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Rosés Are Better Than Roses: Pink Wine for Valentine's Day

We'll take wine over flowers any time.



By *Sarah Tracey* of *The Lush Life*

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Nothing says Valentine decadence like pink Champagne

A dozen roses may be the traditional expression of love, but we're willing to bet that wine has inspired far more romantic moments than floral arrangements ever did! Why not fill your Valentine's Day celebration this year with a delicious assortment of rosés? Although rosé has come to be associated with summer, it's such a diverse category of wine that can absolutely be enjoyed year round -- if you know which bottles to choose. Added bonus: rosés are some of the most food-friendly wines out there. If you're planning a romantic dinner leave the sleepy reds for another time and pop some pink! Read on for some of the perfect picks for Valentine's Day.

Rosé Champagne

If you desire 'only the best' for your sweetheart, Champagne is the classic choice. True Champagne is only made in the Champagne region of France, and it's a splurge that's worth it if you want to go over the top: the combination of soil, climate, growing conditions, craft, and heritage give the wines of Champagne a luxurious complexity and depth that no other region can truly rival. Rosé Champagne is soft and elegant, filled with floral aromas and red fruit

flavors, and lovely to toast with. If you don't want to indulge in an entire bottle, look for half-bottles or 'splits', there are lots of widely available options.

Try: Laurent-Perrier Brut Rosé (\$99.99), Moët & Chandon Grand Vintage Rosé 2008 (\$69), Champagne Nicolas Feuillatte Brut Rosé (\$48), Billecart-Salmon Brut Rose (\$51.99/375ML half-bottle)

Drink rosé Champagne with: Lobsters with Beurre Blanc



Franciacorta rosé is a romantic Italian treat

Franciacorta Rosé

Putting an Italian twist on your bubbles selection is creative and romantic. Although Prosecco has come to be thought of as the Italian equivalent to Champagne, that's not truly accurate: they don't share the same production method or grape varieties (more on that [here](#)). The major Italian sparkler that does rival Champagne in terms of quality and craft is called franciacorta: made in the Lombardy region of Italy (also home to two of my favorite cheeses, Gorgonzola and Taleggio) from mostly Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes, with a little Pinot Bianco allowed in

the blend. And it's also made in the 'classic method,' meaning there is a double fermentation in the bottle just like Champagne. Franciacorta comes in many different styles, including a rosé version. Prices are on the level with Champagne (expect to pay \$35-\$80 a bottle): if you think Champagne is exclusive and luxurious, Franciacorta is about 20 times smaller as a growing region, with only about 100 producers (vs. over 19,000 Champagne vigneron), so you could say it's even more exclusive.

Try: Ca' del Bosco Franciacorta Cuvee Prestige Rosé (\$57.99), Ferghettina Franciacorta Rose 2011 (\$58.99), Faccoli Franciacorta Rosé Brut (\$45)

Drink franciacorta rosé with: Pasta with Rosemary Shrimp Scampi



Delicate French rosé in a beautiful floral bottle, mais oui!

Dry, Elegant Rosé

Rosé 'still wines' (ie, not sparkling) have never been hotter. The days of sticky-sweet white zin are happily behind us and wine lovers everywhere have been enjoying the crisp, refreshing and delicate rosé style iconic of the south of France. It's not just France that has wonderful rosé.

Today great bottles come from Spain, California, and Oregon too. Their styles of rosé are usually made from red grapes, the juice allowed just a little bit of time in contact with the grape skins (where all the pigment comes from) to create a delicate blush color. It's not unusual to see very pale rosés made from Cabernet, Syrah or Grenache grapes.

Try: Gerard Bertrand Cote des Roses Rose 2015 (\$17), Gamble Family Vineyards 2015 Rosé (\$22), Inman Family Wines "Endless Crush" Rosé 2016 (\$35), Elouan Rosé 2015 (\$22), Raimat Rosé 2015 (\$12)

Drink Dry and Elegant Rosé with: Pan-Seared Salmon with Fresh Herbs



Alandra Rosé: a hearty rosé from Portugal

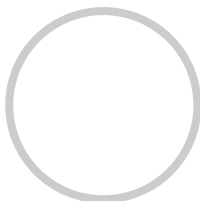
Deep, Rich Rosé

If you normally go for red wine, there are some great rosés that are deep in color and have the richness and structure usually reserved for your favorite reds. The longer the grape skins are allowed to steep in their juice during winemaking, the darker color and stronger flavor and textural elements are achieved. Look for cerasuolo from southern Italy, or Spanish and

Portuguese rosado wines. These richer styles are wonderful in wintertime when we desire a heartier profile in our food and wine; if you think you can't drink rosé with steak these are the ones you should try!

Try: Masciarelli Villa Gemma Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo (\$14.99), Esporão Alandra Rosé 2015 (\$8.00), Falesco Vitiano Rosato 2015 (\$12.00)

Drink deep, rich rosé with: Filet Mignon with Herb-and-Cheese Potatoes



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Sarah Tracey is a certified sommelier, entertaining expert, and wine educator based in New York City. Whether teaching classes, creating custom beverage programming for corporate and media events, or exploring wine regions world-wide, she's driven by her love for producers who make fabulous wines and are also mindful of our environment. With years of experience, knowledge, and a...

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