

THE GLASSHOUSE

WINE APPRECIATION SOCIETY

MODULE 8

Rosé

TRADITIONALLY A REMINDER OF THE LOVELY WARM DAYS AND EVENINGS OF A FRENCH SUMMER HOLIDAYS – NOW INCREASINGLY DRUNK AND ENJOYED YEAR ROUND



As Jancis Robinson has written about rosé.... 'What is made – in Provence – in enormous quantities is light dry rosé which, if drunk young and well chilled, can seem justification for wine's very existence when sipped on a vine-shaded terrace to the sound of cicadas. Too much of it, however, seems to be made on the assumption that tourists don't notice what they're drinking'.

And she also added elsewhere 'Of all the wines Rosé is definitely the one which does not take itself seriously' And I would add –'nor should be taken too seriously.'

Historically rosé was commonplace in that wines were made lighter – matured and kept in barrels before corks were invented – and needed to be drunk as quickly as possible. Corked bottles permitted wines to be matured longer whence there developed a vogue for stronger longer lasting wines – which remains to this day.

However the French liked to drink lighter dry wines in the summer - mainly in the warmer regions – but which nonetheless bore a relationship to the red wine of the region. Rosé wines are made from the juice of red grape varieties – often Grenache, Gamay and Cinsault.

Despite all the developments of wine production around the world rosé remains a predominantly French style of wine production.



Oddly enough the new world has come to rosé wines only very recently but now produces it in small but growing quantities in Australia, South Africa and Chile. But in terms of the new world it was in California from the late 1980s that the trend emerged of making lighter wines from traditionally dark skinned grapes.

THE PROCESS

There are now two principal ways to make still rosé wines.

The preferred method is for a short maceration (separating the harder skin from the softer fruit) long enough to extract some colour from the skin of the dark grape. The grape juice is then extracted. For some grape varieties this maceration process is for no more than a couple of hours. With Grenache a maceration of 8 to 2 hours is usual.

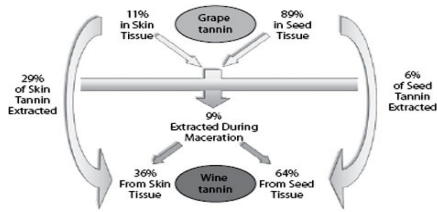


Figure 6. Schematic representation of skin and seed tannin extraction during maceration.

For more basic versions of rosé a small amount of finished red wine is blended into a finished white wine. This can produce a pinkish hue but these wines tend not to offer any degree of flavour to those made by the maceration process. In recent times the word Blush has entered into the lexicon signifying a very light rosé – and we do sell enormous amounts of Pinot Grigio Blush

Champagne however allows for blending of wines to produce Rosé Champagne – and it is more usual for pink Champagne to be made by blending than by maceration.

FRANCE

THE REGIONS

Rosés are grown throughout the wine growing areas of France but are probably most closely associated with Provence – and often presented in a unique skittle shaped bottle – on display this evening. A wine most closely associated with warm holidays and great food. In the Southern Rhone and the Languedoc – where there is an abundance of red grape – both Grenache and Cinsault - rosé is grown in similar quantities to white wine.

The Loire is also well known for its rosés – and can vary from dry to almost sweet – from the everyday Rosé d'Anjou to the more prized Cabernet d'Anjou.



ELSEWHERE

The Spanish also take rosé seriously – even having two words for it – Rosado which is lighter and claret darker (the same origin of the word claret) whilst many wine drinkers of a certain age were first introduced to wine drinking in general by Mateus rosé – still one of the biggest wine success stories in the world.



But neither Italy nor Germany are noted for any great enthusiasm or production of rosé.

In the new world it is still the case that rosé is seen as a means of adding to production runs than for its own intrinsic characteristics – with the exception of the USA.

THE WINES WE ARE TASTING TONIGHT

FRANCE

Chateau de Campuget

Pale pink with a delicate fresh strawberry nose. Red fruits, medium body with a soft rounded finish.

Made by our good friends at Chateau de Campuget this is their finest wine – smooth but deep and delicious.

Chateau de l'Aumerade (Provence)

Dating back to 15th century Chateau de l'aumerade is situated in the sheltered plain of Pierrefeu at the heart of Provence and covers 550 hectares of vineyards. Cinsault, Grenach and syrah – loads of ripe freshness – in that iconic bottle.

Rose d'Anjou (Loire)

Traditionally produced rose: the grapes are crushed after a slight maceration, giving a pink colour. Fermentation is not complete in order to retain the natural sweetness of the grapes.

Champagne Moutard PrestigeRosé

We will be visiting this champagne producer in June. This small estate is located in a very pretty valley in Buxeuil in the south Champagne area. A fabulous pink champagne for every celebration

INTERNATIONAL

Don David Malbec Rosé

Argentines are famed for their robust reds and this maintains the tradition of red wines forming the base of rosé wines.

Pinot Grigio Venezia IGT Blush

100% Pinot Grigio – with the very light colour coming from the pale pink skins of the Pinot Grigio grape.

Mateus Rosé, Portugal

The very first wine I ever tasted – can't wait to taste it again after a gap of only 35 years!!! A friend of mine drinks this on his anniversary with scrambled eggs for breakfast.