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Wine of the week: Carol Shelton, 2010 Mendocino County Dry Rose

By PEG MELNIK THE PRESS DEMOCRAT August 16, 2011, 1:54PM

Who knew? Carol Shelton, known for making sassy zins, actually prefers rose.

"I LOVE LOVE LOVE dry rose," she said. "We drink this wine more than any other wine we make ... It's so food-friendly and refreshing."

The zin-master is behind our wine-of-the-week winner -- the Carol Shelton, 2010 Mendocino County Dry Rose at \$15.

Asked if the uninitiated understand dry rose, Shelton said geography seems to play a role.

"In the Midwest, yes, it is still white zin to them, expected to be sweet and bubblegummy," she said.

California wine-drinkers, on the other hand, appear to be a bit more cutting-edge.

"Here we're seeing the trend change to a preference for dryness in rose," she said. "We poured this wine at the Santa Barbara Wine Festival last month and were amazed at how many of the younger generation (Generation X, Millennials) came to us specifically seeking out our dry rose, while many folks of our own generation (50-plus) were too biased (because of the sweet roses of the past) to try it. If we pressured them into trying it, they were very often shocked and a bit embarrassed at how much they liked it."

The tasty Carol Shelton rose at 4 stars edged out our top-scoring wine, the 4.5-star Lasseter Family Winery 2010 Enjoue Rose, because it's more widely available and its \$15 price tag undercuts the Lasseter at \$24.

John Lasseter is the chief creative officer at Pixar and Walt Disney Animation Studios, and he and his wife Nancy expect to open their winery this fall, with tasting by appointment only.

The back label says the Lasseters fell in love with the dry roses of southern France while at a cafe terrace overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. They were fascinated to see a bottle of rose on most tables, the "perfect companion to sunshine and leisure."

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