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HOMETALK: Wine

A wine for every occasion

What could be more romantic than the sensual pink blush of rosé wine during Valentine's Day month? asks **Graham Howe**

The Mont Rochelle cellar, left, and views over the Mont Rochelle vineyard, below.



ROSÉ wine comes in all colours from rose petal and onion skin to salmon and strawberry pink — and is made in off-dry, dry, still and sparkling styles.

Made from a wide spectrum of grapes in single varietal wines and blends — Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, Cinsaut, Gamay Noir, Pinot Noir, Pinotage, Merlot, Shiraz and Viognier — rosé is one of the most versatile wines for all palates and summer fare.

I've picked 12 of my favourite new releases of still and sparkling rosé wines:

Graham Beck Brut Rosé 2009. Made by pressing whole bunches of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir together, this classic MCC is fermented on its lees for 36 months. A gorgeous salmon pink with a long fine mousse, this offering combines the ripe raspberry fruit of Pinot Noir with the creamy complexity of Chardonnay, lime sherbet and a savoury twist.

Laborie Brut Rosé 2009. Made from hand-harvested fruit from a showpiece estate in Paarl, this blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir expresses typical varietal character. A creamy mousse leads to a wine with a great balance of crisp acidity, vibrant fruit and rich lees character with upfront strawberry, Turkish delight and almond flavours.

Laibach The Ladybird Brut Rosé 2010. A maiden MCC from one of the Cape's leading organic wine producers in Stellenbosch entices with its salmon colour, crisp and fresh mousse and delightful rose petal and strawberry flavours. A new release from Woolworths — also try first class organic MCC from Avondale and Bon Cap.

Pierre Jourdan Cuvée Belle Rose NV. Made from 100% Pinot Noir, the signature grape of Haute Cabrière, this "beautiful rose" is named after the discreet blush of the wine. A fine mousse reveals rich strawberry and black cherry flavours leading to an elegant dry finish. A fabulous match for crayfish, mussels and prawns.

Rickety Bridge Brut Rosé 2010. A maiden blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from a heritage Franschhoek estate has a lovely onion skin hue, yeasty brioche mousse and elegant citrus and red berry character. A classic MCC of great finesse oaked for two years in barrel and on its lees released in a limited edition MCC of 3,500 bottles.

Villiera Tradition Rosé NV. A popular Cape blend of Pinotage, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. A real

crowd-pleaser, it is made from the finest cuvée matured on its lees for 18 months to create a yeasty mouthful of cascading bubbles. A rich, seamless blend of berry-rich Pinotage, elegant, citrus Chardonnay and complex, savoury Pinot Noir.

Delaire Cabernet Franc Rosé 2011. This unique wine, made from 100% free-run Cabernet Franc juice, has a lovely rose petal tint with wonderful flavours of ripe strawberries, cassis and candylloss. A creamy mouthful of fresh red berry fruit with a dry, spicy finish makes a versatile partner for Asian fare and seafood at table.

Holden Manz Rosé 2012. This intriguing wine is made from all four varieties grown on this Franschhoek estate on the mountain slopes — Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Shiraz and Cabernet Franc. A peachy colour with fresh strawberry and cherry flavours has good balance of vibrant fruit and acidity. A great match for sushi and salmon.

Kleine Zalze Gamay Noir Rosé 2012. Made from the classic Beaujolais cultivar, this dry style rosé has a lovely salmon tone, elegant soft tannins, smooth mouth feel and good acidity. Sourced from prized 25-year-old vines in Wellington, low-yield grapes show delicate red berry and cherry flavours with a clean, light and dry finish.

Mont Rochelle Rosé 2010. Made from co-fermented Shiraz and Viognier grapes, this serious food wine was aged on the lees eight months to create a coppery-pink rosé in the old world style. While the Shiraz contributes raspberry red fruit and minerality, a dash of Viognier helps lift apricot and sweet fruit for a dry, crisp finish.

Saffronne Cinsaut Blanc de Noir 2012. A stunning release from Mount Abora in the Swartland showcases the unsung hero of the Rhône and Cape wine industry. Made from 35-year-old vines, whole-bunch pressed and unfiltered, it was kept on the lees to create great texture. Dry, with forest floor flavours and a luminescent mineral thread.

Tamboerskloof Katharien Syrah Rosé 2012. A charming new release from Kleinood Olive and Wine Farm in Stellenbosch comes under an arty hand-torn and printed label. Named after the youngest child in the De Villiers family, it evokes the young summer blush and enchanting days of summer in a light and lingering spicy wine.

■ *Graham Howe is wine and food editor of Habitat magazine.*

HOMETALK: Food



Dream of the Med while dipping and dunking

There is a famous Provençal dish called 'Le Grand Aioli' that combines a mayonnaise with a colourful array of fresh and cooked vegetables, meat or fish. **Hennie Fisher** experiments

ON MANY levels Le Grand Aioli is a composite dish that represents the Mediterranean lifestyle in which food always plays an integral part, but at the same time remains simple to prepare (often being served at room temperature) and enjoy.

Le Grand Aioli is often placed on the table in a large bowl (or even in the mortar it was made in) surrounded by all things fresh and delicious to be dunked into the mayo: radishes, fennel, cocktail tomatoes, hard-boiled eggs, boiled potatoes, blanched green beans, blanched carrot sticks, artichokes, beetroot, cauliflower, some sort of white fish (often salt cod, poached), snails, mussels or clams, shrimp or crab — the list goes on.

In a continuous search for food that is similarly simple and fuss free, and that can be served al fresco with drinks as the sun hits the horizon (while imagining that

one lives on the Mediterranean) this version of a famous Indonesian salad was found. Meaning mix-mix, "gado-gado" is a one-dish meal found on street corners and in households from Malaysia to Indonesia.

Gado-gado is described as an Indonesian extravaganza, and rightly so — the sauce is at the same time slightly pungent and hot, but mellow and rich with a deep earthiness emanating from the shrimp paste, palm sugar and tamarind. This is a dish that is difficult to describe since every person invariably has their own opinion of it.

Recipe books either categorise it as a salad in which case most of the ingredients should be mixed together with the sauce, while others propose that it should be served in the manner of a Grand Aioli with an array of cooked or raw vegetables on the side. Opinions differ as to what a real gado-gado should contain.

Perhaps gado-gado is just one of those complex dishes that one has to accept comes with as many variations and possibilities as there are people wanting to eat it. Perhaps instead of trying to recreate the most correct version, it may be simpler to make your own and savour the unusual flavours and textures that it offers.

Gado-gado
50g tamarind pulp, without seeds (or 80g with seeds, softened with 60ml boiling water)
150g peanuts, roasted and coarsely ground
15ml (1Tbs) shrimp paste
4 small green chillies, seeds removed
1 large red chilli, seeds removed
¼ block palm sugar (or about 2 tablespoons soft palm sugar)
120ml cold water
1 medium onion, diced
3 large garlic cloves, sliced
2 limes, juiced
Extra olive oil
To serve: cucumber, beetroot, boiled

potatoes, miniature corn, green beans, cocktail tomatoes (not traditional, but it is acceptable to substitute with whatever is on hand), etc.

Blend all the ingredients for the sauce in a food processor or spice grinder. It would in all likelihood also be possible to blend the ingredients in a liquidiser, but the resultant purée could possibly be too fine. One ideally wants a uniformly coarse but spreadable consistency. Add a bit more water if the peanuts are making the mixture too dry.

Tip into a non-stick pan and fry on medium heat until the mixture becomes fragrant and turns a slightly deeper colour; stir all the time but do not let the mixture become too dry. Cool and mix with a splash more olive oil before serving.

The consistency must be such that one can scoop up some of the sauce with any of the accompanying vegetables.