



International Wine Cellar Annual Rosé Roundup 2014

By Josh Raynolds



America's love affair with pink wines is looking pretty insatiable based on all anecdotal information I'm able to draw upon; if anything, it seems to be on the rise. Many sommeliers, retailers, wholesalers and the producers themselves have told me that rosés are actually easier to sell than white wines nowadays and that demand shows no signs of slowing down.

Given the flexibility of rosé at the table this is hardly surprising. And as more and more pink wines are being made in a dry, racy style, their use as aperitifs continues to increase as well. I found fewer full-bodied rosés than in past years this spring and summer in spite of trying more new releases than ever before. While I applaud the movement toward brighter and more energetic rosés and personally prefer that style, some members of the trade grumble that it gets harder and harder to find full-bodied, fleshy pink wines, such as those made in the richer, old-school Tavel style every year.

But I have also heard a few positive comments that the growing availability of the lighter, crisper versions now dominating the market has given the entire category much-needed credibility (remember that the days of sweet and innocuous white zinfandel weren't that long ago). Either way, the fact is that we've never had so many high-quality rosés available now, and the odds of getting an excellent bottle are now solidly in your favor. Of course, they're higher still if you seek out the wines I've reviewed below.

90 pts 2014 Innocent Bystander Pink Moscato Victoria

(\$14) Bright orange. Ripe melon, peach and tangerine on the emphatically fruity nose. Plush and round on the palate, offering fresh honeydew and pit fruit flavors and a touch of candied rose. A citrusy nuance adds lift to the finish, which clings with excellent tenacity and powerful peach and melon character. I could drink this by the gallon, and at 5.5% alcohol it wouldn't be a hard task.

89 pts 2013 Chateau de Sours Bordeaux Rosé

Pale orange. Spicy aromas of orange zest, red berries and honeysuckle with a subtle mineral overtone. Fresh and lively on the palate, offering tangy flavors of redcurrant, strawberry and blood orange. Finishes on a silky note, with a lingering suggestion of tangerine and good focus and persistence.