

## **Tastings - That rosé time of year**

It's August and it's hot. If there was ever something less obvious to say about Barcelona, I've yet to hear it. That's why this column is about rosé. I'm generally a red drinker and I can appreciate whites in general, but rosé well, it's generally a bit fat oof. The idea I hear from most winemakers is that they design it to be a lighter red (as most all rosé wines are made from red grapes) that's also fresh. I can appreciate this, but in the southern latitudes of Spain as well as Croatia, Greece, and others, the result is an overly sweet in the body wine that, if the wine of choice on the menu, will be one of the only times I might opt for sangria.

Maybe you like this sweeter style of rosé in the summer and I'm espousing blasphemy, but if your tastes are more like mine, then you'll probably find that the French, especially in Provence really make an amazing style of rosé. That said, I present a local Catalan option that's doing its own wonderful thing as well as a more traditional French option that excels on all points.

### **Sicus Xarel·lo Vermell 2013 12€**

The editor of my books got turned on to Sicus sometime back and was raving ever since about these natural wines by Eduard Pié in Baix Penèdes. I finally had the chance to taste them and, wow. But this rosé is something very unique as it's produced from the rather rare Grey Xarel·lo grape that's somewhere between white and red. Fresh in the nose with apricot and peach skin it boasts great acidity in the mouth that's balanced by a splash of perfectly ripe strawberries. Wonderfully light on the palate and elegant as hell.

### **Chêne Bleu Rosé 2013 16€**

I originally encountered this French winery when they were presenting at G-Night alongside Catalan winemakers who specialize in Grenache. What I tasted very much piqued my curiosity and they let me sample their entire range of wines recently which have been outstanding. They also offer unique and lovely enotourism packages in case anyone "needed" an excuse to escape to Provence.

This rosé opens with light aromas of crushed strawberries and raspberries and with orange peel. The body is no end of fresh with present but not overpowering acidity and a punch of apricot tang that carries in to a relatively dry finish. Expertly made to be light, pair with meals (including spicy dishes), and have depth. While not directly available in Barcelona, they will happily ship or again, you can pop up to the village of Crestet in Vaucluse for a visit [www.chenebleu.com](http://www.chenebleu.com)