

# SPARKLING ROSÈS

FOR THE *Holidays*

By John Vankat

**T**his time of year features several holidays in only a few weeks: Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Different holidays mean different foods, as well as different gatherings of family and friends, who have various tastes.

These many differences pose challenges in selecting which wines to serve. However, there is a single wine style that works beautifully well from Thanksgiving through New Year's and is loved by most people. It is rosé sparkling wine, which includes rosé Champagne.

Sparkling rosés are very food friendly, broadly appealing and traditionally celebratory, making them fine choices during this season of holidays. Of the numerous sparkling rosés available, here are my recommendations at different price levels

**Da Luca non-vintage sparkling rosé "Extra Dry, Vino Spumante, Italy" (\$14)**

This blend of Merlot and Raboso delivers surprising quality for the price. It is attractive in the glass and forward on the palate with strong fruit, enjoyable fizz, very good balance and fine length.

**Villa Sandi non-vintage sparkling rosé "Brut Rosato, Il Fresco, Italy" (\$17)**

This well-made bargain of the Glera grape plus a touch of Pinot Noir is pleasing all-around. It has orange-red color, impressive refinement for the price, mouth-filling froth, expressive personality and long finish.

**Dopff & Irion non-vintage sparkling rosé "Brut Rosé, Cremant d'Alsace, France" (\$23)**

Attractive across the board, this Alsatian is 100 percent Pinot Noir. It features strength and forward fruit, but with medium-dry flavor thanks to its fine balance. Plus, it has both complexity and personality.

**Bollamatta (by Bibi Graetz) non-vintage sparkling rosé "Italy" (\$26)**

This 100 percent Sangiovese sparkler has a very beautiful pink hue. Positives on the palate include appealingly strong fruit, along with pleasing balance, complexity and length.

**Moët & Chandon non-vintage "Rosé Impérial, Champagne, France" (\$40)**

The Impérial has more fruit than most Champagnes, which will make it popular with many people at this season's holiday gatherings. I also enjoyed its color, ample bubbles and extended finish.

**Veuve Clicquot non-vintage "Rosé, Reims, Champagne, France" (\$60)**

Classic rosé Champagne! I especially liked its polished balance and mouth-filling bubbles, as well as excellent complexity, integration and refinement. Its lengthy finish is delightful.



**Moët & Chandon 2009 "Grand Vintage Rosé, Champagne, France" (\$70)**

This outstanding Champagne is a striking, copper-hued red. It is strong on the palate, yet impressively well-crafted. Highlights include voluminous froth and an exemplary finish.

**Pol Roger 2009 "Brut Rosé, Champagne, France" (\$123)**

A beauty with finely textured froth, powerful yet refined strength and focus on excellently balanced fruit. Plus there's wonderful integration, sophistication and complexity, all of which extend through a long-lingering finish.

**Nicolas Feuillatte 2006 "Brut Rosé, Palmes d'Or, Champagne, France" (\$202)**

A memorable wine exceptional in multiple dimensions, including gorgeous deep copper-red color and fizz so fine that it is challenging to sense individual bubbles. Made from beautiful Pinot Noir fruit, there is great strength on the palate, yet with exceeding refinement.

*Recommended wines can be ordered from your favorite Arizona wine store. Write to John Vankat at [azpinewine@yahoo.com](mailto:azpinewine@yahoo.com).* ▲