

Wine Spectator

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10 Refreshing California Wines to Celebrate Spring

New reviews of crisp whites and rosés from across the Golden State

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Posted: April 21, 2014

Tasting Highlights bring the best wines from our editors' most recent tastings to WineSpectator.com members.

Spring is in the air, and as the weather begins to change so too will menus and the assortment of produce at local markets. This week we're highlighting a selection of refreshing whites and zesty rosés to complement the season's bounty. The wines here come from across California, and are available for \$25 or less.

Leading the pack is a lively and distinctive Albariño from Cambiata. This white grape is hugely popular in Spain and Portugal, and it's been slowly gaining ground in California. Cambiata owner and winemaker Eric Laumann grows Albariño and other offbeat varietals, such as Tannat, in Monterey County's cool, coastal climate. For a richer style, reach for one of the white Rhône varieties, such as Truchard's juicy and spicy Roussanne or a Grenache Blanc from Denner winemaker Anthony Younts' personal label, Kinero.

This is also the time of year when producers start releasing their rosés in anticipation of warmer weather. J Vineyards, Pisoni and Calera make an appearance here with Pinot Noir-based rosés from the 2013 vintage. Red Rhône grapes are popular choices for making rosé too, as with Benziger's well-priced version made from Syrah.

CAMBIATA Albariño Monterey 2012 Score: 90 | \$20

Strikingly vibrant and distinctive, with ripe juicy pear, marmalade and citrus notes, accented by citrus blossom hints. This ends with a clean, snappy finish. Drink now. 390 cases made. —*J.L.*

J Vin Gris Russian River Valley 2013 Score: 89 | \$20

Sleek and succulent, with a light pink color, floral strawberry aromas and zesty watermelon and spice flavors. Drink now. 5,000 cases made. —*T.F.*

PISONI Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Rosé Lucy 2013 Score: 89 | \$18

A zesty pink, with a bold streak, offering ripe strawberry aromas and lively flavors of raspberry and spice. Drink now. 680 cases made. —*T.F.*

SPELL Pinot Noir Sonoma County Rosé Vin Gris 2013 Score: 89 | \$18

Crisp and zesty, offering a slight pink color and appealing flavors of spicy peach and watermelon. Drink now. 139 cases made. —*T.F.*



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Eric Laumann of Cambiata made an outstanding 2012 Albariño from Monterey grapes.

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TRUCHARD Roussanne Napa Valley Carneros 2012 Score: 89 | \$25

The juicy, succulent Fuji apple, lemon, peach and pear flavors have accents of quince, spice and strawberry, with a spicy finish. Harmonious and refreshing. Drink now. 1,961 cases made. —*M.W.*

BENZIGER Rosé Dry Sonoma Mountain 2013 Score: 88 | \$15

A smoky edge gives this dark pink extra appeal, with lively watermelon, strawberry and spice flavors. Syrah. Drink now. 705 cases made. —*T.F.*

CALERA Pinot Noir Central Coast Vin Gris 2013 Score: 88 | \$18

Aromas of wild flowers and strawberry lead to succulent watermelon and cream flavors. Drink now. 466 cases made. —*T.F.*

TREANA White Central Coast 2012 Score: 88 | \$23

Bursting with floral notes of honeysuckle and jasmine, this offers peach, melon and citrus flavors, coming together on the long, juicy, spicy finish. Shows great balance and focus. Marsanne and Viognier. Drink now. 4,379 cases made. —*M.W.*

BALLETTO Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Rosé 2013 Score: 87 | \$18

A fun quaff, with floral strawberry and watermelon aromas and soft flavors. Drink now. 2,890 cases made. —*T.F.*

KINERO Grenache Blanc Paso Robles Alice 2012 Score: 87 | \$22

A mineral sea salt note adds interest to the fresh ginger, pear and apple flavors. Crisp, with a touch of coarseness on the finish. Drink now. 300 cases made. —*M.W.*

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