Rosé Uncorked: The Sainsbury’s Rosé Wine Report

May 2016
Introduction

Sainsbury’s sells over 15 million bottles of rosé a year (Nectar*) and, according to wine experts and consumer trends, the nation’s thirst for pink wine is set to continue.

Sales of rosé now account for one in ten of all still wines sold in Sainsbury’s, indicating a change in perceptions around this formerly polarising wine style. Sainsbury's now sells 55 different still rosé wines from all over the world, and this is set to grow.

As the UK’s interest in rosé grows, Sainsbury’s has taken a deep dive into the subject, to see how and why people buy it, drink it and love it...

According to Elizabeth Newman, Head of BWS at Sainsbury’s, the launch of celebrity rosé wines from the likes of Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie and Drew Barrymore are pushing the perceptions of rosé to new heights. Cult rosés like Whispering Angel have also helped to make it a more aspirational drink, particularly among millennials.

The British still have some way to go before catching up with France – where rosé actually outsells white wine – but it is clear that rosé is an increasingly important part of the UK consumer’s drinks choice. Indeed, the 15 million bottles of rosé sold per year in Sainsbury’s is enough to fill 8,800 hot tubs!

Generally perceived to be the wine of choice for summer, Nectar data of Sainsbury’s shoppers shows that rosé wine sales enjoy a significant sales uplift in July.

However, there is also a loyal fan base who enjoy rosé wine all year round – a huge 33% of those surveyed saying they would choose to drink it throughout the year (Sainsbury’s Research).

When it comes to choosing which rosé to buy, whether it’s a paler Provence or darker Californian style, rosé drinkers let their palates decide, with 36% of people saying that taste is the most important factor (YouGov).

As one of the biggest rosé retailers on the high street, Sainsbury’s has an unparalleled insight into how we’ll be buying and drinking it this summer.

Rosé Uncorked is packed with fascinating insights from sales trends, consumer research and top tips from wine expert Joe Wadsack to help you create the perfect rosé moment.

Cheers!

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* Nectar data based on Sainsbury’s shoppers.
The UK’s rosé outlook

A rosé for all seasons

Rosé has a loyal customer base and has become a popular wine choice all year round for a third of people in the UK (Sainsbury’s Research). As you’d expect, rosé drinking habits are also directly impacted by the arrival of warmer, sunnier weather. Sainsbury’s sales data shows that when the sun is out it has a huge effect on encouraging customers to enjoy a glass of rosé and also on the style of wine they choose.

New world rosé wines such as Californian Grenache are most popular in April or May, while sales of the lighter-coloured old world rosé wines routinely peak in July (see chart below).

Last April, sales of Sainsbury’s Californian Grenache Rosé increased by 400% compared with the previous month (Nectar*) – no coincidence that the Met Office noted it was the sunniest April on record since tracking began in 1929.

“The customer preference that we see in spring for slightly darker-coloured new world rosé indicates that people are starting to think more about that first glass of rosé to celebrate the coming of summer but are still more inclined to hold off the paler, more traditional style of rosé until the height of summer on exceptionally hot, sunny days.”

Elizabeth Newman, Sainsbury’s Head of BWS

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1. Sainsbury’s sales data analysis (2014–2016), including:
   - Winemakers’ Selection Portuguese Rosé 75cl
   - Winemakers’ Selection Rosé d’Anjou 75cl
   - Taste the Difference Côtes de Provence Rosé 75cl
   - House Pinot Grigio Blush 75cl
   - Taste the Difference Bordeaux Rosé 75cl
   - Fronton Negrette Rosé. Taste the Difference Fronton Negrette Rosé 75cl
   - Winemakers’ Selection Californian Grenache Rosé 75cl
   - Winemakers’ Selection Californian White Zinfandel 75cl

* Nectar data based on Sainsbury’s shoppers
Rosé renaissance

Interestingly, while it might be expected that older drinkers would prefer the most traditional styles of rosé, insights commissioned by Sainsbury’s indicate it’s the younger generation, or millennials*, who are tipping the scales in favour of lighter styles of rosé wine. More than a quarter 18-24 year olds stated that they’d be more likely to serve a lighter-coloured rosé wine than a darker one to guests (YouGov), suggesting that paler styles have a reputation among the younger generation of being better quality or more premium.

In fact, 18-24 year olds are twice as likely to opt for a paler pink rosé compared with those over 45 (YouGov).

18–24 year olds are twice as likely to opt for a paler pink rosé versus those over 45

“Lighter coloured rosé wine is of higher quality.”

While 29% of women would choose to serve a lighter colour rosé at a dinner party, men are twice as likely to opt for a darker rosé to serve to their guests.

Nearly a third of women would choose a paler rosé to serve to guests

“Would you prefer to serve lighter or darker coloured rosé wine to guests in your home?”

Women

Nearly a third of women would choose a paler rosé to serve to guests

Men

Regional preference

Customers located in the South East, North East, West Midlands and Yorkshire and the Humber show the highest preference for purchasing rosé, with sales in these regions over-indexing compared to the rest of the UK.

Regional preference

* Millennials are defined as the generation born in the 1980s and 1990s, reaching young adulthood in the 2000s
3. Nectar data based on Sainsbury’s shoppers, ranked by proportion of customers buying rosé by region

Rosé wine purchase preference index

Higher preference — — Lower preference
Pairing with pink: rosé’s perfect match

**Rosé and the weekly shop**

Rosé is a quintessential part of our summer repertoire, enjoyed as an apéritif or to accompany summer lunches and barbecues. We delved deep into the UK’s baskets to find out what the nation is buying with its rosé wine.

**Sun seeker’s choice**

Sainsbury’s Winemakers’ Selection
Californian Grenache Rosé 75cl

Easy to drink and with hints of cherry, it evokes memories of summer holidays. No surprise therefore that men’s shorts are a common basket companion with this wine.

**Party pleaser**

Sainsbury’s Taste the Difference
Côtes de Provence Rosé 75cl

More popular than ever (62% sales increase in July 2015 compared to July 14, Nectar*), this wine is most often bought with smoked salmon and party food – a garden party pleaser.

**Holiday throwback**

Sainsbury’s Winemakers’ Selection
Rosé d’Anjou 75cl

Antipasto and olives as well as fresh counter fish suggests this wine is seen as a holiday throwback.

**Perfect for a BBQ**

Sainsbury’s House
Pinot Grigio Blush 75cl

Often bought with fresh burgers and continental meats, this wine is clearly a common pick for BBQs.

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* Nectar data based on Sainsbury’s shoppers, based on purchases made in the same shopping visit with specific rosé products, ordered by significance of relationship.
Rosé 101: tips from the top

Wine expert Joe Wadsack joined us for a fully blindfolded tasting to identify his favourite wines from our top-selling rosé range. He wanted to ensure colour did not prejudice his notes.

“I was surprised at the impact of not having the visual cue of seeing the colour of the rosé I was tasting. It was an interesting exercise in reminding myself of how much we sometimes let our eyes lead our taste buds when it comes to wine. The power of colour to impact choice is far greater with rosé than with red or white wines.”

Sainsbury’s Winemakers’ Selection Côtes du Rhône Rosé (2014)
“This one has instant appeal thanks to an enticing fruit smell. The taste is more laid back, it’s the kind of rosé you drink on a hot day, sat in a deckchair, enjoying a choc ice. It’s got a nice balance and is round and succulent. I’d also pair this with smoked salmon or barbecued sardines. Clean finish, nice wine, well made, elegant.”

Sainsbury’s Winemakers Selection Californian White Zinfandel (2014)
“This is a sweet wine with hints of an English Breakfast Tea. It would pair well with Chinese food, something hot and spicy or perhaps crispy aromatic duck rolls and hoisin sauce to balance out the sweetness. Great choice for people who are new to drinking rosé wine.”

Sainsbury’s Taste the Difference Bordeaux Rosé (2014)
“This has a really pretty, fruity smell of raspberries, cherries and even a bit of cranberry. It tastes very juicy and mouthwatering with good acidity and balance. It’s a lovely summery rosé wine with a clean and fresh taste.”

Sainsbury’s Taste the Difference Barrihuelo Rioja Rosado (2015)
“This is my favourite, it’s fruity and young and smells of pear drops. There’s also a herby quality – I’m getting a dry oregano taste. I would say this is a perfect wedding rosé, with its’ fine, fruit core and subtle yet complex aromatic and mouthwatering profile. Very refreshing.”

3 things you need to know about rosé

1. Rosé is not ‘watered down’ red wine – rosés are made from red grapes but not macerated for as long on the skins so the juice doesn’t take as much of the colour.
2. Rosé is a perfect match for food – oysters and European rosés pair especially well.
3. Pink wine is not just for girls – more men than ever are enjoying rosé because they love the taste. With so many styles on the market there’s a rosé for everyone.