

Everything is Rosé at new Party wine bar

A touch of Oz is adding fizz to a rejuvenated Portobello High Street with the opening of Smith & Gertrude wine bar.

Taking its name from a crossroads in the vibrant Fitzroy district of Melbourne which is famed for its food and wine, husband and wife team Duncan and Amy Findlater are building on success of the bar's seven year old Stockbridge sister.

The couple moved to Portobello 18 months ago and came to realise that a quality wine bar would be welcomed by locals who wanted a good night out without having to travel into the city centre.

With 150 bottles on offer, including 25 wines by the glass, [Smith & Gertrude](#) is proving an instant hit and there are plans to hold small wine tasting sessions and to launch a wine and cheese book club from the autumn.



One hundred and fifty bottles and 25 wines by the glass at Smith & Gertrude in Portobello

Duncan said: "Business has been better than expected and our hunch that people with young families would prefer to hang about Portobello than go into town is playing out. We are getting groups of people in at concentrated times between 5-10pm and then, unlike Stockbridge, it gets a bit quieter, so we are guessing these are young families who have to be up at the crack of dawn."

Popular sellers in the first month have been a sparkling demi sec Gamay, lots of rose because of the hot weather, and chilled Beaujolais and chardonnay on tap. Open Wednesday to Sunday, the hours could be extended depending on demand.

Duncan added: "On holiday in Melbourne, we were sitting in Smith Street having brunch and looked over at the crossroads sign and thought that would be a cool name for a bar if we every opened one.

"There was no big grand business vision behind this, we just thought there might be enough like-minded people in Porty who would like to have a nice place to sample good wine and cheese. When we opened in Stockbridge, we were adamant that was it and it would be a one-off album and we would put our life into that, but Portobello came about it just made sense.



A wine and cheese Book Club will be be launced in September
"We have a small tasting room downstairs for up to 12 people and we plan to have visiting wine producers, tasting sessions

and to start our wine and cheese book club probably from about September.”