

Notes From The Cellar (NFTC); Winepairings e-letter May 21, 2008
Summer quaffer and a 98 point collectable

Memorial day is upon us -The official start of Summer. If you are wine lover this is a great time of year. We get some hot days, still mixed with a few cool days and nights- so you get a chance to enjoy a great variety of wines. From lean crisp refreshing whites to beat the heat, to big powerful reds or a nice port. Anything goes for that matter. As the old saying goes; “Variety is the spice of life”.

This is also a time of year when at my house we start bringing out some Rose – and if at this point you are about to quite reading you may be missing out on some of the most food friendly refreshing wines on the planet.

Unfortunately most Americans first experience with rose was with some nasty sweet cheap junk. Spend anytime soaking up a sunny afternoon on the Mediterranean coast, from a locals sea food restaurant in the Harbor of Barcelona to a swanky cafe watching starlet wanna bees on the French Riviera and more often than not, the bottle in the ice chiller will be a nice cool Rose. The locals know something...

I try to feature a few nice roses over the summer months – Since this is the first one of the season, I will elaborate a bit on this type of wine.

First a word on price. Rose is great value wine; uncomplicated, tasty and refreshing and inexpensive – for quaffing not meditation. There are a few notable exceptions mostly from Bandol and Tavel which tend to be more complex yes they are great to pair with very special dishes but these are a topic for another day. Some new world wineries especially in the US have tried to capitalize on the success that Rose is enjoying here in the US by introducing their own versions - Unfortunately the more is better theory fails miserably-to date I have tasted countless over-extracted \$35 -40 American roses that frankly I wouldn't drink if they were offered to me for free. Look for Rose from places they have been a staple for generations -the Mediterranean countries and some South American ones. Expect to pay from low to high teens for an excellent bottle.

The Challenge: Like most good wine the secret is in the balance. A good rose will walk that fine line between crisp refreshing fruit flavors yet retain a certain dryness that makes it so diverse with food. The worse are the over fruity ones; they will taste cloying and sweet, At the other end of the spectrum are the ones that can be so dry or sour that they can make you mouth hurt. The other element that is paramount is the right amount of acidity -If it's balanced it will be counteracted by the fruit in the wine -something that's not going to jump out front but will be there to pair the wine so nicely with bold flavors such as grilled meats and veggies. Try it with fish or, salads or marinated food even olives or cured meats and salami. It's that diversity that makes roses some of my favorite picnic wines .

A quick word about color -they range from yellow copper to pink and even red -Interestingly the color has no relation to the taste or how heavy the wine appears (color is mostly determined by the grape variety and the amount of skin contact during the wine making). To show off the wonderful color they are packaged in clear glass bottles, so it's important to store them in a dark cool place. Not wines to age drink them young to enjoy the bright fruit.

\$\$\$ wine deals \$\$\$

F_orte Canto Negroamaro Salento Puglia Italy 2006 \$12 (save even more on a case at \$130 -that's less than \$11a bottle!)

The Deal: At the regular price of \$ 14-15 this is unquestionably one of the finest roses values in the marketplace. This is an artisan wine made in small quantities which we discovered several years ago -imported by our friends at Small Vineyards we have drunk and sold tons of this every summer . Walk into your average wine store and they never even heard of this stuff. So we got an opportunity to purchase remaining stock at a very attractive discount. I wanted to start the official BBQ season with a special deal. We kept margins super tight and are passing the deal to you just in time for summer.

I often pour this at wine tastings to folks who never had a good rose -this is a big crowd pleaser The Wine:is made from the dark and spicy Negroamaro grape in the very Southern East end of Italy (the heel of the boot) the result, a very dark colored and very flavorful wine. This is as big a profile you want in a rose without going overboard. Because of the rich mouth feel, this is the one I usually recommend to even die hard red wine drinkers. There is good underlying acidity here to work well with most summer party food., Not sweet, just ripe red fruit balanced with a slight dryness and hint of spice. A favorite on my front porch I particularly enjoy this served nice and cold with a Cesar salad heavy on the Anchovies and Parmesan topped with a freshly grilled chicken breast Yumm...

Collector's corner

Mass Doix VV Priorat 2005 98 points from Wine Advocate \$118 – (very limited!)

Here is a wine that has received a 98 point score from Parker in every vintage it has been made. (2001,2003and 2004 for those of you keeping track)

One of Spain's top wines this disappears very quickly. Seldom found at retail, I have seen this retailing for north of \$150 with older vintages fetching ever higher prices . Made from a strict selection of very old vines, in a short time, It has established itself as one of Priorats top wines praised by collectors world wide. Get yours while you can at a great price.

Wine Advocate # 175 Feb 2008 98 points Drink 2018 - 2040 "The 2005 Costers de Vinas Viejas is aged for 16 months in new French oak. The wine is a blend of 50% Carinena, 48% Garnacha, and 2% Merlot. Purple-colored, it has an other-worldly perfume of pain grille, grilled meat, spice cabinet, espresso, mineral, wild blueberry, and black cherry. This is followed by a powerful, masculine, intense Priorat with gobs of flavor, 8-10 years of cellaring potential, and a very long finish. It will be at its peak from 2018 to 2040."

Did you Know: Didn't see anything in the newsletter that grabed your attention? We always keep a few dozen great wines in stock. Unlike a brick & mortar store we don't have to stock shelves to keep suppliers happy or move quantities of mediocre selections to keep expensive overhead covered. We have a good selection of superb value bottles in the mid \$20's (the start of the sweet spot in the quality /price ratio). Though we often have wines priced at around the mid

teens or less- if we can find a great close out. Sometimes quantities are just too small to feature in the newsletter. Also there are always special bottles we like to keep for our regular customers rather than offer to one time bargain shoppers on the Internet. I am always happy to mix and match a case or two for your needs -just give us a call: with a little notice we will have your wine available for pick up.

events:

Taste of the Nation: a perennial favorite foodie fest -mark your calender for Sunday June 1st details at:

http://taste.strength.org/site/Clubs?club_id=1032&pg=main

The 2008 Colorado State Fair :

http://www.ticketmaster.com/promo/efwf1d?dma_id=

Thanks again for all your support and referrals, tell your friends, Cheers

Paul David, Chief Fermented Grape Taster.

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The buyer is solely responsible for the shipment of wine. We make no representations concerning your legal right to ship or receive wine into any state outside Colorado or any country outside the United States. By placing any wine order with us, you authorize Winepairings to act on your behalf to engage a common carrier to deliver your order to your selected destination.

Please note that **you must be at least 21 years old** to order or receive alcohol from this newsletter. All orders require the signature of a person at least 21 years of age.