

Roses offer sweet values for low price

Comments

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By **BILL AND KAREN GARLOUGH For GO**

Last month, given this challenging economy, we focused on value wines. We have more good news. Like Beaujolais wines in the fall, each spring heralds the newest release of young, vibrant Rosés. The 2008 vintage is now appearing on retailers shelves and offer more enticing values.

Wine facts

Rosés are an interesting and not fully appreciated wine. Rosé wines are slightly sweet, lower in alcohol, and have good acidity. They are generally made by leaving the grape skins in contact with the grape juice for only two to three days, instead of the usual 14 days. They possess some tannin from the brief grape skin contact and the good acidity of a white wine, making them a versatile, food friendly wine. Similar to Rieslings, Rosés can be sweet to bone dry. The expression "color does not lie" applies to Rosés, as the lighter the color, the lighter the style.

Countries that are producing quality Rosés include France, Spain, Portugal, Australia, Italy and the United States. Of these, France is considered the leading producer and offers a variety of styles. The Anjou region of the Loire Valley and the Languedoc region of southern France offer a delicate and dry style. Bolder styles can be found in Tavel from the southern Rhone Valley and Bergerac from the Bordeaux region.

There is an undeniable upward trend in Rosé consumption. In the United States, Oregon and California are producing enjoyable Rosés. We all know the French are passionate about wine and they now consume more Rosé than white wine. This should encourage us to explore this wine.

Food pairings

Rosés are nicknamed a summertime "patio" wine, as they are refreshing on warm summer days and are lower in alcohol, which makes them easy to drink. They are a great party wine, as they can have broad appeal (not too sweet and not too heavy).

Goat cheese is commonly paired with Rosés. I like to pair Rosés with a blended milk cheese (sheep, goat and cow's milk) for a more subtle yet complex experience. Blended milk cheeses can also stand up to the bold flavors of fuller-style Rosés.

As mentioned, Rosés vary in color from light to deeper pink. As a generality, the lighter colored Rosés tend to be softer and pair best with more delicate dishes like salads, cheeses and fish. The darker, bolder styles pair well with grilled meats and spicy dishes.

Bill and Karen Garlough are the founders and owners of My Chef Catering of Naperville, the 2007 U.S. Chamber Small Business of the Year. Bill is a Level 1 Master Sommelier and provides food and wine pairings for customers.

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These Rosés make a fine summertime patio refreshment.
Courtesy of Bill Garlough

BILL'S WINE PICKS

(with suggested retail prices)

"Still" Rosés Chateau Haut Sarthes, France

(full body, good fruit) \$7.99

Domaine de Saint-Antoine, France

(medium body, drier style) ~~\$6.99~~

"Sparkler" Rosés Segura Viudas Brut, Spain

(drier style with attractive fruit aroma and flavors) \$6.99

Banfi Rosa Regale, Italy

(sweeter style, great aperitif or dessert wine) \$19.99