More Than Meets the Eye: Carla Bruni, Rosé, and the Art of Contradiction

My conversation with the former First Lady of France about her Provence rosé, music, and embracing life's contradictions.

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Carla Bruni, co-owner of Château d'Estoublon

Photo courtesy of Château d'Estoublon and Vintus

Don't underestimate rosé. The best pink wines are more than eye candy for social media; they are crafted with care, and they tell a story.

Now, allow me to add another adage to my arsenal: don't dare underestimate **Carla Bruni**.

The official reason for my recent meeting with the former First Lady of France was to discuss **Château d'Estoublon**, the Provence estate Bruni purchased in 2020 with her husband, former president of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, and business partners, including wine industry veteran Jean-Guillaume Prats, formerly of Cos d'Estournel and Lafite Rothschild.



Roseblood Rosé

Photo courtesy of Château d'Estoublon and Vintus

I arrived at Bruni's Manhattan hotel suite ready to delve into the story of Roseblood d'Estoublon, the estate's delicious luxury rosé. However, during our freewheeling conversation, it became clear that Bruni — model, musician, mother, and more — finds beauty in life's intersections and contradictions. Our discussion went beyond the contents of the bottle as she connected wine to life in myriad ways.



With Carla Bruni in New York City

melancholic songs… These notes are bringing us somewhere. It's not only wine, it's also our memory coming from smell, taste, and it's very sensual."

I first tasted Roseblood d'Estoublon a few years ago; I was so impressed by its precision, balance, and drinkability that I featured it in a luxury rosé tasting that I led at the **Food & Wine Classic in Aspen**. I selected the wine purely on its merits. At that time, it never occurred to me that one day I'd be chatting with Carla Bruni.

Although its current leadership acquired the estate only six years ago, it has a rich history. Founded in 1489, Château d'Estoublon, on the southern slopes of the Alpilles in the heart of Provence, is also renowned for its award-winning olive oil. Of Estoublon's 300 hectares, 120 are planted to olive trees and 17 to vines; the remainder consists of forest and gardens. The ownership group is not shying away from significant investments to strengthen the brand's winemaking capabilities; it has expanded to encompass 340 hectares of vineyards across Provence. And while rosé is the leading lady, the Roseblood d'Estoublon portfolio also includes white wines.



Château d'Estoublon in Provence, France

Photo courtesy of Château d'Estoublon and Vintus

But Bruni's journey from stages, catwalks, and presidential palaces to the vineyards of Provence was never in her plans. She describes her foray into the wine business as a "miracle" and the "hand of fate." Yet, it clearly suits her: not just as an investment but as a means of understanding life a bit more.

"Humility." Bruni did not hesitate when asked what surprised her most about becoming a vintner. "That you need to get into humility because you're depending on the weather, the sky, and you're depending on snow and wind and sun and nature. So I think nature is always very humbling, because it's so much stronger than us. I don't know if you believe in God or not. But when I'm in nature, when I look at nature, that's when I feel him or her."

She also embraces the hard work that comes with learning a new industry, likening it to going back to school. Bruni credits the Estoublon team of about 80 people, including technical director Victor Joyeux, for their significant contributions. "My share of the work is not the difficult one; it is the magical one. I'm so grateful to the people working there; it is such a wonderful team, such a cool team, such a hard-working team."

contradictory." When we were first introduced, she disarmed me by asking, "Have you seen the movie *A Fish Called Wanda*? I love it!" She later cracked me up with an animated reenactment of a scene from the 1988 comedy that put my old-fashioned name on the silver screen.

Of course, you could pair a glass of Roseblood with a movie night or follow Bruni's suggestion: "Being at home with a nice glass of wine and some beautiful music is heaven."

But she also sees it as a way for people to connect: "The real thing about wine is really sharing something. Sharing an emotion, sharing a taste, sharing a pleasure, sharing a meal, sharing a confidence."

Four Roseblood Rosés to Try



Roseblood Rosé 2025
Coteaux Varois en Provence
$30
Roseblood's flagship rosé is a precise, pretty blend of Grenache Noir, Syrah, Cinsault, and Cabernet Sauvignon, with a splash of Clairette, Rolle, and Carignan, sourced from high-elevation vineyards. The combination of quality grapes and technical director Victor Joyeux's winemaking savoir-faire makes a rosé that is more than eye candy. You're not just drinking pink; you're drinking a true wine. Yes, Roseblood Rosé is refreshing, but it is not a one-note wine; it is an example of harmony. Stone fruit, red berries, floral notes, and citrus make for a lively and luscious rosé. ***Wine Spectator*** **named the 2024 vintage one of its Top 100 Wines of 2025.**



1489 Roseblood Rosé 2025
Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence
$94
Who says a rosé can't be complex? 1489's name pays tribute to the year Château d'Estoublon was founded, and the wine's style matches that impressive milestone. Inspired by the estate's rose garden, where delicate flowers bloom under the Provençal sun, 1489 blends Grenache and Syrah from 50-year-old estate vines growing on a volcanic crater. These two red grapes form the foundation of a rosé with power, roundness, and vibrant fruit. Like a couture dress, 1489 incorporates myriad techniques to maximize the luxe factor, including six months of lees aging to build that roundness. Aging in French oak adds subtle toasty notes. But freshness is not sacrificed, and it still expresses that easy-breezy touch of salinity that is a signature of quality Provençal rosé.



Roseblood d'Estoublon Sparkling Rosé NV
Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence
$37
I always say it's hard to feel sad when you're sipping rosé. Add bubbles to the equation and ooh la la, it's like sipping petite pink diamonds. This festive cuvée, led by Grenache, Cinsault, and Syrah, is made using the Charmat method, with a clever twist: instead of adding sugar to spark the second fermentation, the winemakers freeze a portion of the original grape must and add it to the base wine in pressurized tanks, creating fine bubbles. Fresh and full of finesse with flirty red berry and stone fruit flavors, Roseblood d'Estoublon Sparkling Rosé is a perfect example of approachable elegance.



Roseblood d'Estoublon L'Excessive Non-Alcoholic Sparkling Rosé NV
Provence
$48
While I did not become a wine writer to wax poetic about non-alcoholic wines, I understand that there are moments when the ritual of wine is welcome, but not the side effects of alcohol. For those occasions, Roseblood's alcohol-free bubbly is an elegant option. Carla Bruni's song **"L'Excessive"** inspired the wine, and her lyrics appear on the front label: "I am excessive. I like when things don't go round. When things go too far, me, I stay relaxed." A wine named "Excessive" with zero alcohol? Bruni clearly embraces contradiction.

While many non-alcoholic wines are fermented and then stripped of alcohol, Roseblood takes a different approach. The wine, Muscat with a touch of Merlot, is never allowed to ferment into alcohol. After a brief maceration, cold settling and strict temperature controls halt alcoholic fermentation and guarantee 0.0% alcohol.

And zero alcohol can be très chic: "So you can have the most warm, funny, crazy, laughing evening without wine. Without alcohol. What I mean is that alcohol is fantastic, but when you have somebody that you really like to talk to, you don't need that," said Bruni.

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