

July 2026

It was another warm, sultry evening when 13 members of the Wine Group descended upon 'The Kitchen' for their monthly samplings; luckily the air conditioning was on and was appreciated by one and all.

Karen and Ruth had chosen as their theme one grape for both their white and red wines; the grape in question Sauvignon Blanc is the parent grape of both Sauvignon Blanc (white) and Cabernet Sauvignon (red). Refer to the end of this document for the differences between the two.

The evening started with three white wines:

1. CHAMPTELOUP SAUVIGNON BLANC TOURAIN, France, 11.5%, RRP £12.50
2. SAINT CLAIR SAUVIGNON BLANC MARLBOROUGH, New Zealand (WAIRAU VALLEY), 12.5%, RRP £16.25 we paid £12
3. PICOS y RIOS SAUVIGNON BLANC, Chile (VALLE CENTRAL), 12.5%, RRP £9

Voting was 6,5,2 which rather matched the price!



Onto the reds:

1. Kleine Zalze Cabernet Sauvignon 2024, South Africa, 13%, RRP £8.50 we paid £7.75
2. The Green Road 2023, Chile (Curico Valley), 13.5%, RRP £10
3. Shannon Ridge 2022, California, 13.5%, RRP £16

Voting was 0, 7, 6 with the medium priced red just edging the vote!

A great theme, with lots of information, enjoyed by one and all.

Tasting notes can be found on the Wine Group page.

The differences between Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon

Sauvignon Blanc is a crisp, acidic white wine, while Cabernet Sauvignon is a bold, tannic red wine. They differ in grape colour, flavour, body structure, food pairings, and aging potential.

Sauvignon Blanc is a light-bodied, highly acidic white wine featuring citrus and grassy notes. Cabernet Sauvignon is a full-bodied, heavily-tannic red wine with bold dark fruit and oak flavours.

Despite the stark contrast in the glass, these two grapes are closely related. Genetic testing has shown that Sauvignon Blanc is actually one of the parent grapes of Cabernet Sauvignon (the other being Cabernet Franc).

Key Differences at a Glance

Feature	Sauvignon Blanc	Cabernet Sauvignon
Wine Colour	White (pale straw to yellow light green bright and clear)	Red (deep ruby to purple dense and opaque)
Body	Light to medium	Full-bodied
Acidity & Tannins	High acidity zesty, minimal tannins	High acidity, which helps cut through rich fatty foods high/bold tannins
Flavor Profile	Grapefruit, green apple, lime, grass, and bell pepper	Blackberry, black cherry, leather, cedar, and vanilla
Oak Aging	Usually un-oaked (crisp)	Often aged in oak barrels (rich)
Aging Potential	1–5 years (meant to be enjoyed young).	1–5 years (meant to be enjoyed young).
Food Pairings	Light fresh dishes-Seafood, (oysters, white fish) salads, goat cheese	Rich dishes-Red meat, steak, hearty stews, aged cheeses, grilled or smoky foods
Origin	France (Loire Valley, Bordeaux)	France (Bordeaux)
Alcohol	11–13%	Higher on average

Why They Taste So Different

- Sauvignon Blanc: Primarily grown in cool-to-moderate climates like the Loire Valley in France or Marlborough in New Zealand. It is meant to be consumed young and fresh, usually fermented in stainless steel to retain its crisp, zingy character.
- Cabernet Sauvignon: Requires a warmer climate to fully ripen its thick, colour-rich skins. It is almost always aged in oak barrels, which softens its astringent tannins and adds vanilla and baking spice notes, making it ideal for aging in the bottle.

Price Range

- Sauvignon Blanc: –\$ (generally affordable).
- Cabernet Sauvignon: \$–\$\$\$\$ (can reach luxury levels).

Overall:

- Sauvignon Blanc = Fresh, zesty, vibrant.
- Cabernet Sauvignon = Powerful, structured, complex

Where Cabernet Sauvignon is Made

- France: Bordeaux (often blended with Merlot and Cabernet Franc).
- USA: Napa Valley, Sonoma County, and Paso Robles in California.
- Other key regions: Tuscany (Italy), Coonawarra and Margaret River (Australia), Colchagua Valley (Chile), and Stellenbosch (South Africa)