

A Rose By Any Other Name



While Rosés are not just for summer sipping any more, I still find myself gravitating towards the pretty and refreshing pink wines when the weather warms up. For my money – and fortunately, most rosés are easy on the wallet – few wines are as versatile as rosés. Served well-chilled, they're the perfect hammock companion or aperitif. Served slightly chilled, they can keep up with grilled seafood or roasted chicken. And sparkling versions simply shout, "party on."

Rosé is not a specific varietal, but is a style of wine that generally ranges in color from soft pink to light purple, depending on which grapes are used and the winemaking technique employed. Traditional red wines get their color from lengthy contact between the juice and the red grape skins. One of the most popular methods for making rosé is *Saignée* - literally "bleeding" – where the grape juices are bled away from the skins soon after the grapes are crushed. The longer that the skins are left in contact with the juice, the darker the wine will be. Blending white and red wines together is not a popular method, nor is the use of oak in the aging of rosé wines. These wines, for the most part, are meant to be enjoyed young.

Many different wine grapes lend themselves to rosé production. The most popular are made from Rhone varietals including carignan, grenache, mourvedre and syrah, although I have had some wonderful rosé wines made from sangiovese, malbec and pinot noir. The qualities I look for in a rosé wine are fresh red fruits flavors – running along the lines of strawberry and raspberry - crispness and abundant acidity. Of course, they have to be reasonably priced. I like to keep my finds to less than \$20. After all, these wines are for everyday enjoyment and I am not looking for a complex wine I have to cellar. I am looking for uncomplicated enjoyment.

Non-Vintage Villa Jolanda Moscato Rosé Piedmont Region of Italy

Made from 100% Moscato this sparkling wine has beautiful scents of raspberry and cherry on the nose with fresh, clean strawberry and cherry flavors in the mouth, with just a touch of ginger on the crisp, clean finish. The bubbles add a certain festive feel to the wine. I had great success pairing it with fresh fruit and cheeses. **\$10**

2012 Boxwood Topiary Rosé, Middleburg, VA

A delicious rosé wine made from a blend of Malbec, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes grown and processed in the traditional style at John Kent Cooke's historical estate in the Middleburg, Virginia. It offers bright flavors of strawberry, red cherry and ripe peach that coat the tongue. Its generous mouthfeel and crisp acidity make it a winner with grilled salmon. **\$16**

2013 Elk Cove - Pinot Noir Rosé Willamette Valley, Oregon

Made exclusively from Pinot Noir grapes, this Oregon beauty is wonderfully crisp and dry, yet delivers loads of pretty fruit flavors - including strawberry, raspberry and melon - on a fresh and balanced frame. Served well-chilled, it needs nothing more than a beach chair and a good book to keep it company. **\$16**

2013 Château d'Esclans Rosé Whispering Angel Côtes de Provence, France

I fell in love with Roses in a sidewalk café in Provence. This wine, made from a blend of grenache, cinsault, mourvedre and a touch of syrah, transports me back to that place and time instantly. This dry rosé features strawberry, cherry and watermelon on the nose and on the palate. Hints of spice on the pretty finish give it a little something extra and keeps you coming back for another sip. **\$17**