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WINE

Rosé for the Long Haul

In the United States, there is an increasing interest in upper-echelon pink wines that will improve with age

written by Katherine Cole | published July 10, 2017

The all-Spanish wine list at the restaurant Taberna de Haro in Boston features more than 300 selections. But there's one Gran Reserva from Rioja of which chef and owner, Deborah Hansen, is particularly protective. She only has three bottles left of the most recent vintage, which is the 2000. The next vintage, the 2008, may or may not be released next year, depending on the winemaker's whim.

"The flavors to me are like porcini and iodine and dried roses," Hansen says, sighing dreamily when asked to describe the wine. "It both broods and shines. The acidity is still intact, but it kind of seethes with funkiness and dark, savory aromas."

The Rioja in question is the 2000 R. López de Heredia Viña Tondonia Rioja Gran Reserva Rosado. Yes, that's right—it's a rosé. And for Hansen, it's an easy sell at \$150 a bottle. "Nobody asks about it," she says, "except wine geeks who understand that it's rare and unusual."

A 17-year-old still rosé may not be rare on wine lists for much longer, however. As still rosé sales continue to blossom in the United States, there is increasing interest in upper-echelon pink wines that will improve with age.

"It's a top-of-class price," she says, "and people who put them

The tech and native rosé so d

Faith Arm adopter of decisions delicious. But when "The buye

my rosé by that time. I can't change the process just to get it to you. Then people didn't wa

it was discounted because they thought it was off-vintage. ... It has been an uphill push."

Faith Armstrong Foster, winemaker and owner of Onward Wines and Farmstrong Wines in Napa, California, was an early adopter of the application of such traditional techniques to rosé. "I'm a UC Davis-trained winemaker, but a lot of my decisions are based more on heart and opinion than chemistry," she says with a laugh. Her 2010 rosés, she says, are delicious right now: "The fresh fruit subsides but it has more honeyed, floral complexity."



Faith Armstrong Foster, Onward Wines. Photo by Megan Reeves.



that they can sell for a higher price. "There are people who

old-vine fruit, whole-cluster European precedent for treating following suit.

Napa, California, was an early winemaker, but a lot of my 2010 rosés, she says, are

she encountered resistance. haven't bottled it unless

