



Terroir Rosé on the Rise



From celebrities to top wine producers, it seems everyone has a hand in rosé these days. While Mateus, Lancers, and Sutter Creek turned many people on to rosé in the past, Provence gets accolades for the pale rosé explosion in the 21st century. Yet another style exists beyond the beach and picnic rosés pushed grand marketing schemes. They are referred to as *Rosés de Terroirs*.

I tasted these wines recently with author, luxury brand marketer and professor Evelyne Resnick, PhD as part of the official kick-off of the Rosés de Terroirs group (Association Internationale des Rosés de Terroirs (AIRT)).

Disclosure: Wines provided as samples. No compensation received. Opinions are my own.

The People and Wines Behind Rosés de Terroirs

The Tavel AOC initially launched “*Rosés de Terroirs, unissons-nous!*” (Terroir Rosés, let’s unite) campaign in 2020. Then recently a smaller group of producers from within Tavel, and other regions around Europe, took control and gave the campaign new energy, created the International Association of Rosés de Terroirs. Their aim is to promote rosés from great terroirs in France and abroad. The project kicked-off at WineParis 2022 showcasing 34 wines with the goal of 100 over the next three years.

These wines tell a story of the place they are grown (the interaction between the grape variety and their physical environment), the passion of the producers, and a commitment to using minimal, if any pesticides. A commonality among them concerns tannins. Each containing from light to a low levels of tannin coming from contact with the grape pulp, skins, and seeds, as part of the maceration process.

Starting Point: Tavel

As the Association was established in Tavel, it makes sense to start here.

The only French ‘cru’ dedicated 100% to rosé wine, and the first rosé appellation in France in 1937, the name “Tavel” comes from the Latin word “Tavellis” which means stone table. In fact, its 960 hectares spread over three types of stony terroir: flat white stones (Les Vestides), sand and stones (Olivet), and pebbles (Vallongue).

Not to be confused, the name Tavel, applies not only to the village, but also the name of the appellation itself (Tavel AOC), and the wine produced in the appellation. It’s one of the smallest AOCs in the Southern Rhone, across the river from Châteauneuf-du-Pape where Grenache typically dominates, aided by Cinsault, and also sometimes Syrah, Mourvèdre, Clairette, Bourboulenc, Carignan, Picpoul, and Calitor. No mono-varietal rosé here!

Tavel is intense, with more to say. It is not a typical rosé. It’s a wine for the table and so good with food. And its color is much more intense, with the *Cahiers des charges* (French appellation rules) stipulating that Tavel wine must have a certain depth of color.

What gives Tavel wine these unique characteristics is the process of extended maceration of whole grapes, skins, and pulp during winemaking. This gives the wine greater weight, structure, complexity, and of course a deeper color and hint of tannins.

Wines from several producers beyond Tavel are included in the association. Below is a brief description of the regions where they reside and the wines.



A sampling of Rosés de Terroirs includes Domaine La Suffrène (Bandol), Le Fraghe (Charetto di Bardolino), Les Vignerons de Tavel et Lirac (Tavel), Château d'Aqueria (Tavel), Chateau Ballan Larquette (Bordeaux) and Fournier Pere & Fils (Sancerre).

Sancerre

Sancerre rosé is a rare gem made from 100% Pinot Noir.

Fournier Pere & Fils – Les Belles Vignes 2020

- Blend of saignée and direct press | Price: 17.50€
- Certified HVE3, in organic conversion

A marked Pinot Noir cherry core with zingy rhubarb aromas with spicy nuances on this wine. These follow to the palate with a medium acid and body structure. A low tannin level brings power yet in an elegant way. A wave of stony savoriness glides across the rather lengthy finish. A wine to go with seafood and sushi dishes like no other!

<https://savortheharvest.com/terroir-rose-on-the-rise/>