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# Raise the white flag

A rosé revival? It's the pinots that are having a party, writes **Jeni Port.**

**C**HANGE is in the air this summer. The Kiwis and sauvignon blanc will kneel to pinot grigio and pinot gris, while vermentino's prospects will continue to rise.

The rosé revolution will again storm the barriers of wine snobdom but this time the message will be: let them drink rosé *and* sparkling rosé.

Expect the unexpected, too.

Who could have imagined that chenin blanc would make a comeback? And beaujolais and light dry reds? And sweet riesling ... sorry, "off dry" riesling?

Will this be the year that prosecco — Italian and home-grown — cuts into sales of sparkling wine over Christmas?

Some things won't change.

There will still be too many under rated rieslings and semillons left on shelves, and sommeliers and others will doggedly serve reds at room temperature, even when said room is a sweltering sauna.

## Low and bubbly

The low-alcohol wine movement gains many converts at this time of year (with good reason). At 10.8 per cent, Jacob's Creek Cool Harvest sparkling sauvignon blanc (\$15) meets the low-alcohol criteria and, importantly,



doesn't suffer on the flavour front and remains dry. Sauvignon blanc in a bubbly form is surprisingly easy to take with none of the herbaceous overload we are used to, just a light citrus flavour.

## Sharp and tart



This one is for the oyster-lovers who want the briny tartness in their molluscs to continue in their wine. If you like acidity and minerality driving your riesling, search out Larry Cherubino's The Yard 2011 riesling from the Riversdale Vineyard, Frankland River (\$25). Dry as the Nullarbor.

## Fine and appley

A fine-textured grigio from the Adelaide Hills with subtlety and finesse, the Alta 2011 pinot grigio (\$20) represents all that is good about this emerging Aussie style: crisp, appley and unassuming.

## Herbal and tropical

Sounds like sauvignon blanc but it isn't. Chenin blanc can share some




similarities with ripe savvy but in a richer, generous way. Voyager Estate's 2010 chenin blanc (\$20) is sweet tropical fruit with loads of charm. Other Oz chenins: Coriole, Dowie Doole, Kalleske.

**Citrus and sweetish**

The off-dry phenomenon continues this summer with imported wines up against the growing number of home-grown sweeties. Two Aussie master riesling makers are now converts. Ken Helm at Helm Wines at Murrumbateman has his 2010 "half-dry" riesling (\$25), nicely sweet and

perfectly dry to finish, and Jeffrey Grosset shows his riesling cred with a finely-balanced "off-dry" 2010 Watervale riesling (\$32) that is deceptive in its low-key sugaryness.

**Dry and rosey**

Rosé should be dry and juicy and fleshy, and the scent inviting enough to whet the appetite. Exhibit A: Innocent Bystander 2010 pinot rosé (\$19.95) — pretty, raspberry, savoury. Exhibit B: Lerida Estate Lake George 2011 pinot rosé (\$18) — floral, strawberry freshness, juicy. Exhibit C: La Linea 2011 tempranillo rosé (\$20.95) — dusty, earthy, cherry, spice.




**Bullish and spicy**

Running With Bulls 2010 Barossa tempranillo (\$19.95) will put a smile on your face. If it doesn't, check your pulse. Intense purple in colour, sweet plums and blueberries, chocolate, cinnamon spice, vanilla, warm and extremely tasty. This summer RWB is joined by a less energetic partner, a 2010 Wrattontully tempranillo (\$19.95) that plays black cherry and tamin notes.



**Soft and plummy**

This growing light, dry red category is brimming with good, easy drinking. Winemakers, taking a leaf out of the beaujolais book, are using gamay often partnered with pinot noir or even shiraz to produce vibrant-coloured young reds that only need a sunny courtyard and a pizza to be complete. Try Eldridge Estate's smooth, spicy PTG 2011 gamay-pinot noir (\$25) from Mornington Peninsula; Chalmers' earthy 2009 aglianico (\$25.99) or Medhurst's uncomplicated Whatever red (\$21.50) from the Yarra Valley. Feel free to serve lightly chilled.



**Red and cheery**

The barbera grape is in the shadow of sangiovese and nebbiolo but come summer it stands tall. Light to medium in body, with lots of cherry and red-fruit flavour, a touch of spice and little oak, it is puny no more. Try Coriole Vineyards 2010 barbera (\$30) from McLaren Vale to remind us that the first rule of wine is to be agreeably and utterly drinkable.

\*Prices are approximate.





PICTURE: MARINA OLIPHANT