

wine

Richard Watson

Summer thoughts turn to rose wine

The onset of warm weather is often seen as a signal to wine drinkers that rose wines are in season. They are, of course, popular all year long. But their response to chilling and their lightness seem to complement our balmy days.

Many of the roses on our shelves are simple blends of red and white grapes, labeled rose wine, and are not worth our attention. They have little character and tend to be sweet and vapid. Alas, however, many wine drinkers, having tried these, assume all roses to be lacking in character and finesse. They deny themselves some fine treat. Some excellent rose wines have come from France solid fornia has beginn to produce some excellent ones. The latter are usually associated with their grape varietals which predominate in them.

These all tend to cost a dollar or two more per bottle than the generic roses, but grape character is present in them and a sense of complexity and depth may often be found.

FROM THE southern Rhone Valley

FROM THE southern Rhone Valley comes Tavel, made crisp and clean from the Grenache grape, considered by many to be the most consistently excellent rose in the world. These come from a variety of bottlers and shippers and are well worth exploring.

The Loire Valley produces the other fine rose of France in the region of Anjou.

Two kinds predominate. Rose d'An-Two kinds predominate. Hose of Anjou tends to be mellower, sweeter, perhaps fatter. Cabernet d'Anjou is crisper and has more character. It is made from the excellent Cabernet Franc grape which contributes so much to the fine Bordeaux to the south.

CALIFORNIA ROSES of distinction are made from the Zinfandel, Cabernet with the addition of ice.

Sauvignon and Pinot Noir grapes, Oc-cassionally Petite Sirah, Gamay and Grenache are used to make varietals of

Grenache are used to finance variations, quality.

For the most part, these wines are made totally from the specified grape variety and are made into roses rather than red wines by separating the skins from the juice soon after pressing. Thus, only minimal pigmentation is derived from the skins and the tannian depth that comes from them are also absent, leaving the wine fresh and light.

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The following are recommended for exploration. All of them carry varietal names, some are called rose, some blane, some have other marketing-oriented titles. They all, however, are roses by any other name.

Cabernet Sauvignon Roses (richer and fuller): Buena Vista, Durney, HMR, Inglenook, J. Lohr, Monterey Vine-yards, Pope Valley, Simi, Villa M. Eden.

Pinot Noir Roses (sometimes rich and full, sometimes fat and cloying): Beaulieu, Carneros Creek (great), Caymus, Firestone, Franciscan, Pope Valley, Souverain.

Pettle Sirah Roses (crisp): Beaulieu, Fetzer.

Greanaher Roses (crisp): Beaulieu, Fetzer.

Gamay (variable): Inglenook, Chappellet, Wente, Mondavi.

IN ADDITION try two excellent generics, both called rose. They are Petzer's Premium Rose and Monterey Vineyard's Classic Rose. Al Rose should be drunk young (then the value of buying vintage dated wines), nothing earlier than 1978 should be considered today. All should be chilled, but not "on the rocks." The subtle flavor of most will be lost

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NOW 30% OFF!

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