

Weekend Tasting: June 11-13 FRI 4-7, SAT 12-7; SUN 12-4

All **ROSÉS**: Can Summer be far behind?!

1. AIX 2009, Coteaux d'Aix en Provence, France - \$14.96

Bordered by the River Durance to the north and the Mediterranean to the south, the heart of Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence appellation is the historical town of Aix-en-Provence, to which the Romans were drawn by its nearby thermal springs. Wines have been made in this area since the Greeks...2,600 years ago.

The appellation is Provence's second largest after Côtes de Provence. The most important grapes for this wine are Grenache, Cinsaut and Mourvèdre. This wine is young, dry and pale salmon in color with a pleasant, long finish. In this wine you can taste Provence, the berries, prunes, even a little caramel and tiny bit of spice, but very balanced on the palate. It is sun and ripe fruit in your glass. Chilled, this rosé is great as a summer sipper for lunch or pre-dinner, or paired with fish, a salad of tapas, white meats and all kinds of pastas – hot, or a cold salad style.

2. Sables d'Azur, Château Gassier 2009 Côtes de Provence, France - \$11.96

Area : 40 ha (100 acres)

Appellation : AOC Côtes de Provence

Grape varieties : Syrah, Grenache & Cinsault

Average age of vines : 25 years.

Production : Château Gassier vines are cultivated along **minimal intervention** principles.

History : The Gassier family has worked the vineyards for five generations.

Wine Spectator recognized Sables d'Azur, Cotes-de-Provence Rosé as being a “**Best Value**” and has awarded it an **87-points**. Produced by the esteemed Provence house of Gassier, Sables d'Azur is a crisp wine that pairs well with a variety of dishes and is the perfect refreshment on a warm summer day or a later afternoon lunch. Ice-cold shrimp cocktail in an outside café on a warm day with a glass...I am transported to Provence! “Mmm” is the first thought that comes to mind when the nose gets a whiff of the Sables. Strangely sweet, cherries and overripe strawberries fill the nostrils with anticipation. At first touch to the lips, the wine is very fruity, yet subtly smooth. The palate is treated to a tangy dance of clean flavor before experiencing a dry finish, something good rosés are noted for.

3. Château L'Ermitage 2009, Costières de Nîmes – Rhône Valley, France - \$10.96

Bigger body, but still crisp, this blend of 50% Syrah, 30% Grenache, 20% Mourvèdre is made by Jerome Castillon, one of my favorite winemakers in the Rhône. I have visited his winery, and he has poured his wines here with me in Fremont. Highest quality wines, even this simple summer wine gets all his attention. A bright salmon pink, it has light berry notes on the nose, is fresh and fruity on the palate with a long finish.

4. Parejas Cellars, 2009 Two Coyote Vineyard, Yakima Valley, Washington - \$11.46

Richer color, fuller bodied for those who want a Rosé to go with that steak on the grill, or BBQ Chicken wings. Still dry, but textured with a big mouthfeel, and can stand up to bold summer flavors. I have never seen a Rosé made from Tempranillo before. Enjoy this unique wine from our own backyard.

5. Syncline, 2009 Columbia Valley, Washington - \$15.68

Here is the Washington version of a Rhône-style Rosé: 37% Cinsault, 35% Counoise, 12% Grenache, 11% Mourvèdre, 5% Carignan. It is loaded with strawberry and watermelon flavors. Delightfully fruity, yet complex and flavorful, this dry medium-bodied Washington Rosé is the perfect summer food wine. Only 600 cases made, and I bought 3 cases in anticipation. Buy some now if you like it, since I will not be able to get any more.

TASTING DISCOUNT: 4 BTLS @10%; 6 BTLS @ 15%