

Tasting Monterey

A WINE ENTHUSIAST'S QUARTERLY JOURNEY THROUGH MONTEREY'S WINE COUNTRY

STORE HOURS



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Food service begins at
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*No new member tastings
after 6pm

SUMMER
REFERRALS

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ROSÉ WINES – *Summer in a Glass*



Rosé wines have come a long way. We're well beyond the days of White Zinfandel being the only association with a wine that is not red or white. Yet...it's surprising to discover that many people still assume a pink wine will be sweet, which is very much not the case. And while rosé wines can certainly still be on the sweeter side, and there some out there, rosé wines made all over the world are more often produced in a drier form.

In fact, it's believed that the red wines made during Roman times were more akin in appearance and style to the rosé wines of today.

There are three different ways to make rosé wines. The first is through skin contact, called the maceration period in winemaking vocabulary. This is the most used way to produce rosé wines. It involves the early pressing of red grape varieties after a period of normally twelve to twenty-four hours of the juice being in contact with the grape skins. The limited exposure to the skins imparts the pink color to the wine, and the exact time duration and varieties used will determine just how pink in color the wine will ultimately be. This explains why you'll see rosé wines ranging from a pale, almost light orange, to dark violet and purple rosé wines.

The next way to make rosé wines is known as the saignée method. Saignée, "bleed" in French, is the process of bleeding off some of the juice of a red wine during the winemaking to have a more concentrated color and ultimate flavor in a wine.

The last way to make rosé wines is to simply blend red and white wines to produce a rosé wine. However, this method of producing rosé wines is discouraged in most wine regions and even forbidden by law in some countries.

The popularity of rosé wines in the United States actually began prior to the appearance of White Zinfandel and other new world rosé wines, often referred to generally as blush wines. After World War II, two Portuguese wine families released sweet, slightly sparkling rosé wines to primarily target the American market. These easy-drinking wines by Mateus and Lancers were very popular for some time.

One would think that the rise of blush wines in the States was in response to competing against these imports. Ironically though, legend has it that the first White Zinfandel was created accidentally. One fateful day, Sutter Home's winemaker encountered a problem known as "stuck fermentation" while making a red wine from Zinfandel grapes. With the fermentation process upset, a pinkish, sweet wine resulted and a new era in American wines began. Before long, Sutter Home, Beringer, and others were pumping out White Zinfandel, White Merlots, and Cabernet Blancs...all considered blush wines.

Those Portuguese exports aside, western European wine regions have a long history of producing mostly dry rosé wines. In France, you'll find rosé wines from places like Bordeaux and Burgundy, and even sparkling rosé from the Champagne and Loire Valley growing areas in the north. But the real French rosé comes from where it is described as the taste of summer in a glass. Provence and the Rhône Valley have outstanding rosé wines, with rosés being most of Provence's total wine production. Rosés from this area of southeast France bordering the Mediterranean Sea are made from a wide range of varieties, but Syrah, Grenache, and Mourvedre make up the majority of varieties used for rosé wines.

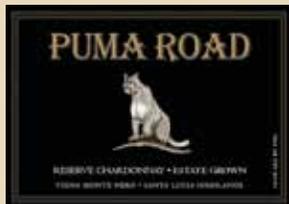
Rosés are also very popular in Spain, where they are produced primarily from Grenache and known as rosado. Portugal and Italy also both produce a variety of rosé wines.

Rosé wines are made in a variety of forms in the United States, from sweet to semi-dry to dry,

Continued Inside

RESERVE WINE SELECTIONS

PUMA ROAD - 2012 Reserve Chardonnay



Winery: The Francioni family has handled the Salinas Valley soil for the past three generations. In the early 1890s, Silvio Francioni, Sr. settled a ranch outside of Gonzales with his beloved wife Maria, and their children. What began as a dairy operation developed into a row crop farm. The owner of Puma Road winery Ray Francioni, Silvio's grandson, kept the farming tradition vibrant and alive. His dreams for business reached far past dairy cows and growing lettuce. While growing 6,000 acres of row crops, he began to delve into growing grapes. For over the past 20 years, Francioni has been a prominent grape grower in the Monterey County region. His operation has advanced into growing 2,000 acres of vines while simultaneously continuing the

family row crop business. About half of the grape yield is grown in the Santa Lucia Highlands.

After the Francioni's became grape growers, they decided to craft wine themselves. The family produced their first bottle of wine in 2003 under the label of RF Wines. Years later, Puma Road Winery produces 4,500 cases per year. They proudly continue to grow 15 varietals. The winery is a thriving, local-based establishment that strongly reflects the Santa Lucia Highlands

Winemaking & Tasting Notes: Puma Road's single vineyard Chardonnay is grown on the Vigna Monte Nero ranch in the Santa Lucia Highlands. The esteemed region is nationally recognized for producing exquisite Chardonnays. The mild weather and consistent fog creates the moderate environment this varietal thrives in. The hand harvested fruit is aged for 10 months in 40% new French oak and 60% in neutrals. First, the senses smell hints of fruit, vanilla, and butter. Next, the palate experiences tastes of caramel, citrus, and pear.

Puma Road
2012 Reserve
Chardonnay

Alcohol
14.5%

AVA
Santa Lucia Highlands

Composition
100% Chardonnay

Cases Produced
122

Aging Potential
5-6 years

COASTVIEW - 2012 SA Andree



Vineyard: Located at over 2,200 feet in the Gabilan Mountains with a commanding view of the Salinas Valley and Monterey Bay. Coastview sources their grapes from this exceptional vineyard planted on decomposed granite and veins of limestone. In many respects including soils and elevation, this vineyard is nearly identical to those of Calera's famous Mt. Harlan vineyards just a few miles to the North. Owner John Allen farms the vineyard organically and follows our direction with respect to keeping yields down and managing the canopy for the highest quality.

Label: Coastview's wine labels speak to adventure and the idea of hidden treasure, in a Jules Verne style of thinking. Each label references a journey or traveler and speaks to the uniqueness not only of the wine but the vineyard where it was grown. For the 2012 SA Andree - The Swedish balloonist, Salomon August Andree, embarked from Svalbard, in July of 1897, in a balloon with two companions, scientific equipment, homing pigeons and several crates of champagne, attempting to pass over the North Pole and land near the Bering Strait.

Tasting Notes: This classic Bordeaux blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, and Malbec is a deep garnet red. The nose offers herbal notes and strong aromas of cedar, graphite and hard spice box elements. The palate is a voluptuous blending of the ripe fruits of each of these varietals. It promises to be the perfect pairing for a special dinner featuring prime rib.

Coastview
2012 SA Andree

Alcohol
14.1%

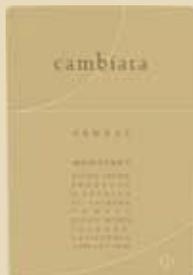
AVA
Monterey County

Composition
65% Cabernet Sauvignon
25% Malbec
5% Cabernet Franc
5% Petit Verdot

Cases Produced
125

Aging Potential
8-10 years

CAMBIATA - 2012 Tannat



Winery: Cambiata is not your average California winery. They are a little more unconventional and iconoclastic than our compatriots around the Golden State. I launched Cambiata in 2002 after making wines for other people for nearly two decades. Cambiata's intention was to make distinctive wines that go beyond the Franco triumvirate of Bordeaux, Burgundy and Rhone. Today, they are vinifying a handful of compelling wines from some of California's scarcest grape varieties including Albariño, Tannat and Dornfelder. They also make limited quantities of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay from the Santa Lucia Highlands.

Vineyard: In case you are not familiar with it, Tannat is a native of Southwest France. Included in its resume are the big, dark, dense reds from the Madiran region north of the Pyrenees Mountains that separate France from Spain. Cambiata planted their small Tannat vineyard in the rocky and well drained soils of the Santa Lucia Mountains. The cool growing conditions allows them to harvest grapes that are fully ripe yet still possessing an appropriate amount of food worthy acidity.

Tasting Notes: Cambiata fermented the black juice in small open-top fermenters and pumped over twice a day during fermentation. The wine was then pressed straight to 60 gallon barrels (100% French, 40% new). Cambiata's 2012 Tannat is incredibly deep and concentrated with notes of earth, blackberries, saddle leather and licorice. On the palate it is thick and chewy with bold, well-integrated tannins. Big wine. Good wine.

Cambiata
2012 Tannat

Alcohol
14.7%

AVA
Monterey

Composition
100% Tannat

Cases Produced
348

Aging Potential
8-10 years

Cover Article Continued



across the country with too many different varietals to list. Here in California, rose wines are produced pretty much in all of our growing areas. The growing popularity of dry and semi-dry rosé wines may be due to their versatility.

As rosé wines can be made, and are made, from such a wide range of varietals – Cabernet Sauvignon to Pinot Noir and pretty much every varietal in between – the aromas and flavors of rosés are equally varied and heavily influenced by the varietal(s) used. Melons, peaches, strawberries, mandarins, flowers...all and many more may be present in rosé wine flavor profiles. Equally, the color of rosé wines is greatly influenced by the varietal(s) used to make the wine.

However, one factor generally considered as a universal characteristic of rosé wines is this: these are not meant to be serious wines. Nearly all rosé wines are meant to be approachable and not overly-sophisticated. This is true for a Monterey County Pinot Noir rosé, a French Rhône rosé, or even a glass of blush. And although rosé wines can be served warm, most prefer these wines to at least be slightly chilled.

Another universal characteristic is that these wines are not meant to be aged. Waiting too long in the bottle can actually end up damaging the wine. So now that we're into warmer summer days, the time is perfect to explore the pleasant diversity of rosé wines. We currently offer three excellent Monterey County examples for your experimentation purposes from Ventana, Fieldfare, and Silvestri and invite you to enjoy summer in a glass!

Bryce Ternet - is a contributing editor and is the author of: "The Stevenson Plan, A Novel of the Monterey Peninsula."

RECIPE

Fettuccine with Shiitakes and Asparagus

Ingredients

3 tablespoons	olive oil, divided
1 bunch	asparagus, trimmed, cut into 2" pieces
	Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons	unsalted butter
8 oz.	shiitake mushrooms, stems removed, caps sliced
1 small	shallot, finely chopped
1 teaspoon	chopped fresh oregano
1 teaspoon	chopped fresh thyme
12 oz.	dried or 1 lb. fresh fettuccine
3 oz.	Parmesan, grated (about ¾ cup)
4 large	egg yolks

Directions

Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add asparagus, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until just tender, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

Heat butter and remaining 1 Tbsp. oil in same skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, season with salt and pepper, and cook, tossing often, until tender, about 5 minutes. Add shallot and cook, tossing occasionally, until softened, about 2 minutes. Toss in oregano, thyme, and asparagus.

Meanwhile, cook pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water, stirring occasionally, until al dente. Drain, reserving 1 cup pasta cooking liquid.

Add pasta, ½ cup pasta cooking liquid, and 3 oz. Parmesan to skillet. Cook, tossing and adding more pasta cooking liquid as needed, until sauce coats pasta, about 2 minutes; season with salt and pepper.

Divide pasta among plates and top each with yolks and more Parmesan.

Serves 4

VISITING Varietals



TANNAT

Pronunciation: Tan NAW

Tannat is a red-wine grape originating in the Madiran region of France. Tannat is generally considered one of the dozen and a half or so of world-class red-wine grapes. Other regions are beginning to experiment with Tannat, both in South America and in the U.S. In the U.S., Texas is emerging as a hotbed of Tannat activity, and Virginia is showing some stirrings, too; California, of course, also has entries.

The very name of the grape means "tannin", and the wines are typically very dark and, yes, tannic (owing mainly to the unusually thick skins and high seed count of Tannat grapes). When made in the Madiran, Tannat is commonly blended with other wines to soften its tannic astringency. More recently, vintners there have experimented with using more oak for softening, and more recently yet, with "micro-oxygenation", the use of oxygen aeration during the fermentation process.

Tannat makes decidedly robust wines, with pronounced aromas of smoke and plum, significant tannins and a wonderfully spicy finish. The rich palate has juicy flavors of plum and raspberry, with a long, generous finish. The tannins are impressive, but nicely balanced with the intense fruit and spice flavors of the wine.

As for food pairings, Tannat's smoky character makes it a perfect match for roasted meats and game, as well as sausages and strong aged cheeses.

CHEESE

Varietals



ROQUEFORT

Pronunciation: Roke-e-fore

One of the great blue cheeses of the world, Roquefort Cheese is a raw sheep's milk cheese made in the south of France, and characterized by its distinct green-blue veins. Legend has it that Roquefort, once called the "King of Cheese", was discovered when a shepherd, who was having a meal of bread and sheep's milk cheese was distracted by a beautiful maiden and left his meal in the Combalou caves of Roquefort-sur-Soulzon. Upon his return he discovered the cheese covered in mold. Bravely, he tasted it and it was delicious! Thus, the discovery of Roquefort Cheese.

Roquefort was first mentioned in historical writings by Pliny the Elder in 79 AD who praised this original French blue cheese. In the 15th century, Charles VI gave the village of Roquefort-sur-Soulzon exclusive production rights of the cheese.

Roquefort Cheese is made by adding Penicillium Roqueforti spores to the curd during the cheese making process. This particular strain of healthy, edible mold was discovered long ago in the Combalou Caves, the same caves where Roquefort Cheese is set to age today.

Roquefort Cheese is white, soft, crumbly, and rindless. Its distinctive blue-green veins provide a sharp tanginess to create a well-balanced complex, creaminess and a range of sweet, smoky and salty flavors. The cheese is best when eaten at room temperature and delicious when served with figs and nuts, or a piece of crusty French bread and a glass of sweet wine. Crumble Roquefort Cheese over pizza, salads, or pasta, or blend into dressings or dips.

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