



Wine of the week: Enjoué, 2014 Sonoma Valley Rosé



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THE PRESS DEMOCRAT
July 21, 2015, 10:47AM

The name Enjoué is French for “joyful, playful and lighthearted,” which captures the spirit of this rosé and the vintners behind it — John and Nancy Lasseter.

Winemaker Julia Lantosca says the Lasseters’ fingerprints are all over our wine-of-the-week winner — the Enjoué, 2014 Sonoma Valley Rosé at \$28.

“A typical tasting trial finds us seated at the Lasseters’ kitchen table,” Lantosca explained. “I work together with John, Nancy, and Bart Hansen (our cellar master) on the blends ... John and Nancy share a passion for blended wines, and every wine we bottle has been created through our blending tastings.”

This is a knockout, dry rosé with tangy fruit and a supple texture. What sets it apart is its bright acidity and its tasty range of flavors – strawberry, grapefruit, watermelon and a hint of mango.

“We make a Provençal-style rosé,” Lantosca explained. “Nancy and John Lasseter fell in love with these wines during their travels in France, and discovered when they returned to Sonoma Valley that this style of wine was not readily available here. So, they used this style as the inspirational starting point for Enjoué.”

The rosé is a blend of organic syrah, grenache and

mourvedre grapes.

Concocting a rosé with consistent color is the most challenging part, since the intensity of the grape color varies each year, said Lantosca, the Lasseter winemaker since 2007.

“Part of the pleasure of rosé is that it’s visually very appealing,” she said. “Since both Nancy and John have a background in art, the appearance of the wine really matters to them.”

John is the chief creative officer of Pixar, Walt Disney Animation Studios, and DisneyToon Studios. Nancy’s background is in graphic design.

What the uninitiated don’t know about rosé is how the dry, crisp incarnation has transformed skeptics into fans.

“I enjoy sharing the Enjoué because there are people who see ‘pink’ and think that means a sweet, uninteresting wine,” Lantosca said. “I love to see their pleasure with the first sip of our rosé.”

Lantosca never expected to be a winemaker. She went to U.C. Davis intent on becoming a veterinarian, but she was bewitched after taking a wine appreciation class and switched majors.

“I began trying a variety of wines,” Lantosca explained.

“I became fascinated with the many wines I tasted and I immediately switched majors.”

This week’s blind tasting: Rosé

TOP PICK

Enjoué, 2014 Sonoma Valley Rosé 13.3%, \$28. ★★★★★1/2: A gorgeous, dry rosé with tangy fruit and a supple texture. It has a tasty melding of fruit flavors -- strawberry, grapefruit, watermelon and a hint of mango. Crisp acidity. Nice length. Knockout.

TASTY ALTERNATIVES

CrossBarn, 2014 Sonoma Coast, Sonoma County Pinot Noir Rosé, 12.5%, \$18. ★★★★★1/2: This rosé is also incredibly

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striking, our wine-of-the-week runner up. It has bright fruit -- strawberry, white peach and watermelon -- and great minerality. It works. Dry, with a crisp finish. Rock Star.

Chasseur, 2014 Vin Gris of Pinot Noir, 13.7%, \$16.★★★★: A supple rosé with generous fruit and nice acid. Aromas and flavors of strawberry and watermelon. It pulls off its viscous texture. Well done.

Gary Farrell, 2014 Russian River Valley, Sonoma County Rosé of Pinot Noir, 13.2%, \$28.★★★★: This tasty rosé has strawberry, pomegranate and a burst of minerality at its core. Just a hint of blood orange in the mix. Bright acid. Crisp finish. Just lovely.

Charles Heintz Vineyards, 2014 Sonoma Coast, Sonoma County Rosé of Pinot Noir, 13.3%, \$19.★★★: This rosé initially seemed muted. It had subtle aromas at best. It fared better on the palate with bright fruit -- strawberry and rhubarb. It has nice acid, and a lingering strawberry finish.