

Rosé • Sunday Shrimp Salad

Remember White Zinfandel? In 1972, Bob Trinchero was trying to make a dry version of a white Zinfandel, and the fermentation got stuck (the yeast suddenly died), leaving a little bit of residual sugar in the wine. Rather than spend the money and time to restart the fermentation with new yeast, he bottled and sold it. By 1987 Sutter Home White Zinfandel became the best-selling premium wine in the nation. It became so popular because most casual wine drinkers enjoy a slightly sweet "blush" (pink) wine. Though the grapes came from Lodi, no Lodi wineries made a White Zinfandel (Sutter Home is based in St. Helena). A few years ago, responding to customer demand, several Lodi wineries started making European style dry blush wines, and their customers loved them. Dry **rosé** (pronounced rose-A) is a refreshing summer wine that's perfect for drinking while sitting on the lush grounds outside a Lodi tasting room on a hot summer day.

Origin: Rosé is not a grape varietal but rather a method of processing red grapes. Virtually all red grapes actually have white juice inside. The color of red wine comes from leaving the white juice in contact with the dark skins for several days or weeks through the end of fermentation. There are two ways to make rosé wine, both of which involve separating the red skins from the juice before fermentation. One way is by limiting skin contact to a few hours or even a couple of days, until the juice reaches the desired color, then the must (crushed grape skins and juice) is pressed, and the pink juice that comes out is fermented into wine. The other way is called *saignée* (pronounced sohn-YAY), where a small portion of the juice is bled off the must a few hours or a day after crush. Winemakers drain the juice to increase the ratio of skins to juice in the red wine must. This makes a darker, richer red wine. This "waste" pink juice is then fermented into a dry rosé. What's the difference? It has to do with the amount of flavor extracted from the skins versus the desired color of the wine. In the Provence region of France, for example, where 85% of the wine production is rosé, they use the first method to get the most flavor with the least color. Their signature regional rosé is a pale onion skin color. Saignée is more of an opportunistic wine. If the winemaker likes the waste juice, he or she may make a small amount of rosé from it--or not. It also has to do with the amount of rosé you want to make. You can probably figure out that saignée produces fairly small quantities compared to pressing off all the juice from the same amount of grapes.

Tasting and Serving: When you delve into wine tasting, you will hear a lot of jargon, especially all those words people use to describe aromas and flavors. There is no standard vocabulary to describe the aromas of rosé, because they are all different, and most rosés have very little aroma. You can make a rosé from just about any red grape, and the flavor extraction from the skins can be dramatically different from one winery to the next, and from one year to the next. Rosé is simply meant to be drunk and enjoyed. One thing to remember: rosés don't age in the bottle. They must be consumed right away to get the maximum flavor. If someone hands you a rosé that was made from grapes harvested more than a year ago, you should probably pass. It won't go bad. It will just not have the intended flavor profile. Serve rosé at 50 degrees (30 minutes in a refrigerator).

Pairing: What food do you pair with a rosé? It depends on the style. **Light dry rosés**, made in the Provençal (pronounced pro-vah-SAHL) style with lighter red grapes like Pinot noir pair well with light salads, raw and lightly cooked shellfish, and grilled fish. **Medium dry rosés**, like most wineries in Lodi make, pair with those foods, plus they will handle more spicy foods. A medium-bodied dry rosé made with **Rhone varietals** (Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre, and Carignan) can pair with all of those foods and will stand up to a hearty salade Niçoise, paella, or grilled chicken. I chose Klinker Brick Winery 2016 Bricks and Roses to pair with my Sunday Shrimp Salad. The dish is a southern style creamy, salty, spicy, oniony mixture that brings out the big flavor of the sweet, savory Gulf shrimp. Bricks and Roses is a delicate wine with a beautiful peach color made from Rhone varietals to give it a full flavor profile of strawberries, citrus, and melon. It's light enough that it doesn't take anything away from the subtle beer/spice flavor of the steamed shrimp but tart enough to cleanse your palate after each bite of the creamy salad. What does Gulf shrimp have to do with Lodi? Me, I guess. I've been steaming and boiling these babies all my adult life. When I hear that a wine pairs with shellfish, my mouth waters for that sweet, salty, seawater taste. Steve Felten decided to make a rosé in 2013 because, at the time, Klinker Brick didn't have a white wine to serve in their tasting room. He wanted to offer something that at least tasted like a white wine. Their first rosé sold out in couple of weeks. Klinker Brick now offers an Albariño made from grapes grown behind their tasting room in addition to their great Bricks and Roses rosé.

Sunday Shrimp Salad

After living on the Mississippi Gulf Coast for 19 years, I was glad to get back to Lodi. I do miss the sailing, the people, and the fresh Gulf shrimp. Some nights, I could see the lights of the shrimp trawlers from the window of my beach cottage. We had fried shrimp, boiled shrimp, grilled shrimp, steamed shrimp, blackened shrimp, barbecued shrimp, coconut shrimp, stuffed shrimp, Cajun shrimp, shrimp etouffee, shrimp creole, shrimp scampi, shrimp poboys, shrimp



salad... California supermarkets with good fish departments carry fresh Gulf shrimp (usually from Texas) when they are in season. Occasionally, the shrimp are previously frozen, which is OK. Check the label or ask the fishmonger to make sure it's wild caught in the United States. Don't buy imported shrimp! Why is this dish called "Sunday" Shrimp Salad? In Lodi, anyway, Grant Hamilton at IDOL Beer Works fills your empty growler with Image IPA (India Pale Ale) on Thursday. You drink a pint on Friday, then another pint or two on Saturday. The remaining pint is just enough to steam shrimp. Plus, Sunday is a great day to drink rosé wine.

Ingredients

2 pounds raw headless Gulf shrimp
3 stalks celery, cut into 3-inch sections
2 cups Lodi IPA beer (1 pint)
3 TBS Nellie and Joe's Key lime juice
2 TBS Old Bay Seasoning
2/3 cup celery, cut brunoise (2 to 3 stalks)
1/2 cup red onion, cut brunoise (about 1/2 small onion)
1/3 cup green onions, sliced into 1/8-inch rounds then chopped once (2 to 3 onions)
1-1/2 TBS parsley, cut fine brunoise
2 eggs, hard-boiled, cut small dice
1-1/2 tsp Tony Chachere's Original Creole Seasoning
1-1/2 TBS Dijon mustard
1/3 cup mayonnaise
1 tsp salt (to taste)

Steaming the Shrimp

If the shrimp still have the shells on, use a shrimp deveiner (page 182) to remove the vein running along the shrimp's back. This will also split the shell. Remove the shell, tail, and legs. You may have to wipe the brown vein remnants out of the shelled shrimp. Using a pot with a steamer basket and a vented lid, pour the beer, 2 TBS lime juice, and 2 TBS Old Bay Seasoning in the bottom of the pot and mix well. Turn the stove to medium-high heat. When the beer is boiling, put the steamer basket in the pot and lay shrimp in the steamer basket one layer high and add a couple celery stalk pieces. Cover with the lid and open the vent on the lid.



Tall pot with steamer basket. This usually comes in a set with the pot, pasta insert, steamer basket, and vented lid.



Cooked shrimp (pink and opaque with curled tails).

Raw shrimp meat is translucent and off-white or gray. You know a shrimp is cooked when the outside skin turns pink, the tail curls, and the meat turns white and opaque. Its body is no longer flexible. You want to stop cooking at that point. Overcooking will dry out the meat. After about 3 minutes of steaming, check to see if they are done. Steaming shrimp can take from 3 to 5 minutes, depending on the size. If they are not done, check every minute after that. Jumbo shrimp could take up to 8 minutes. When they are done, pull them out and put them in a bowl of ice and water to stop the cooking process. Repeat for another batch of raw shrimp until they are all cooked. Note that the first batch may take longer to cook than the last batch, because there is more liquid in the pot, so keep your eye on each batch after 3 minutes of steaming.

Making the Salad

Chop the steamed or cooked shrimp into ½-inch-long pieces. Chop again into smaller pieces if you use jumbo shrimp. Put the shrimp pieces in a 4-quart bowl and add all the remaining ingredients. Mix well and refrigerate for at least an hour before serving.

Presentation

My favorite presentation is to serve shrimp salad bruschetta style on toasted slices of a French baguette. Most baguettes are pretty small in diameter, so slice the baguette at a 45-degree angle, which gives you an oblong slice that is larger than the diameter of the loaf. You can also fill artisan romaine lettuce leaves with shrimp salad. Serves 4 people.

The California Ingredient

As a perfect complement to its wine culture, Lodi is now home to several craft breweries. Grant Hamilton, owner and brewer master of IDOL Beer Works (L-O-D-I spelled backwards), had his first beer at age eight in a local pub in Glasgow, Scotland. When he moved to California seven years ago, he wanted to open a business that showcased traditional west coast IPA's (India Pale Ales) alongside Germanic beers. In 2017, he turned the old Giant Discount Tire store on Sacramento Street into a world class brewery and tap house. His West Coast Image IPA is perfect for steaming shrimp, mostly because it only takes a pint to steam the shrimp, and you can drink the rest of the growler. Together with the Old Bay seasoning, the IPA's intense, sharp flavor adds the perfect touch of bitterness to the sweet and salty shrimp meat.

Tips and Tricks

In a pinch, you can use already cooked shrimp. Just skip the steaming step, but be sure to remove the tails. The problem with pre-cooked shrimp is that they usually come from India or China. These don't have the rich, sweet, slightly salty flavor of Gulf shrimp. The whole point of making shrimp salad, at least in the South, is to celebrate the bounty of wild caught Gulf shrimp, so we only make it during shrimp season. Look for the key words "Gulf," "Wild Caught," and "USA."

Some grocery stores sell frozen wild caught Gulf shrimp year-round. These will not taste quite as good as fresh shrimp, but they're not bad. To defrost the shrimp, dump them in a large bowl of room temperature water for about 10 minutes. Change the water, refill, and let them sit for another 10 minutes. Drain the water, and they're ready to steam.



Cool Gadget: Shrimp Deveiner

Before cooking a Gulf shrimp, you want to remove the black "vein" that runs along its back. This is not actually a vein, but rather the shrimp's version of a large intestine. It won't hurt you to eat, but will add an earthy flavor and gritty texture. There are several YouTube videos that show how to devein a shrimp. Every major kitchen gadget retailer sells a shrimp deveiner, but depending on where you live, you may have to special order it. Most deveiners are under \$10. I use a Chef'n Hightailer, which is a little more expensive than most (about \$20), but it's quick and easy to use, durable, easy to clean, and dishwasher safe. You just slide the pointed end into the shrimp's vein along its back (making the curve of the tool match the natural curve of the shrimp), push it all the way back until the end is near the tail, then squeeze the handle. It splits the skin along the back and usually scrapes out the vein. You just pull the skin, tail, and legs off in one piece and wipe out any vein remnants with your finger. The Hightailer is worth the investment if you plan to make something with shrimp at least once a year.

