

I edited this story for AP style, paying particular attention to the names of wines. I also wrote the headline and linked to some of the vintners mentioned in the blog post, although the hyperlinks aren't visible in this PDF.



Chow Town

The daily dish on Kansas City's food and drink scene

CHOW TOWN

A rosé by any other name would taste as dry

Special to The Star

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If you didn't already know it, let me reintroduce — I love rosés. They are bone dry, crisp and refreshing. I am clearly not alone in my “passion for the pink.” Premium rosés have never been more popular, with U.S. imports up nearly 40 percent, according to recent statistics. The growth of the rosé category in the states has outpaced that of all other wine categories for the last decade.

As a general rule, rosés are made of juice from red grapes with minimal skin contact, giving them their pink hue.

France is ground zero for rosés. The very best in the world, in my opinion, can be found in the Provence wine producing region of Bandol and in the Tavel appellation in the Southern Rhône Valley. Wines from Bandol and Tavel can be on the pricier side of the pink spectrum, but they are the wines all other rosés are measured against. I had the pleasure of drinking the Chateau Aqueria rosé from Tavel not long ago, and it was delicious.



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For more affordable French options, you can always turn to Côtes du Rhône bottlings and rosés labeled Côtes de Provence. I’ve found dozens of wines from these regions, none more than \$20, that are absolutely fantastic.

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The Côtes du Rhône rosé bottlings are easier to find and provide the most bang for your buck. I have enjoyed a number of rosés that fit that description, including bottlings from Les Dauphins and Ferraron Père & Fils. Both were lovely, crisp, balanced wines — perfect for the back deck or the picnic table.

Outside France, but still in Europe, I quaffed the Di Giovanna rosé from Sicily, the Rio Madre rosé from Spain and the Orrison rosé from Portugal.

Di Giovanna’s rosé is made from the indigenous Sicilian grape Nero d’Avola, usually vinified into a full-bodied red wine that is not one of my favorites. With a lighter touch in the rosé, however, it was perfect.

The Rio Madre from Rioja is a project of world-famous wine importer Jorge Ordóñez. Attaching Ordóñez’ name to a wine almost always guarantees success, and that’s certainly the case here. Made from the lesser known Graciano grape, the wine has both elegance and balance, which is not always the case for Spanish rosés.

Made with 100 percent Moreto (a grape I’m unfamiliar with), the Orrison rosé from Alentejo, Portugal, is restrained but delicious, and another new discovery for me. This is just the second vintage of this rosé from Orrison. I look forward to future vintages with great anticipation.

And, as I give you my final thoughts on rosés for the summer, I have two shoutouts for rosés from unlikely sources: South Africa and Chile.

From South Africa, I am a fan of the Mulderbosch rosé, made from 100 percent cabernet sauvignon. If you like a fuller-bodied, affordable rosé, this is your wine. Give me a grilled bacon cheeseburger and a glass of Mulderbosch and I’m a happy man.

Lastly, the Montes Cherub rosé from international wine-making star Aurelio Montes is also a pleasant surprise. Made from shiraz, the Cherub rosé has quickly become one of my favorites. Intensely colored, the wine has strawberry and cherry flavors with lovely spicy notes and bracing acidity. Unlike most rosés, I’d say the Montes Cherub would drink well for two to three years after its release. But why wait? It’s so delicious right now!

Wherever you turn for your rosés this summer, there’s no doubt we are swimming in an ocean of delicious, dry rosé, so let’s get out and sail it. It is, after all, the season to drink pink! Cheers.

Dave Eckert is a partner with Flavor Trade, a Kansas City-based gourmet food incubator and co-packer. Before that, Eckert was the producer and host of “Culinary Travels With Dave Eckert,” which aired on PBS and AWE for 12 seasons.

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