

# The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

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~ Wine education for us all – rosé wine ~

Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012

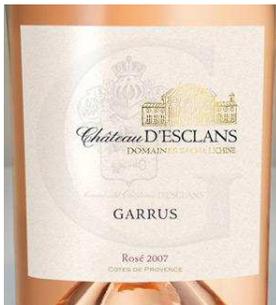
## What's all the blush about?

What is rosé? Is it a red wine or a white wine?

Truth be told, it's a little of both. With several exceptions, most rosé is made from red grapes using white winemaking methods.

There are two common ways of making the ideal summer sipper. The first is to simply crush the grapes and let them ferment with the juice for up to three days in stainless steel vats, after which the juice is 'run off.' Fermented at cool temperatures the same way white wine would be, the result is a very pale red (or pink) wine with a discernible white wine personality.

On the other hand, most of the world's finest rosés are produced using the *saignée* method. This is a little more complicated. Instead of immediately crushing the grapes, they are left relatively unbroken to chill and macerate for up to two days, after which they are fermented like any other white wine; any 'free-run' juice is then drained from the vat and eventually bottled. Not surprisingly, this is more labour-intensive, and quality will depend on the experience and/or talent of the winemaker. Isn't this always the case?



So in what places is the best rosé produced? In France, great rosé can be found throughout virtually all southern winegrowing regions, particularly Provence, Languedoc-Roussillon, and the Southern Rhône Valley (most notably the Tavel appellation). In each case, the wine is typically a blend of Grenache, Cinsault, Syrah, and Mourvèdre; though the style may vary depending on grape blends and the level of extraction involved. Delightful rosé can also be found in the Loire (the best made from Cabernet Franc), Burgundy (particularly the commune of Marsannay), and even Bordeaux. Spain and Italy also produce their fair share, under the names 'rosado' and 'rosato,' respectively. In each case, local grapes are commonly used, though Spanish versions are often more reliable, especially those made from Garnacha (Grenache).



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In California, white Zinfandel was all the rage in past decades, crafted using the *saignée* method but with a much shorter maceration. However, the past ten years have seen white Zinfandel give way to darker-coloured, fresher, and much more potent styles. Many of these are crafted using whichever grapes the specific region is most famous for, or from whichever grapes are most widely available. Other than this, generalizations are hard to make, rosé is now so widely produced. Large-scale producers can be found throughout California, South America, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. In each case, they will often taste much stronger and more extracted than their European counterparts, as well as possess a much darker colour. Not surprisingly, smaller producers with a good reputation are the ones to watch out for.

Most rosé can be easily enjoyed on its own, either as an aperitif on the clichéd summer patio or as an accompaniment to all sorts of dishes. While it may seem surprising, rosé pairs amazingly well, not just with seafoods and creatures formerly feathered but a wide assortment of foods. The ideal serving temperature is anywhere between 6 and 8°C. Just remember one thing: excepting champagne versions, rosé does not age. Particularly on this account, it is indeed neither a red wine nor a white wine.

Shared At: <http://www.winealign.com/user-list/julianhitner/23-june-2012-release---other-gems>

## A few gems for collectors:

### White Wines:

**Ridge 2010 Estate Chardonnay, Monte Bello Estate Vineyard (Santa Cruz Mountains), California:** In my limited experience with Paul Draper's whites, I have only tasted a handful of Estate Chardonnays; but the '10 is probably the best. Light lime in colour, the wine is gently toasted, offering beautiful, persuasive scents of pears, quince, hazelnuts, nectarines, mild orange peel, dried butterscotch, and a hint of vanilla. Very complex, sporting superbly poised fruit, balanced acidity, and a polished, lingering hint of pears, quince, and mild butterscotch on the finish. First-rate design, balance, and focus. Even more surprising is the clear Burgundian influence, despite the 14.2% alcohol. Now-2020+. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, May 2012)

**91+ \$49.95 (#241646) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Astrolabe 2011 Province Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, South Island, New Zealand:** Another bull's-eye from one of the finest Sauvignon Blanc producers in Marlborough, the 2011 Province is as zesty as it gets. Very pale lime in colour, the wine is marked by lovely, uplifting scents of gooseberries, white grapefruit, white peaches, lemon, minerals, and cat's pee. Complex, expressing intensely zesty fruit, vibrant acidity,

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and a lasting hint of gooseberries, mild tomato leaf, and minerals on the finish. Impressive as always. Screwcap closure. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**89** \$21.95 (#10421) **Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Terredora 2010 Loggia della Serra, Greco di Tufo DOCG, Campania, Italy:** Good Greco can be hard to find, but those from the Greco di Tufo DOCG easily rank among the finest in Italy. Pale-light lime in colour, the 2010 Loggia della Serra offers assertive, engaging notes of jasmine-laced green apples, pears, apricots, and fern leaves. Palate: fresh fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a refined hint of pears and jasmine on the finish. Lovely character, balance, and style. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**87++** \$17.95 (#983197) **Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Domaine de la Tourlaudière 2010, Muscadet Sèvre & Maine Sur Lie AOC, Loire, France:** An oversight of mine that I don't recommend more Muscadet, especially during the summertime. Pale lime in colour, the 2010 Domaine de la Tourlaudière reveals crisp notes of delicate green apples, seasalt, lemon traces, and minerals. Palate: nervy, vibrant dry fruit and acidity on display, ending with a hint of lemon and minerals (both very mild) on the finish. Neatly balanced and correct. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**87** \$13.95 (#171694) **Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

## Red Wines:

**Château La Gaffelière 2008, St-Emilion Premier Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France:** If only I had more notes from this fabulous estate! Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the stellar 2008 Château La Gaffelière starts off as surprisingly fragrant, exhibiting exceptional aromas of currants, blackberries, plums, blueberries, mocha, licorice, crushed rocks, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, wielding exquisite, concentrated fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an elegant, exciting hint of plummy currants and graphite on the finish. Full of finesse, depth, and optimal flavouring. It has a silkiness that has to be tasted to be believed. 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. Now-2026++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**92++** \$84.00 (#136127) **Vintages Shop Online**

**Mahle 2007 Wind Gap Syrah, Castelli Knight Ranch, Russian River Valley (Sonoma County), California:** Likely the only Syrah I have ever tasted from the Russian River Valley, the 2007 Wind Gap is a must-have for collectors in search for the proverbial fish-out-of-water. Opaque ruby colour, the wine displays abundant, 'varietally certain' aromas of fragrant cracked pepper, blackberries, brambleberries, plums, tobacco leaves, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, delivering delicious, beautifully attenuated fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a long, exquisite hint of peppercorns, blackberries, and fresh pipe tobacco on the finish. Utterly characterful, harmonious, and sumptuous. Now-2024. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**91++** \$59.00 (#242776) **Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

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**Trinity Hill 2009 The Gimblett, Gimblett Gravels (Hawkes Bay), North Island, New Zealand:** Sourced from the most famous vineyard in Hawkes Bay, the 2009 Gimblett has to be tasted to be believed. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, offering superbly, 'modernistically Bordelaise' aromas of light mocha, crème de cassis, licorice, subtle spring flowers, pain grille, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, possessing exemplary, well-structured fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a marvellous hint of mild mocha, currants, and graphite on the finish. Excellent robustness, style, and balance. 38% Merlot, 37% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Cabernet Franc, 8% Petit Verdot, and 2% Malbec. Now-2021+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**91++ \$35.95 (#280263) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Lionello Marchesi 2006 Coldisole, Brunello di Montalcino DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** The first wine I've ever tasted from here, the 2006 Coldisole is excellently integrated, balanced, and stylish. Dark garnet in colour, this beautiful Brunello displays enticingly multifaceted aromas dried red fruits, wild game, undergrowth, savoury leather, sandalwood, and spice. Complex, possessing great fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an elegant, focused hint of dried cedary cherries on the finish. Unmistakably traditional, with ample freshness and elegance—superb all-round work. Now-2022++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**91+ \$41.95 (#281238) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Château La Couspaude 2008, St-Emilion Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France:** To the best of my knowledge, the only other note I have from La Couspaude is of the '05, a first-rate delivery for all intents and purposes. In comparison, the '08 is slightly more sinewy, though just as hedonistic. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, offering beautiful aromas of black plums, blackberry compote, mocha, pain grille, forest floor, licorice, vanilla, and spice. Complex, retaining chewy, tighter fruit (great stuff), firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a superb, lingering hint of sinewy plums and mocha traces on the finish. Delicious, balanced, and characterful. 75% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2022++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**91 \$72.00 (#229245) Vintages Shop Online**

**Outpost 2009 Zinfandel, Howell Mountain (Napa Valley), California:** A red-letter day for my wine database: it isn't often I add a Howell Mountain Zinfandel to the list, let alone one so marvellously crafted. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2009 Outpost exhibits high-class, textbook aromas of blackberries, plums, incense, cherries, licorice, white pepper traces, and a hint of kirsch liqueur, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, presenting concentrated, well-structured fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a persistent, exceptional hint of blackberries and incense on the finish. Brimming with character, flavour, and breadth, the 15.9% alcohol is very well integrated. Now-2019++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**91 \$69.00 (#253377) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Château Chasse-Spleen 2008, Moulis en Médoc AOC, Bordeaux, France:** It almost makes me sad I have so few notes to show for what is otherwise one of the finest non-Classified Growths in Moulis. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2008 Chasse-Spleen is finely toasted, revealing absolutely lovely 'claret' aromas of currants, plums, fragrant licorice, minerals, mild black mocha, and a hint of blackberries, vanilla, and spice.

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Complex, possessing refined, accessible yet elegant fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a beautiful, well-rounded hint of blackberries and mineral licorice on the finish. Expressive, focused, and decisively elegant. 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot, and 7% Petit Verdot. Now-2022. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**90++ \$44.00 (#134452) Vintages Shop Online**

**Tatiarra 2009 Culled Barrel Shiraz, Heathcote, Victoria, Australia:** My first note from this winery, the 2009 Culled Barrel Shiraz offers a unique, if not entirely exact, representation of the type of wines now produced in Heathcote. Extremely dense ruby in colour, it is heavily toasted, possessing intense aromas of 'dark' eucalyptus, blackberry compote, currants, spring flowers, leather, vanilla, and spice. Complex, carrying forward, supple fruit and tannins, mild acidity, and a very long hint of eucalyptus, blackberries, and dark raspberry traces on the finish. Powerful, supple, and full of life. Now-2022+-. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**90 \$39.95 (#271379) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Château de Nages 2009 JT, Costières de Nîmes AOC, Rhône, France:** The last JT I tasted was from the 2006 vintage, so sampling the '09 was like being reacquainted with an old friend. Opaque ruby in colour, this overachiever is finely toasted, exhibiting inviting aromas of black fruits, blackberry treacle, currants, mocha/coffee, crushed rocks, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting sumptuous fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a remarkably decadent hint of black mocha and blackberry treacle on the finish. Tempting, finely textured, and lengthy. A real treat. 95% Syrah and 5% Mourvèdre. Now-2022+-. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**90 \$21.95 (#736876) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Château Tronquoy-Lalande 2004, St-Estèphe AOC, Bordeaux, France:** The epitome of proper, not glamorous, claret done in the St-Estèphe mould, the 2004 Tronquoy-Lalande is worth the inflated cost our market demands. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is aging gracefully, boasting semi-youthful aromas of currants, plums, earth, forest floor, tobacco, and a hint of crushed rocks and spice. Complex, with beautiful fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an elegant, amenable hint of currants and 'light' earth on the finish. Refined, focused, and flavoured in just the right way. Now-2019. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**90 \$29.95 (#279984) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Bodegas Olarra 2004 Cerro Añon Gran Reserva, Rioja DOCa, Spain:** Modern and clean, the impressive 2004 Cerro Añon should appeal to most Rioja lovers with ease. Virtually opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted (American-style), revealing lovely aromas of mocha and coconut, switching to blackberries, plums, dried wild strawberries, seaweed, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with beautiful fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an endearing hint of blackberries and coconut on the finish. Fulsome and polished, a standout against so many lesser wines of the same style. 80% Tempranillo, the rest Garnacha, Mazuelo, and Graciano. Now-2019+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**89 \$24.95 (#190827) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release**

**Fontalpino 2009, Chianti Classico DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** My only note from this winery, the 2009 Fontalpino is a good Chianti Classico with a fine feel about it. Dark

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ruby-red currant in colour, the wine displays pleasant notes of wild red plums, leather, undergrowth, herbs, and a hint of cedarwood and spice. Palate: good Tuscan-style fruit showing, with fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a lovely hint of wild red plums and cherries on the finish. Most enjoyable. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**88** \$22.95 (#275859) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release

**Château de Lancyre 2010 Coste d'Aleyrac, Languedoc (Pic-St-Loup) AOC, Midi, France:** In a recent column, I expounded on the virtues of Pic-St-Loup, so I am very pleased to have tasted yet another well-made example so soon. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2010 Coste d'Aleyrac reveals lots of Provençal berries, raspberry compote, plums, English lavender, licorice, and spice. Palate: neatly structured, juicy fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering hint of dark raspberries and plums on the finish. Balanced and flavourful. 50% Syrah, 40% Grenache, and 10% Cinsault. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**88** \$19.95 (#74765) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release

**Simi 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander Valley (Sonoma County), California:** Overpriced in this market, the 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon is juicier and more berry-oriented compared to the '07; yet is nonetheless very satisfying, fulsome, and balanced. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is moderately toasted, displaying notes of currants, plums, berries, cherries, incense, and a hint of herbs, vanilla, and spice. Palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, milder acidity, and a polished hint of dark berries and currants on the finish. Appealing and tasty (for the style). Also contains 3% Malbec, 1% Merlot, and 1% Petit Verdot. Now-2017. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2012)

**88** \$24.95 (#25221) Vintages 23 June 2012 Release

## Cognac:

**Hine Triomphe, Cognac, France:** One of the top blends of the house, the Triomphe's namesake is well earned, for this is truly magnificent, incredible Cognac. Crafted from blends 50-60 years of age from Grande Champagne parcels, one would expect nothing less. Light-medium orange in colour, it offers immortal, multilayered aromas of caramel/toffee/butterscotch (perfectly intermixed), giving way to *petits fruits rouges*, hazelnuts, subtle citrus oils, graphite, and spice. The palate is a story of complete fullness, finesse, and length. Truly, this is the epitome of great Cognac. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**98** \$830.00 (#292888) Vintages Spirits

**Hine XO Antique Grande Champagne Premier Cru, Cognac, France:** Classic Cognac in virtually every detail, excepting the much older assemblages, the XO Antique is one of Hine's best blends. Medium orange-caramel in colour, it is marked by incredible aromas of all-natural caramel and butterscotch, giving way to a cornucopia of 'spirit-styled' *petits fruits rouges*, orange citrus, graphite, and exotic spices—all terrifically potent. Palate: rich, profound, with amazing dimension and style. Supple yet graceful; opulent and exciting. The full package, with a price to show for it. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**95** \$226.75 (#241174) Vintages Spirits

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**Hine Homage Fine Champagne Grand Cru, Cognac, France:** A unique blend of just three different vintages (1984, 1986, and 1987), the Homage seems more ‘raw’ than the house’s other blends, with more of a terroir-like personality. Medium orange-caramel in colour, it possesses caramel, toffee, coffee, orange peel, red fruits, and exotic spices. These carry brilliantly onto the palate, where a greater emphasis is placed on alcoholic intensity and a greater sense of completeness. In the end: a blend that tastes more like Cognac than brandy. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**93 \$144.95 (#285975) Vintages Spirits**

**Hine VSOP Rare, Cognac, France:** One of my favourite VSOPs, the Rare is one of the finest ‘entry range’ Cognacs available. Medium orange in colour with a touch of caramel, this beauty, embodying a smidgen of the exotic, offers exceptional wafts of delicate caramel-driven *petits fruits rouges*, toffee, graphite, and a trace of nuts. The palate is even better: smooth, elegant, fulsome, and never excessive. Always a treat. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**93 \$86.15 (#356857) Vintages Spirits**

**Hine Cigar Reserve, Cognac, France:** As its name suggests, the Cigar Reserve is crafted with the stogie-smoker in mind, boasting more perceptible alcohol and a rounder, more fiery texture. Medium orange in colour, it offers gorgeous scents of intense caramel, toffee, orange peel, red fruits, and lots of spice. On the palate: full, delicious, with immediate appeal. Americanized in some respects, in that the caramel flavour and rounder fruits are much more apparent. Still of exquisite craftsmanship and style, though. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**92 \$124.95 (#961136) Vintages Spirits**