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Wine of the week: Enjoue, 2016 Sonoma County Estate Rosé



BY PEG MELNIK
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John Lasseter says "Quality is the best business plan."

This axiom has served the vintner and Academy Award-winning animator well. Lasseter is chief creative officer of Pixar Animation Studios, Walt Disney Animation Studios, and DisneyToon Studios.

"The Lasseters insist on quality above all else," said Julia lantosca, who makes the wine for Sonoma's Lasseter Family Winery. "If a wine lot doesn't improve our blend or makes the wine inconsistent with past vintages, I have the freedom to sell it off and only bottle the best wine possible."

The winemaker is behind our wine-of-the-week winner — the Enjoue, 2016 Sonoma County Estate Rosé, at \$28. The French word Enjoue means cheerful in English and this refreshing rosé is a splash of good cheer. The Enjoue is a dry rose that has pitch perfect balance and tangy fruit. It has crisp notes of strawberry, grapefruit and a hint of mango, with a quench of bright acid. What's more, the Enjoue has great minerality. This Rhone rosé is an authentic version; it has a French accent. lantosca said the fingerprints of the Lasseters are all over this rosé because of their tie to France.

"Their passion for rose wines from the southern Rhone led directly to the creation of our Enjoue," she said.

"When we began this project, we tasted nearly 30 Provencal and Bandol the Lasseters gathered during a tasting tour of the region. Trust me when I say, after tasting such a large group of wines, it was quite clear where we were headed in style, fruit profile and color."

The winemaker said John's creative side found its way into this rose.

"The artist's eye has been important in seeking to have a consistent color for the rosé," she said. "As an artist, he understands that one part of the pleasure of a great rosé is its beauty in the glass."

As for Nancy, lantosca said her inventiveness also played a role.

"She's intrigued by new options and possibilities," lantosca said.

"We have added a small amount of counoise to the 2016 blend. We planted a small block because Nancy suggested more blending options could potentially benefit the wine. We are looking at planting some cinsault, for the same reason."

lantosca, 60, graduated from U.C. Davis in 1979 with a bachelor's degree in fermentation science. She originally intended to study veterinary medicine, but that was before she was bewitched by winemaking.

"I took a beginning course in Wine Tasting and became fascinated," lantosca said. "I started taking more courses in viticulture and enology. Then I took off fall of 1978 to do an internship at Dry Creek Vineyards (June-Dec). After that I was hooked ..."

Over time lantosca has become an ardent fan of well-crafted rosés.

"I appreciate the bright fruit aromas and flavors, great mid-palate body with refreshing acidity," she said. "The ideal rosé is delightful to sip but has intriguing layers of flavor that captivate the taster."

THIS WEEK'S BLIND TASTING Rosé

TOP PICK

Lasseter Family Winery's Enjoue

Enjoue, 2016 Sonoma Valley Estate Rosé, 13.5% alcohol, \$28. ★★★★★1/2

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Tasty ALTERNATIVES

Hanna, 2016 Sonoma County Rosé, 12%, \$22.

★★★★: This floral rosé reels you in with aromas of white flowers and rose petals. On the palate there's tangerine, strawberry and grapefruit — lively flavors. Refreshing.

Clos du Val, 2016 Carneros Napa Valley Pinot Noir of Rosé, 13.9%, \$30. ★★★★★: This is a crisp rosé with quite a range — watermelon, strawberry, grapefruit and mineral. It's refreshing. Top rate.

Edna Valley Vineyard, 2016 California Rosé, 13%, \$14. ★★★1/2: This is a rosé with bright acid coupled with notes of raspberry, strawberry and mineral. Supple texture. Nice length. Pretty.

Barra of Mendocino Pinot Noir of Rosé, 13%, \$18. ★★★1/2: This is a tasty rosé with notes of peach and melon, but its weighted to watermelon. It has good minerality, a nice lift and finishes crisp. Smart.

[Peg Melnik's Tasting Room blog](#)