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Rosé Simplified: Your Easy Shortcut To The Best Wines Of Summer

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I'm not one for made up marketing holidays, but since it is almost summer and we are already into peak rosé drinking season, I thought I'd at least acknowledge National Rosé Day, next Saturday (June 13).

Plus, I really like rosé, have been trying a bunch of them, and agree that it is a perfect summer wine, cool enough for heat but more versatile than other basic whites or reds in terms of going with a wide range of food, especially beach favorites like seafood, cold salads and much of the stuff coming off the grill. It can match just about everything grilled but big red meat, from grilled veggies to pork chops to fish, chicken and veal. It is also very flexible in terms of global cuisines, going with everything from Pacific Rim to Caribbean fare.

However, as the popularity of rosé has boomed, tripling in the past 25 years, getting the good stuff has gotten more challenging. Many low-quality producers jumped into the market to meet demand, and today there are lot of cheap but not very good rosés on store shelves, and worse, a lot of pricey but not very good ones as well.



It was France, and particularly the South of France, that started the whole high quality rosé thing in the first place, so my answer for this summer has been to simplify things by going the same route that works so well for champagne - find a house you like and stick with it, at different price points for different occasions. When it comes to rosé, there is no house quite like Château Minuty, the global leader in Côtes de Provence, a quality geographic appellation (AOC) recognized by the French government for its excellence since 1977.

Just as Bordeaux is recognized for its big reds, Burgundy for its lighter pinot noir and world class chardonnay (Chablis) and champagne for its bubbly, Provence is generally considered the best place in the world for rosé. Provence's climate, terroir and varietals are perfectly suited to this wine, and production has been finely honed over a very long time. Provence is the number one French region for rosé production, accounting for 42% of the nation's total, and rosé has been made here for more than 2,600 years. It is actually the oldest wine made in Provence, which in turn is the oldest wine making region in France. They know what they are doing.

But even in this elite group, [Château Minuty](#) stands out, and the 80-plus year old family owned winery is generally acknowledged to be among the world's top producers, championing especially food-friendly wines that can be enjoyed all year round - not just in summertime. As a result, shopping for this label is about as fail safe and simple a way to enjoy reliably great rosé as you can imagine, and this year, for the first time ever, the Chateau's most popular label worldwide, Prestige, is available in this country. All the wines are fairly widely available nationally.

Here's the lineup:

Minuty Prestige 2019: The number one label from the Chateau, and your choice for making every lighter or spicier meal this summer memorable. Prestige comes from two hand-harvested Minuty estate vineyards, including the family's original plot in Saint-Tropez. This wine is a beautiful pale pink, belying its powerful and well-balanced taste, with notes of citrus and Provence's famously pleasant minerality. Delicate enough for grilled fish but full enough to handle things like veal, and it goes very well with much Asian cuisine. 91 Points *Wine Enthusiast*. (\$30)



M de Minuty 2019: Most \$23 French rosés are suspicious, but this one is underpriced if anything, and you would be hard pressed to find a more accessible embodiment of the renowned Côtes de Provence style of rosé at (or close to) this price point. Fresh, lively and perfectly balanced, M de Minuty comes entirely from hand-harvested grapes grown in the Côtes de Provence. Its nose features intense aromas of orange peels and red currant, and this is one to drink by itself poolside or at the beach on a hot day, or if you are eating, with lighter pastas, salads, seafood, and lighter grilled meats. (\$23)

There is also an annual M de Minuty Limited Edition bottle for a few dollars more. Same wine, but each year Minuty partners with different global artists each year to celebrate the St. Tropez lifestyle on the bottle. This offering is the work of Barcelona based visual artists Zosen Bandido and Mina Hamada. (\$28)



Rosé et Or 2019: This is a step up into a very high-quality rosé for more special summer (or anytime) occasions, like having beloved guests over for dinner - or bringing as a gift when you are the guest. Rosé et Or comes exclusively from the original estate vineyard, just a half-mile from the ocean in St. Tropez. Very intense citrus fruit aroma plus complex flavor, bursting with fruity freshness notes of pink grapefruit and white peach. This one goes with a wide variety of tapas or starters, almost every kind of seafood, lighter soups and Pacific Rim fare. 92 Points *Wine Enthusiast*. (\$55)

Château Minuty 281 2019: The “colorful” name 281 is the eye-catching Pantone color royal blue cascading down this bottle, inspired by the vibrant sea and sky of Saint-Tropez in summer. 281 is the most complex and rich label in the Minuty portfolio, and more seasonally versatile, a fine cooler weather wine as well. Deep, with a pronounced mineral structure, this pairs especially well with grilled fish or shellfish, matching both the seafood itself and the grilled char, and is also a great choice for finessed one pot dishes like risotto. 92 Points *Wine Enthusiast*. (\$90)

