

Sokol Blosser
ROSÉ OF PINOT NOIR
Dundee Hills



**“An ideal choice for a picnic, a pâté,
a Caesar salad or a sunset.”**

“The 2004 Rosé of Pinot Noir from Sokol Blosser Winery in Dundee. This is a benchmark pinot noir rosé, filled with the berryish fragrance and savor of pinot noir without any ponderousness. The color is absolutely perfect for a pinot noir rosé, the texture rich but not intrusive.”

- Matt Kramer, The Oregonian, “Summertime and summer light”, Sunday, July 10, 2005

“BENCHMARK PINOT NOIR ROSÉ”

- MATT KRAMER

THE OREGONIAN, 7/10/05

Summertime and summer light

A rosé, a dry Bordeaux and an "important" riesling measure up for seasonal sippers

The inescapable truth of warm-weather wine drinking is that you want something cool, relatively light and not too imposing. And if it is going to be "important," then it had better be a white wine.

The three wines recommended this week fulfill these criteria perfectly. One is an Oregon rosé made from pinot noir that is an ideal choice for a picnic, a pâté, a Caesar salad or a sunset. Another is a sprightly, lemon-scented dry white from Bordeaux that's clearly all about fresh fish or a light pasta dish.

The "important" wine is a profound dry riesling from Alsace, a real sit-up-and-take-notice white wine that will wow your guests, and you, too.

Sokol Blosser Rosé of Pinot Noir "Dundee Hills" 2004: Regular readers of this column are likely aware that I am a fan of rosé wines. A really good rosé is actually a surprisingly rare accomplishment. Rosés tend not to sell for much money and they don't bring wineries the prestige they seek.

What's more, rosés require a just-right touch. If the juice spends too long on the flavor and color-rich skins then you've got a red wine. Too little time and it's pink but flavorless. And of course the juice itself has to come from pretty good grapes that are suitable for the delicacy of a rosé-type wine to begin with.

All of which helps explain the 2004 Rosé of Pinot Noir from Sokol Blosser Winery in Dundee. This is a benchmark pinot noir rosé, filled with the berryish fragrance and savor of pinot noir without any ponderousness. The



KRAMER ON WINE

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Not least, it's an exceptional deal in terrific rosé: \$8.95 a bottle. That's several bucks a bottle less than other rosés are asking these days.

Château Haut Rian 2004 "Bordeaux": This lovely dry white wine from Bordeaux — a blend of sauvignon blanc and semillon — reminds us of what the Bordeaux region can do when it wants to. Lately, inexpensive Bordeaux has taken a beating in the world market. A wine this good should have no problem selling out annually with customers begging for more.

Château Haut Rian 2004 is a luscious sauvignon blanc/semillon blend that sees no time in oak and doesn't miss it. It's plumped with flavor, notably variations of tastes and scents of herbs, ripe lemons and an edge of lime with some fruits like peach and apricot present. It's a fish wine supreme, as well as a wonderful choice for an aperitif.

Really, this is a standout dry white for the money, and worth hunting down, especially at its asking price: \$8.95 a bottle. (Note to retailers: The wholesale distributor is Valley Wine Co.)

Riesling "Bebenheim" 2002, Domaine Marcel Deiss: Now we're into the realm of truly great, spirit-enhancing dry white wine. If you've ever wondered what the hoopla about dry riesling is all about, this is the wine you need to try. Believe me, as great dry rieslings go, this is a secret treasure at the price being asked.

The story here is that Domaine Marcel Deiss is an old Alsatian winegrowing family, dating to 1744. The current winemaker, Jean-Michel Deiss is a believer in biodynamic winegrowing, an extreme form of organic cultivation and winemaking. Deiss wines are like no other in Alsace, as Jean-Michel Deiss creates different sorts of wines than his neighbors. Sometimes he's successful, sometimes not. This 2002 riesling designated "Bebenheim" (a village name) is a success indeed.

Deiss "Bebenheim" 2002 is dry riesling as it should be but rarely is. Suffused with a mineral scent and taste that many tasters classically describe as slate, it is thick-textured, with strong notes of apricot, citrus and even a touch of astingency in the finish.

This is profound dry white wine ideal for salmon, veal, chicken, pastas in cream sauces and many sausages. (You might be surprised how well a dry riesling of this sort of scale and depth goes with meats.) It will do nothing but improve with additional aging, but it's surprisingly evolved already.

At \$24.95 a bottle this is a steal in truly great dry white wine.

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