

Ask Ms. Merlot..

Ms. Merlot — our resident take-no-prisoners wine guru — is back from her travels 'abroad' and is once again ready to answer questions about the history, science, and culture of wine posed by us sub-Mason-Dixon Line dwellers.

Dear Ms. Merlot,

I've been hearing that 2005 Bordeaux is the vintage of the century. I also heard that 2000 Bordeaux was the vintage of the century, as was 2003. Is global warming causing centuries to get way shorter?

—Troubled in Timonium

Dear Troubled,

One would think that now, wouldn't they? No, centuries are still one hundred years long, although I once had a blind date that seemed to last several centuries. 2005 is quite likely a very fine vintage in Bordeaux. So what? So was '86, '89, '90, '96, '99, '00, '01, and '04. I could name others as well. In California, there have been lots of great vintages. Ditto Australia, Italy, Spain, etc., etc., etc. Is that the sole reason to buy wine? Do you even *like* wines from Bordeaux?

Yo Ms. Merlot,

What's the deal with rosé? I can't be drinking no sissy wine, ya know.

—He-Man in Homewood

Dear He-Man,

You, sir, are quite obviously a Neanderthal. Are you also afraid to wear pastel colored shirts? What other psuedo-macho crap do you dish out?

Rosé is a wine made from red grapes. The grape skins (where pigmentation resides) stay in contact with the juice for a shorter than typical period of time, thus resulting in a lighter colored wine. Generally served chilled, Rosé has been made for centuries in most wine regions and represents a myriad of tastes and styles. And as a side note, anyone who uses their wine choices as a means to advertise their status, income, education, or "un-sissiness" just doesn't get it.

Dear Ms. Merlot,

It seems that every week, there are more and more wine experts demanding that I listen to their wine recommendations? How do I distinguish the real authorities from the frauds?

—Confounded in Canton

Dear Confounded,

That, my dear, is a question for the ages. I can only respond in general terms...frauds pontificate, knowledgeable people deliberate. So, one must ask oneself: is the guy at the water cooler yammering about his 'cellar' offering considered advice, or is he merely attempting to make up for some other shortage...if you catch my drift.



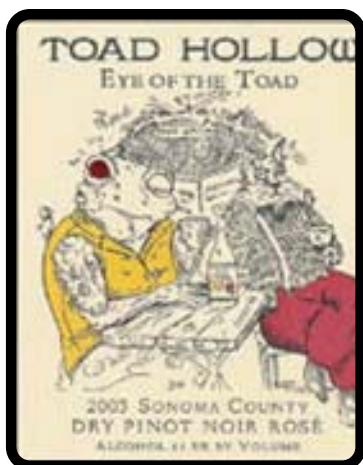
2005 Toad Hollow 'Eye of The Toad' Rosé

Sonoma, U.S.

Regular Price: \$12.99 **The Wine Source Price: \$9.99**

By now everyone has heard the story... Robin Williams (yes, THE Robin Williams) called brother Todd 'Toad', the name stuck and his (the brother's) winery has been ever after named 'Toad Hollow'. The labels are fun, the wines are named with a sense of whimsy, but aside from all that foolishness, the wines have always 'over-performed' as we say in the trade. Which brings me to this Rosé of Pinot Noir.

All who know me know I dearly love Rosé. But my standards are seriously high. A good Rosé must be bone dry, yet alive with fresh fruit. It mustn't be light or hollow or wimpy, rather, it must have depth of flavor, be well textured and, most importantly, be un-shy. Completely un-shy. In fact, a great Rosé should be a bit of an exhibitionist. It must announce its pinkness proudly and loudly. Take this wine... Herbs and a hint of pepper bring out the wonderful wild strawberry flavors. This is a wine that is great with sushi, Thai or grilled seafood. This is a Rosé that struts. (PW)



2005 Patton Valley Pinot Noir Rosé

Oregon, U.S.

Regular Price: \$16.99 **The Wine Source Price: \$12.99**

Bright, vibrant, and at the same time a pale pink hue, the 2005 Patton Valley combines the delicate, elegant fruit of Pinot Noir and the refreshing quality of Rosé. Powerful aromas of strawberry intermingle with a hint of spice and resolve themselves in a crisp, tangy palate. Arriving to us from the northernmost part of the Willamette Valley, this is quintessential back-porch rose to be consumed by the bottle. (IAS)
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2005 Yalumba Sangiovese Rosé

Barossa Valley, Australia.

Regular Price: \$12.99 **The Wine Source Price: \$9.99**

One of the oldest wine families in Australia is the Smith family, whose founder, Samuel Smith laid the framework for success in the mid-1800s. Direct ancestor, Robert Hill Smith, runs things now and the portfolio has grown to include a handful of recognizable labels (Heggies, Vasse Felix, Smith & Hooper) of which Yalumba may be the best known. They grow a tiny amount of Sangiovese in Barossa and make even a smaller amount of Rosé from it each year. And we've got it all. Ripe, full and fresh, it's clearly an Aussie rosé, unapologetic for its exuberance and style. Better hurry though, it's so good, it won't last until summer. (PW)

2005 Grand Cassagne Rosé

Costieres de Nimes, France.

Regular Price: \$11.99 **The Wine Source Price: \$8.99**

I'll be the first to admit there may be a little bias in our love for this wine, after all it was the first 2005 French Rosé we tasted this year from a sample provided in mid winter. From the opening whiff of wild strawberry and herbs the Grand Cassagne whisked us away to a summer that seemed impossibly far off. The palate was fresh and young, unlike the frozen ground or chilly wind that was blowing outside. Made from 60% Syrah, 35% Grenache, and 5% Mourvedre, try pairing this delight with smoked salmon at your next weekend get together. (IAS)

2005 Domaine Petite Cassagne Rosé

Costieres de Nimes, France.

Regular Price: \$11.99 **The Wine Source Price: \$8.99**

Domaine Petite Cassagne is operated by relatively young owner Diane Puymorin, who believes in limiting yields and farming her vineyards by organic standards. The resulting wines are clean and pure with an intensity of both texture and fruit. The 2005 Rosé is a medium bodied spicy rose, packing a touch more punch than the 2004 edition. This ripe, friendly blend of Grenache and Syrah is both crowd pleasing and interesting enough to keep rosé aficionados attention. (IAS)

2005 Domaine de la Mordoree Rosé "La Dame Rousse"

Tavel, France

Regular Price: \$16.99 **The Wine Source Price: \$12.99**

The most muscular of traditional Rosés. Tavel is the undisputed king of the pink wine category. Domaine de la Mordoree is located in the heart of Tavel and the Dame Rousse is certainly one of the best examples from the appellation. A blend of mostly Grenache, Syrah, Mourvedre, and Cinsault the 2005 Mordoree is a powerful, expressive wine loaded with ripe red berry fruit and some additional pepper and spice courtesy of the high proportion of Grenache in the blend (60%). Try this stunning Rosé with barbequed chicken or even a weeknight pizza and experience the muscular side of Rosé. (IAS)

2005 Domaine Fontsaite Gris de Gris Rosé

Corbieres, France

Regular Price: \$14.99 **The Wine Source Price: \$11.99**

Year in and year out Domaine Fontsaite produces one of The Wine Source's favorite Rosés. The 2005 edition is no exception jam packed with ripe berry flavor and possessing an amazingly precise, taut finish. A typical Corbieres blend of Grenache, Syrah and the all-important Carignan, this is a sturdy Rosé built to stand up to fish stew or shrimp from the grill. The Fontsaite Gris de Gris is easily one of the most versatile Rosés of our collection. (IAS)

2005 Chateau Domaine de Montmarin Rosé

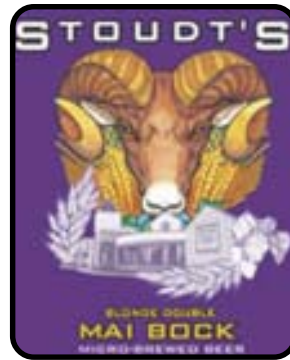
Cotes de Thongues, France

Regular Price: \$9.99 **The Wine Source Price: \$7.99**

OK, so you're not ready for Rosé. You think the guys will laugh at you. You've made your rep drinking big, dense, meaty wines. You're a Cab kinda guy. How about then... Rosé of Cabernet Sauvignon! Think of it as Cabernet for the daylight. Luchtime Cabernet. Cabernet cocktail. Make a Cabernet oyster shooter. Sushi Cabernet. A thousand uses! And don't worry, it's Cab, your reputation is safe.[PW]

Beers of the Week

The influx of spring beers continues here at The Wine Source. This week we have received three local brews we are excited about; Fordham's Maibock, Stoudt's Blonde Double Maibock, and Dominion's Spring Pilsner.



A rich, full bodied, deep golden-blond lager. Stoudt's version of the German classic style is brewed with the finest 2-row malt and a subtle amount of noble hops. This seasonal beer is available in the spring. 7% abv.

\$8.49 a six pack

Founded on the premises of the original Ram's Head Tavern, this brewery has now taken off on its own. This maibock is perhaps their best seasonal yet.

\$6.99 a six pack



Their first Seasonal brew of 2006, the Spring Brew is a bold, Imperial-style Pilsner created by brewer Chris Frashier. With this 8.5% brew he has raised the already high bar of what people should expect from Dominion's good, reasonably priced beers. Annually, one of our favorites.

\$6.99 a six pack

Don't Forget to check the Beer Page of our website for regular updates, www.the-wine-source.com

Mark Your Calendar!

\$10 WINE AND PIZZA TASTING

Thursday, May 4, 4:30 - 7:30 pm
at Iggies

Taste the wines of Zenato with Nadia Zenato.

\$10 WINE AND PIZZA TASTING

Tuesday, May 9, 4:30 - 7:30 pm
at Iggies

Taste the wines of Mastro Baradini with Lucio
Mastro Baradini.

FREE WINE TASTING

Thursday, May 6, 1:30 - 5:30 pm
at The Wine Source

Free tasting of the wines of New Zealand.

WINE DINNER

South African Wines

Tuesday, April 25, 6:30 pm
at Abacrombie, 58 W. Biddle St.

\$85 per person, including tax and gratuity
For reservations, call the store at 410.467.7777



WINE DINNER

Sunday, April 30, 5:30 pm
at Iggies, 818 N. Calvert St. (Mount Vernon)

\$40 per person, including tax
For reservations, call the store at 410.467.7777

SAVE THE DATE

Grateful Palate Wine Dinner
Tuesday, May 23, 6:30 pm
Oceanaire, 801 Aliceanna St.

\$85 per person, including tax and gratuity.
For reservations, call the store at 410.467.7777

**For a complete up-to-date
listing of our events, check our website
at www.the-wine-source.com**

Comments from the Cheese Cave

Valencay- The taste of springtime in the Loire Valley right here on Elm Avenue. The best tasting goat's milk cheeses are made from April to June when young, delicate grasses lend their sweet flavor to fresh goat's milk. Serve with crisp white wines like Pinot Blanc or Sancerre. *Try drizzling a slice with one of our new Javanese Island Honey; you won't be disappointed!*

\$8.50 each 8oz. pyramid; \$4.50 per half.

Marzolino- Made only in the spring from fresh, Tuscan sheep's milk. Marzolino is a great alternative to fresh mozzarella and melds perfectly with light, warm weather dishes. Serve with salami and olives for an easy antipasto, layer with slices of tomato and fresh basil; add a drizzle of olive oil and finish off with fresh cracked black pepper or add a few slices to your next homemade pizza. **\$11.25 lb.**

Pitxun- If you like your sheep's milk cheeses a little older then Pitxun (pronounced Pi-CHOON) might become one of your favorites. Made in the Ossau-Iraty valley in the French Pyrenees from raw sheep's milk. Nutty and buttery with a texture that might remind you of aged Italian Pecorino Toscano. **\$14.75 lb.**

Point Reyes Blue- By popular demand! We get requests for this cheese several times a week and are happy to say we'll be featuring this awesome, tangy blue for the rest of the summer! Point Reyes Blue is the perfect blue cheese for salads, dips and summer cheese plates. Great with our Javanese Island Honey. **\$12 lb.**



Delitia Butter- Butter? Just butter? Well, it's "just butter" when it comes from a big factory and is made with anonymous cream from "corporate" cows, but when it comes from the same small, Italian dairies who make Parmigiano Reggiano then no, it's not "just butter" anymore. Delitia butter will amaze you with its deep, sweet flavor. Like the best olive oils, it is best savored on little more than a piece of crusty bread but don't hesitate to spread some on your morning bagel or muffin, either. Did we mention the Javanese Honey?

\$3.50 each 8oz. package

Javanese Island Honey- Yes, they have bees in Bali, too. Big Tree Farms makes exciting varietal honey from the blossoms of tropical fruit trees. Their Rambutan Honey has a nose of fruit and a sweet citrus flavor while their Mango Blossom Honey is heavy with the perfume of smoke, black cherry and passion fruit. Honey has always been a natural partner for cheeses. Try a drizzle on fresh goat cheeses and aged sheep's milk cheeses.

Just \$6.25 each.

Petit Jesu- We're not sure how this coarse, dry salami got its name but the full, rustic flavor of this all-pork sausage is unforgettable.

\$15.75 lb.

Pate Mousse de Perigord- Pork-free mousse with duck, turkey, sherry and truffles. Smooth and savory!

\$10.75 lb.

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