thought of the idea of planting a vineyard, with his daughter and son in law running it. They planted 6,000 vines in 12 hours (**yes, 12 hours**), with 14 different grape varieties both red and white, including exciting new varieties; Divico, Pinotin, Solaris, Muscaris and Johanniter, and will produce a range of distinctive and unique wines. They have great plans for the future for this beautiful south facing hilly plot, which has just the right soil to cultivate vines, but which is recovering from intensive farming over the past hundreds of years.



We had THE most wonderful afternoon, sitting under the shelter of a new marquee, sipping on iced lemon water, looking out onto the vines, whilst Jim talked us through their philosophy of growing disease resistant and earth friendly grapes organically, sustainably and innovatively. They already run natural retreats and weddings there, and have great plans for the future with food offerings, pop ups and many other ideas.



Due to the excessive heat, Jim decided it prudent not to walk us up and down the slopes, instead talked us through much of what they do in the vineyard from the marquee, but took us out briefly to look at a couple of rows of vines and explain how they are pruning and training the vines. They will not be ready for their own production for a year or two, but have supplies of three wines made from the same grapes as they have, to give visitors an idea of what the wines will be like.





Together with lovely cheeseboards, we enjoyed three of these wines, 2 whites and a red all priced at £16.50 which we could purchase on the day. They also had some sparkling rose or white.

1. **“Hidden Valley”** Johanniter grape. 12% Very pale, tropical nose with a delicious peach/apricot flavour. Long last on the taste. This white grape – a crossing of Riesling X (Seyve-Villard 12-481 X (Ruländer X Gutedel)) – produces wines that are said to be “strong, fresh and fruity” like Pinot Blanc and Riesling. It is also “a good terroir indicator
2. **“Beachcomber”** Muscaris. 12.5% Very pale, very slightly fizzy, citrus grapefruit and pear. Dry but didn’t quite live up to the first wine tasted.
3. **“Evening Surf”** Cabertin grape. Deep purple in colour, hints of vanilla and mocha, light and smooth. Excellent light red for an English producer.



Being based in the Newquay area, they look down towards Porth Beach, and you can see from the names of the wines the type of market they are aiming for, however after tasting these wines they would hold their own in any restaurant or bar.



Caroline very kindly had made for us fresh fruit or plain scones served with clotted cream and jam, or a fresh cream Victoria sandwich with strawberry, which we had with tea or coffee after our tasting. Both her and Jim were extremely friendly, knowledgeable, thoughtful and welcoming. It is exciting to see the start of this new adventure for both them and the vineyard and I think many members wish to visit again to follow their progress. Meanwhile we certainly bought a few bottles to try at home, as did many others.



I always think as a Wine Group it is essential we get out to visit vineyards each year, just to remind us of the huge effort that goes into the production of wine. Nothing is guaranteed, they are at the mercy of the weather and obviously it has to be a passion, as often it becomes a 24/7 job especially when running it with just two of you.

Our visit in September to Polgoon vineyard will be very different as they are a firmly established family business, making excellent wines and also their own pressed apple juice and cider, and a



larger concern. For those of you who came to the Atlantic Vineyard and enjoyed the time there, I would urge you to book Polgoon in September.







## **NOW CLOSED FOR BOOKINGS**

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August, Arts Centre, St Austell 6.45pm start 9.30 finish, clear up so taxis at 10pm please.**

**MAJESTIC WINE presents “Wines for Summer” Cost £19pp to include a sparkling wine on arrival and 6 wines, food and room fee.**

## **TO BOOK NOW:**

**September 19th DAYTIME VISIT, Polgoon Vineyard, Penzance**

**Minibus departs Penrice/Arts Centre at 10.15am, return from Polgoon 3.15pm. Tour £20pp, minibus cost £23.50pp. Book by 20 August. xxxxWGSEPT25**

Another visit to the fascinating and lovely family run Polgoon vineyard. Arrive for 1200 private tour and tasting alongside lunch (prebook lunch, menus below and pay for lunch yourselves).

“Join us for a walk through England’s most westerly mainland vineyard and taste the wine grown and made here. Intimate,



Polgoon vineyard

relaxed & informative, our tours last approximately 90 minutes where you will be shown the traditional method we use to produce our wines and the process from grape to glass. Our summer tours then finish with a guided tasting of 5 x award winning Polgoon Wines and Ciders.”

*As we will be walking along the vines, please wear suitable footwear for uneven ground and clothing dependent upon the weather.*

Choose your own lunch from the menu below, and inform Sue Osbrink when you book, plus any dietary requirements, and pay for your lunch on the day at the vineyard.

There will be time to browse their shop and deli and to make purchases.

POLGOON

# MENU

Made with locally sourced ingredients and fresh fish from Newlyn

## NIBBLES

Bread & Balsamic Oil	5
Marinated Olives	5
Moroccan spiced almonds	4
Stuffed vine leaves	5
Feta stuffed peppers	5
Hummus & pitta	5

## LIGHT LUNCHES

Soup of the Day	7
Mozzarella Tomato Bruschetta	9
Baked Camembert	16
Spring Vegetable Super Salad	10
Mezze Board	16
Polgoon Cheese Board	16

## PIZZAS

Margherita	13
Goat's Cheese, Spinach & Hot Honey	15
Prosciutto & Salami	15

## FROM THE SEA

Anchovy & Olive Tapenade Bruschetta	11
Smoked Mackerel Scotch Egg	12
Smoked Haddock Rarebit	13
Pan Seared Scallops	15
Newlyn Crab Sandwich	17

Skin on fries	5
Truffle parmesan fries	6
Garlic parmesan fries	7

## CREAM TEAS & DESSERTS

Cream tea	11
Sparkling cream tea	17
Blood orange posset with dark chocolate	6
Affogato	6

Follow and tag us on social media  
@thevinehousebypolgoon  
@polgoonvineyard

**Friday October 17<sup>th</sup> Arts Centre, St Austell. Start 6.45pm end and clear up, taxis for 10pm. £24pp**

**“Chardonnay from around the World” by member Peter Howard.** Well done Peter, who will give us a “blind” Chardonnay comparison wine to compare and contrast with 4 other Chardonnays – an individual comparison marking sheet will be provided.

We haven't had a single grape comparison tasting for quite a while, so a very interesting evening ahead.

**To book your place xxxxWGOCT 25 before end of September please.**

**Friday November 7<sup>th</sup>, visit to Ellis Wharton, Indian Queens. Leave Penrice at 5.50pm, depart EW 9.30pm. £30pp for the tasting, £16pp for the minibus**

Always a popular tasting, especially prior to Christmas, Ellis Wharton always push the boat out for this tasting. The theme is **Christmas Wine Selection** with suitable matching foodie bits, and wines to match your Christmas meal and occasions. Afterwards just time to browse exciting gifts of both wines and food from their excellent shop.

**To book by October 10<sup>th</sup>, xxxxWGNOV25**

## **Our Christmas Event Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

Following the recent vote, the majority of members voted for change, and to go out for a Christmas evening meal. So Sue Osbrink, Sue Smith and myself worked hard to contact a variety of establishments, and then visited our shortlist of local venues where we can have a private room with full disabled access, for a Christmas meal, a wine quiz and raffle too. I am delighted to say we have unanimously decided on a venue, brief details below, with menus, wine list and further information to follow next week. We



asked for an amendment to the menu to include a fish main course to cater for our pescatarians and this will be confirmed.

In brief:

## **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December**

### **The Cornwall Hotel, Pentewan Road, St Austell**

Arrival 6.45pm for 7.30pm sit down, 10pm finish

- **3 courses (menus to follow) £38 per person to include a glass of fizz on arrival** buy your own wines

3 Course festive meal with choices each course, in private Christmassy decorated function room with round tables, plenty of space to walk around, taxi drop off right by reception, lift from reception to function room and Disabled access

Following our visit, we have secured the function room without a room charge, and additionally a special room rate in the hotel for the night of our function, to include full use of the swimming pool and spa area.

We will have a wine quiz which we can do in pairs, or as a team, during the meal and afterwards, with a prize. We will have a raffle with excellent wine prizes.

Full information and how to book with a small deposit, to follow soonest – venues are already full on many December evenings.

**ALL PAYMENTS TO THE WINE GROUP ACCOUNT PAY INTO  
ACCOUNT NO 23132587 (Barclays) SORT CODE 20-30-47 (U3a  
St Austell)**

**On occasions when we use a minibus please state your  
preference to Sue Osbrink, [susanosbrink@gmail.com](mailto:susanosbrink@gmail.com) for  
departure/drop off point. Penrice School or the Arts Centre.**

### **Low or 0% percent alcohol wines**

Member Janet Harvey kindly sent me an article I had previously seen, in the Guardian regarding 0% percent or low alcohol wines. I must admit that I prefer no wine to 0% wine, similarly with gin. I would rather have a glass of “full fat” wine occasionally than a low alcohol one more frequently, perhaps because I haven’t found anything I think worth giving up wine for. However I know there is a need for drivers, for health reasons and I shall try the Chardonnay and Rose from M&S as below after these recommendations. Those I have tried thus far have either been too sweet for my palate, or give a nasty after taste. Janet was of a similar opinion, but try for yourself as you may well find something suitable.

### **Here is the article on still and white low alcohol wines suitable for Summer drinking perhaps:**

Are you a zebra-striper, alternating your alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic versions to moderate your intake? Or are you booze-free? As curbing drinking becomes more popular, it’s clear that this moment of sober curiosity is moving beyond Dry January and into the everyday.

Luckily, the drinks industry is scratching our sobriety itch with a bevy of good alcohol-free products. If you’re ready to wet your whistle with something delicious that won’t have you stumbling into the next day with a sore head, read on to discover the best no- and

low-alcohol whites, reds and rosés from my taste testing, perfect for any time, any place.

## The best non-alcoholic and low-alcohol white wines

### Moderato Colombard Cuvée Révolutionnaire, 0.5%



**£12.99 at Wise Bartender**

**£14 at Majestic (£12 as part of Mix Six package)**

Born from French winemaking heritage, this alcohol-free white is one of the few that could truly be mistaken for the real thing. The Colombard grape is typically high in acidity, with fresh floral aromas and notes of lemon, grapefruit and peach, and its flavours stay on the tongue well after the last sip. Moderato's founders, Sébastien Layé and Fabien Dessens, are pioneers in the alcohol-free wine movement in France, establishing [Le Chai Sobre](#), (The Sober Cellar), the country's leading production centre for alcohol-free wine.

## Thomson & Scott Naughty Non-Alcoholic Blanc, <0.5%



**£10.50 at Ocado**

**£10.95 at Abel & Cole**

Noughty is a premium, organic, non-alcoholic wine brand that has raised the bar for what alcohol-free wine can achieve. For about £10, its white, with less than 0.5% ABV (about as much as a ripe banana), is great value for money. Made from chardonnay and chenin blanc in South Africa, this is a fresh, crisp wine with an authentic wine-like texture. It's dry, too, so it won't be mistaken for fruit juice, unlike some other alcohol-free offerings.

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## Bolle Chardonnay, <0.5%



[£15.99 at Bolle Drinks](#)

[£15.99 at Amazon](#)

Bolle has already taken the non-alcoholic sparkling wine world by storm, and booze-free imbibers love it for its fine bubbles and authentic taste and texture. This is the first non-alcoholic still wine in its range: made mainly from the chardonnay grape, with a bit of the Germanic variety Silvaner added in. It's crafted as a wine and then de-alcoholised. No sugar, flavours or aromas are added, so you get real chardonnay notes of apricot, lemon and apple, alongside a silky mouthfeel and bright acidity. The traditional chardonnay bottle looks the part, too. Very smart.

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## Brown Brothers Moscato Zero 2023, 0.5%



[£9.95 at the Fine Wine Company](#)

[£9.75 at Bakers & Larners](#)

Based in Milawa, Victoria, Brown Brothers is one of Australia's leading family-owned wine companies. Its Moscato Zero is a "vintage" bottle, with all the grapes from one year, and is on the sweet side with a gentle spritz. The muscat grape, which makes moscato wines, is one of the only varieties that still tastes "grapey" to dessert or a cheeseboard.

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## Torres Natureo, 0.0%



[£6.20 at Ocado](#)

When one of the biggest wineries in the world gets on board with alcohol-free wine, it's definitely worth a look. As with Brown Brothers, Torres has chosen muscat grapes for its white Natureo, delivering a semi-dry wine. From the Penedès region of Spain, Catalonia's famed wine-growing area, all of the grapes are from a single year. This floral wine is fresh and smooth on the palate, with notes of golden apple, pear and orange blossom, which pair beautifully with a seafood paella.

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## Schloss Wachenheim AG 'Eisberg Selection' Pinot Grigio, 0.0%



£8 at Majestic (£7 as part of Mix Six package)

£8.99 at Wise Bartender

Pinot Grigio is one of the most popular white wines in the UK. Established in the Pfalz region of Germany more than 100 years ago, this winery considers itself a boundary-pusher in regular winemaking – and now a global pioneer in alcohol-free wines, too. This de-alcoholised pinot grigio is actually more expressive than many alcoholic versions, with notes of lemon, lime and juicy white peach. It has a subtle spritz, but is dry and zesty, too.

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## No- and low-alcohol rosé wines

### Wednesday's Domaine Elan, 0.0%



**£14.99 at Wise Bartender**

This bottle looks the part, and the pale pink wine has summery aromas of watermelon and strawberries. On the dry side, it has mouthwatering acidity, lots of juicy berry fruit flavours, and even a slight creaminess to the texture. This rosé from Wednesday's Domaine has got to be one of the most convincing still pinks out there. It's simply delicious.

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## Thomson & Scott Naughty Non-Alcoholic Rosé, 0.5%



[£9.99 at Waitrose](#)

[£10.80 at Friarwood](#)

Made in South Africa from two of the country's signature grapes, chenin blanc and pinotage, this is an elegant, dry, salmon-hued rosé with less than 0.5% alcohol. It's clean and crisp on the palate, which may be because it has almost half the amount of sugar found in most other non-alcoholic wines. Subtle summer berry and citrus flavours give it a more grown-up taste than other alcohol-free offerings out there. Take it to a dinner party to impress.

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## M&S Alcohol Free Rosé, 0.0%



If you would like to read more about fizz and red wines, here is the link:  
[www.theguardian.com/thefilter/2025/jul/27/best-non-alcoholic-low-alcohol-wines](http://www.theguardian.com/thefilter/2025/jul/27/best-non-alcoholic-low-alcohol-wines)

If any of you really enjoy any of these suggestions do let me know, and if I feel the rose above or the Bolle Chardonnay is worth buying I will also let you know.

I look forward to seeing those of you booked for our Majestic tasting tomorrow, the 1<sup>st</sup>, which should be an interesting and varied tasting of a selection of summer wines.

Kind regards

**Amanda**