

The Red, White and Rosé: Three summer wines to elevate an ordinary day

After a long time apart, we're ready to enjoy life with our friends and loved ones. And that means wine. Not just any wine, though. Every bottle should be a little special, to remind us all what we have. Here are a white, red and rosé to help you celebrate the summer. Each stars a little-known grape, giving you the chance to show off your wine knowledge.

For white, we are drinking Txakoli (chah-kuh-lee). I recommend the Ulacia, but if you see the Ameztoi or Gorrondona, those are delicious too. All three are around \$20, and each brings super high acidity, citrus fruit and usually just the whisper of bubbles. These are wines to wake you up and refresh you. That first sip might sting a little. But the second is a little more refreshing, and soon you will be quaffing your Txakoli like a pro. The Ulacia contains the wonderful Hondarrabi Zuri grape (and yes, for the geeks out there, a little bit of Hondarrabi Beltza). These will pair terrifically with shellfish and spicy fare.

In the industry, we are all a little bored with Provence Rosé, but luckily, we have an antidote for these feelings of ennui. Meet Clos Cibonne Tentations. It is the entry level wine of Clos Cibonne, and can be found for around \$18. The higher-end bottlings of Clos Cibonne cost more than \$30, and are some truly world class rosé. However, the Tentations is a damn nice bottle on its own. Like the Clos Cibonne, it includes a healthy percentage of Tibouren, highly sought after because it brings great intensity to both aromas and flavor. A sniff and sip of this wine lets you know why the grape is prized; the fruit seems a little more focused, there's a hint of smoky herbs in the palate and it's all in balance. It has great acidity and it's dry and very focused; try it at a warmer temperature to bring out more fruit. It will be a little difficult to spot in the wild. If you see it, pick up a few, as this will not last throughout the summer.

We are going straight into fruit bomb territory with our red, Li Veli's Susumaniello. It's summer, and we'll drink fruit bombs if we want to. This one is a doozy, starring red fruits, black fruits and more fruits. It's light on tannins, with just enough acidity to bring you back for another sip. It is not, however, going to be easy to find, as most shops have a very limited Susumaniello section, but I have it on authority that it can be found in the southern, middle and northern parts of the state. It will be great with anything on the grill and doesn't mind being drunk all by itself.