

Wine Spectator

12 Festive Rosés from California

New reviews of pink wines perfect for summer sipping

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Tasting Highlights bring the best wines from our editors' most recent tastings to WineSpectator.com members.

Summer is almost here, so go ahead and start counting the days. Just in time for warm weather, the 2012 California rosés are beginning to arrive on store shelves, preparing you for those leisurely sunny afternoons and evenings.

This group of new releases offers a range of styles, from delicate and crisp pinks that would be at home in Provence to the ripe and full-flavored blushes that only California would dare produce.

Rosé can be made from any red grape, but not all rosés are created the same way in California. Rhône-style rosés seem to fare best, with Pinot Noir ranking a far second.

Tablas Creek, in Paso Robles, has been an advocate of rosé for years—no surprise given its association with the Perrin family of Château de Beaucastel in the Southern Rhône, where rosé thrives. The producer has two pinks on our list.

Winemaker Erik Miller demonstrates an affinity for Grenache with his Kokomo Pauline's Vineyard, while Jeff Pisoni shows that Pinot Noir can produce a festive pink from Santa Lucia Highlands, near Monterey. Carroll Kemp follows suit with the Red Car Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Rosé Bybee Vineyard.

The biggest challenge when it comes to these new rosés? Finding them. Except for Tablas Creek, Cline and a few others, they are made in small quantities and sold largely through wineries and the Internet. But rosé lovers should not hesitate to seek them out.

TABLAS CREEK Rosé Dianthus Paso Robles 2012 Score: 89 | \$27

A rosé with a backbone, offering a bright pink color and aromas of strawberry and smoke, with flavors of dried cherry, melon and spice that finish with a touch of tannins. Mourvèdre, Grenache and Counoise. Drink now. 1,230 cases made. —*T.F.*



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