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14 Jul 2023

TASTING ARTICLES

ROSÉ

PROVENCE

RIOJA

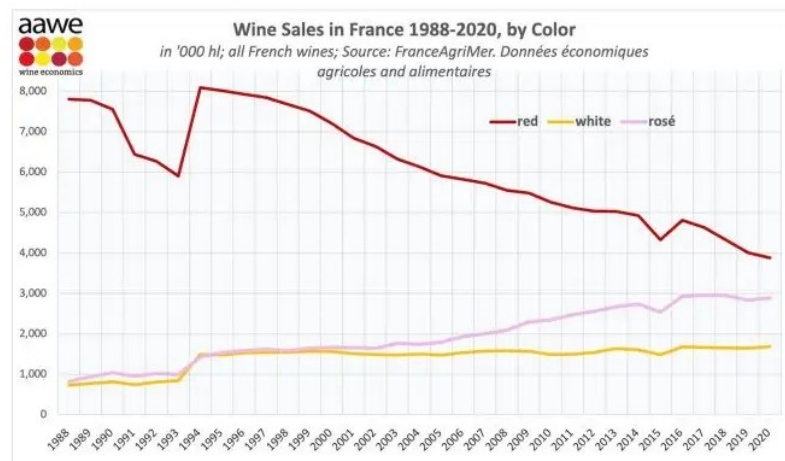


Rosé, seriously



The best rosés are not only refreshing while young but also have the capacity to evolve beautifully, finds Tam. Above, winemaker Rosana Lisa, who makes delicious, ageworthy rosé at Lalomba in Rioja.

On 26 June 2023 the [American Association of Wine Economists](#) [tweeted](#) a graph of wine sales by colour in France from 1988 to 2020. It makes for a startling graphic. Red-wine sales (ergo consumption, one might deduce) have pretty much crashed from a high of 8 million hl (176 million gallons) in 1994 to under 4 million hl in 2020. White-wine sales have remained pretty steady since 1994 at around 1.75 million hl (38.5 million gallons). Rosé consumption, on the other hand, has risen. From less than 1 million hl (22 million gallons) in 1988, the French consumption of pink wine is up to 3 million hl since 2016 and holding steady. The French are drinking nearly as much pink wine as red. They have *tripled* their consumption of rosé.



AWE reports on wine sales by colour in France from 1988 to 2020

These are serious, sit-up-and-take-notice data. France Agrimer published a [report](#) in June 2023 that studied rosé-wine consumption in 45 countries and it's clear that it's not only France where we're seeing colours changing. They report on “new” rosé wine-making countries ... characterized by more than 50% growth in the space of 10 years’. Chile and New Zealand lead the charge. In terms of worldwide rosé production, France (35%) and Spain (20%) top the list, the US is third (10%), Italy coming in a very close fourth (9%). Worldwide, rosé consumption is now one in 10 bottles. (In France, it's one in three!)

The story could be that red-wine consumption has dropped, alarmingly. But we could read this graph in a positive way. Perhaps the pendulum – which in the 1980s and 1990s swung in favour of those who believed that excess signalled success, that lavish (insert winemaking/oak/alcohol/tannins/extraction/ripeness) signalled taste, and that (big) volume equalled a healthy industry – is moving into a space where balance and moderation, coupled with real, mindful sensory pleasure, is the focus.

Wine drinkers want fresher, lighter, more food-friendly, thirst-quenching wines. Climate change might play in our favour here if we're smart. We can harvest red grapes for rosé earlier, at higher acidity and lower alcohol, but fully ripe, busting with flavour. The resulting rosés are refreshing, appetising and much more all-round in terms of pairing with all kinds of food, which suits our increasingly global, plant-based way of eating. And they also work without food. Win-wine-win.

I've split the 61 rosé reviews below into three groups. The first is the Lalomba Finca Lalinde vertical – worth looking at on its own terms. The second is a handful of sparkling rosé wines and the third is 49 still rosés from around the world. The default order is by producer (sur)name but you might find it interesting to reorder by region or score – not least to consider whether Provence really is where the most scrumptious rosés hail from ... Just saying.

Still

Madrevite, La Bisbetica Rosé 2022 IGP Umbria

16

Full bottle 1,158 g.

Minerally, sandy and floral on the nose, and then gritty, salty and briny on the palate. Muscular, dry, even a little astringent, and full of robust character. (TC)

13%

Drink 2023 – 2024