

Pretty in Pink

by Anthony Dias Blue

I don't want to say "I told you so," but I did.

I've been singing the praises of rosé for years. For the most part of the past fifteen years, nobody wanted to hear that tune, but now they are singing along. In fact, Jay-Z (to continue the musical metaphor) calls rosé "the new sophistication." The recent popularity of rosé is demonstrated by the fact that some wineries are even renaming their White Zinfandels, the former darling of the just-graduated-from-Pepsi generation, as "Zinfandel Rosé."

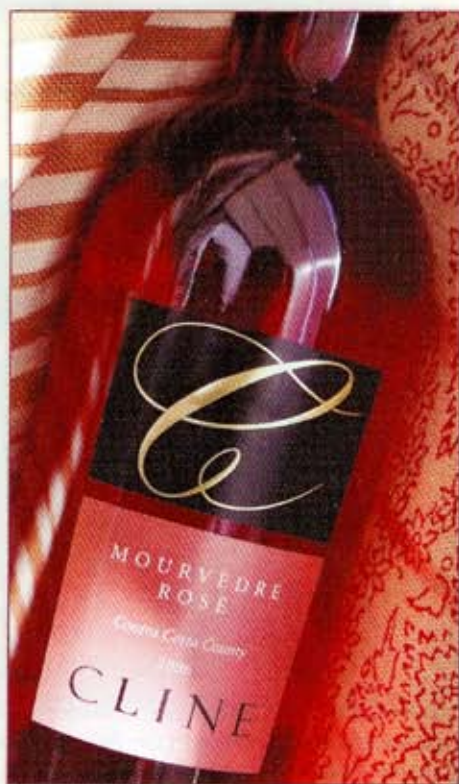
Clearly June is the appropriate moment to talk about rosé and the ideal time to stock up. You won't want to be without these fresh, charming wines during the summer—and there are lots to choose from. I have more than a hundred tasting notes in my current database.

But first, a brief description of how rosés are made: Rosé can be made by lightly pressing red grapes so that only a small amount of pigment colors the wine. More common is the practice called the saignée (bleeding) method. In this case, the free-run juice from grapes destined to be made into red wine is removed—bled—and made separately into rosé before the grapes are pressed and vinified into red wine. This

method serves two purposes: It makes rosé, and it intensifies the red wine that is subsequently made from the same grapes. It's a win-win situation.

Rosé can be made from virtually any red grapes. There are good examples produced from Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Tempranillo and Pinot Noir. Rhône varieties, particularly Syrah and Grenache, are especially well-suited to be made into rosé because of their unabashed fruitiness.

The ideal rosé—especially if it's going to be consumed with food—is crisp, fresh and bright. The wine should be dry or, if there is some sweetness, it needs to be balanced by lively acidity.



88 Angove's 2006 Nine Vines, South Australia (\$10)

Juicy and fresh with spice and lively berry fruit; crisp, snappy and long; 70% Grenache, 30% Shiraz.

88 Vina Robles 2006 Roséum, Huerhuero Vineyard, Paso Robles (\$13)

Deep pink color; dry and juicy with lovely berry fruit and racy acidity; 60% Grenache, 40% Syrah.

88 Tenuta Caparzo 2006 Rosato, Toscana, Italy (\$14)

Dense and rich with dry, juicy flavors of plum and citrus; deep and concentrated; 60% Sangiovese, 40% Syrah.

92 Cline 2006 Mourvèdre Rosé Contra Costa County (\$15)

Great depth and character; a concentration of pomegranate and plum.

89 Anglim 2006 Rosé, Paso Robles (\$15)

Pale salmon color; juicy and bright with tangy citrus and berry fruit; Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre and Viognier.

89 Ortman Family 2006 Syrah Rosé, Paso Robles (\$16)

Bright ruby color; dry, rich cassis and berry fruit; long and tangy with spice and good balance.

88 Steele Wines 2006
Cabernet Franc Rosé, Lake
County (\$16)

Smooth and fresh with tangy acidity and ripe, rich plum fruit; ripe, mellow and nicely balanced.

89 Beckmen Vineyards
2006 Grenache Rosé, Purisma
Mountain Vineyard, Santa
Ynez Valley (\$18)

Lively, dry and fresh with light, bright berry fruit and a long, ripe finish; 12% Syrah.

91 Verdad 2006 Rosé,
Arroyo Grande Valley (\$18)

Ripe raspberry and wild strawberry combine with spice and watermelon. The mouthfeel is creamy with a lengthy finish. 85% Grenache, 15% Mourvèdre.

88 SoloRosa 2006 Pinot Noir
Rosé, Russian River Valley (\$18)

Pale salmon color; dry and bright with juicy fruit and smooth texture.



88 Michael-David Vineyards
2006 Incognito, Lodi (\$20)

Smooth and juicy with clean, balanced strawberry fruit and tangy acidity; 56% old-vine Cinsault, 34% Grenache, 10% Mourvèdre.

90 Tablas Creek 2006
Rosé, Paso Robles (\$27)

Deep ruby color; rich and lush textured with dry raspberry, peach and minerals; 60% Mourvèdre, 28% Grenache, 12% Counoise.

