

u3a ST AUSTELL WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

OCTOBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



Dear Wine Group Member

It would seem we are at “the elegant end of Summer” (a great description I heard today), at present and October seems a very Autumnal sounding month which heralds yet another season leading up to the inevitable Winter.

However, it seems we can no longer predict exact weather conditions as we experience many sunnier warm days, although mornings and evenings do feel much cooler now. Personally speaking, soups, casseroles, and warming dishes will be on our menu at home very soon, and therefore some heavier whites and red wines will feature along with warmer clothing and cosy evenings. Crisp whites and dry rose wines put away for the

moment, but equally not the heavy winter wines just yet, I hope we have another month or two first!!

Looking ahead, I need to really start planning next year's calendar of events and I am very grateful to all the members who bothered to take time to give me feedback. Generally most members concurred that they were happy with the variety of events and most were happy with the minibus taking them on trips. I think my mistake may have been to plan two trips out when members were spending time with families or having their own holidays in the quieter month of September which I will take into account next year. I will still keep the Ellis Wharton and Old Chapel Cellars trips as they seem to be very popular from your feedback and perhaps look at one visit to a vineyard closer to home.

It is very pleasing that quite a few members have volunteered to partake or even run an evening and others happy to volunteer to provide the food, which is fantastic as this group is about participation. which is in the spirit on which the wine group is based, Thanks to all who have volunteered their services.

Favourite presenters seem to be Sebastian from Wadebridge Wines (just confirmed for March), Pete from Majestic, and Carol Avery, all of whom I will endeavour to persuade to return to give us another wonderful tasting evening next year. Other non purely wine tasting evenings were popular too, with the Quiz tasting and Call my Bluff evenings a resounding success. Therefore I am delighted to announce that Andrew and Christine have volunteered to run an "alternative" Wine Tasting evening in November, and if you remember both their Quiz nights were fantastic events, so thank you both. Additionally Jenny Skipp has offered to run a Members Favourite Wines tasting concentrating on heavier reds in October, another great evening no doubt. Thanks Jenny.

I must continue to make contact with possible outside presenters now!!

Some interesting wine news

English fizz has beaten champagne to be crowned “International Sparkling wine of the year”

English sparkling wine chalked up another triumph over its rivals across the Channel in an awards ceremony at the Guildhall in London on September 9 when the International Wine Challenge (IWC) announced **Nyetimber's Blanc de Blancs Magnum 2016** made from 100% Chardonnay, as the winner of the Champion Sparkling Wine Daniel Thibault Trophy – the first time in the IWC's history that the award has been given to a wine made outside the Champagne region. Even better, made by a female winemaker, Cherie Spriggs, who also collected the “Sparkling Winemaker of the Year” award! Brilliant.

UK vineyard trials feathered defenders

Sussex-based Rathfinny wine estate has been deploying birds of prey to trial a new way of protecting their grapes before harvest. Trained Falcons hawks and a Chilean blue eagle have been patrolling the skies above the grapes to protect them from seagulls pigeons and crows. In the past the vineyard had used plastic netting with plastic clips and so this is an environmentally friendly way of protecting their crops. Other wineries are also interested and additionally many have expressed early optimism for the quality of the 2025 vintage following the record hot summer. I wonder if we will see any more vineyards using the birds of prey. What a lovely sight it would be.

There is no report from September as we had to cancel our proposed trip to Old Chapel Cellars.

Events to book for :

Now full with a wait list in the event of cancellations.

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

“Chardonnay from around the World” by member Peter Howard.

Thanks to Frances and Kim for offering to do the food for this event.

To everyone who has booked, please read the following which is from Peter

1. **Please bring just one tasting glass**, which will be used for the Comparison Chardonnay 500ml, which you will take smaller amounts from to compare with 5 other wines.
2. You will be given 3 plastic glasses (which you can retain and bring to other tastings) to use for the other wines, and once the first 3 are drunk, wipe out your glasses for the remaining 2. Bring a small cloth if you wish.
3. Bring either labels numbered 1 to 5 or pieces of paper, to place under the glasses so you know which wine is which.

Peter has produced tasting/comparison sheets for the evening, and later in the evening will give us the wine information and cost. This all sounds very exciting, thank you Peter.

Only one space left on minibus but feel free to book and share a taxi there, we can put members in touch to share.

Friday November 7th, visit to Ellis Wharton, Indian Queens. Leave Penrice at 5.50pm/Arts Centre 6pm for arrival 6.30pm 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 **Festive Wine Tasting**. A festive themed fun and friendly wine tasting of wines from Ellis Wharton, wines they think are so good that they should feature in your celebrations! Expect everything from Sparkling to Sweet wines for this tasting. Suitable matching

foodie bits to accompany. Afterwards time to browse exciting gifts of both wines and food from their excellent shop.

For this tasting we may be joined by the Newquay u3a Wine Group.

To book by October 8th, xxxxWGN0V25

Although we have paid deposits to the hotel, should anyone else wish to book please do contact me, as we can accommodate more places.

**u3a Wine Group Christmas Event, Thursday 11th
December 2025, The Cornwall Hotel, Pentewan Road
St Austell, PL267AB.** Arrival 6.45pm for 7.30pm sit down,
10pm finish. Dress code Smart Casual or go the whole hog!

3 courses £38 per person to include a glass of fizz on arrival.

We will enjoy a 3 Course festive meal in a private function room with round tables. Quiz and raffle with prizes.

Taxi drop off right by reception, lift from reception to function room and disabled access.

The balance for the cost £28 pp is due by 9th October, so once paid please inform Sue Osbrink. Also if you haven't yet, give your menu choice and any drinks you require on the table.. there may be a delay otherwise in getting drinks.

In addition, a Special hotel room rate offer £99.00 including breakfast for 2 people with double or single occupancy. This includes use of swimming pool, spa facilities and possible early check in. You can book direct 01726 874050 quoting "Party Night 11th December rate, Hannah"- saves booking taxis!

Sue Osbrink will be coordinating your booking and your 3 course menu choices with any dietary requirements, which will be captured on the back of your place setting in case you forget. If you wish to pre-order wines to have ready on the table you can add that into your booking choices, wine list was attached to previous note with menu. Alternatively order on the night. Please let Sue know if you would like to sit with friends, the tables seat 8/9, and we will do our best to accommodate this.

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, for departure/drop off point. Penrice School or the Arts Centre.

Old Chapel Cellars

As you know, we had to cancel our visit to Old Chapel Cellars in August due to lack of numbers. However, they are holding their Annual Wine Fair and I have said I would let the wine group members know. If you are interested it would be worth sharing a taxi with 4 of you, to Truro. You can book on line on their website.

Join us for our Christmas Wine Fair on Wednesday 12th November— back for a second year!

After the success of last year, we're bringing back our Christmas Wine Fair this November—with lots of improvements and of course, the return of the best part: **over 100 wines open to taste!**

This time around, we're offering two tasting sessions:

- **Afternoon Session (12:30pm–4:00pm) £15**
- **Evening Session (6:00pm–9:30pm) £20**

What to Expect

- 100+ wines open to taste from all corners of the globe – explore a huge variety of wines at your own pace.
- All styles covered: White, red, rosé, sparkling, dessert & non-alcoholic.
- Our Chapel team and suppliers will be on hand to guide tastings, share recommendations, and chat all things wine.
- Enjoy our famous grazing-style spread of cheese, bread, chutney and more—perfect for pairing with your tastings (Evening Session Only).
- A great opportunity to stock up for the festive season or discover gift ideas for the wine lovers in your life.

Location

Old Chapel Cellars, The Old Chapel, St Clement Street, Truro
TR1 1EX

That is it for this month, I am looking forward to Peter's tasting very much on the 17th and look forward to seeing many of you there.

Kind regards

Amanda