

Summer Sips

BY EMILY
BETZ TYRA



August Wine Pour: Rosé

Stock your picnic cooler or your cellar with these five favorite Northern Michigan rosés—refreshing in hot weather, but complex enough to drink far into fall.

Marachal Foch Rosé, Good Harbor

Vineyards (\$7.50) The late renowned winemaker Bruce Simpson pressed this rich-hued, fruit-forward, semi-sweet wine from 100 percent M. Foch grapes. His son Sam Simpson started working with it in January, bottling and releasing only 300 cases.

2008 Pinot Noir Rosé, Forty-Five North

(\$20) Clean, refined, history-making. Competing against 954 reds at the 2009 Pacific Rim Wine Competition, this gorgeous rosé came in second to the California-made Barbara by Jeff Runquist, compelling judges to create a new Best Rosé category, which it won hands down.

2008 Rosé, Left Foot Charley

(\$15) Winemaker Bryan Ulbrich quips, "Don't fear the pink, it's a great summer drink!" Delightfully dry yet robust; a delicious pair with burgers. Made from Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Pinot Noir and Dornfelder grapes grown on Old Mission Peninsula and in Antrim County.

2007 Pinot Noir Rosé, Brys Estate (\$17.50) Spicy, dry and subtly floral, great with bacon-wrapped scallops or vineyard owner Eileen Brys's Cherry Pork Loin. RECIPE ON MYNORTH.COM. CLICK ON FOOD & WINE, RECIPES.

2008 Rosé of Cabernet Franc, 2 Lads (\$17) Lush, ripe, herbaceous, bold. At press time only a handful of bottles left at the Old Mission tasting room.

DRINK TO THIS

Sales of Michigan wine grew 196% from 1996 to 2008.

SOURCE: MICHIGAN GRAPE AND WINE INDUSTRY COUNCIL



Vino File

Kris Sterkenburg, co-owner of Gill's Pier Winery with husband Ryan Sterkenburg (ALSO PICTURED). The couple came to the Leelanau Peninsula from Milwaukee seven years ago to grow grapes and start a boutique winery.

On Riesling: Our only Riesling is semi-dry. If you ferment it too dry you lose a lot of the fruit character.

On winemaker Bryan Ulbrich, who, in addition to his own Left Foot Charley wines, makes all of the Gill's Pier wines: We hired him right out of the barrel, and it is one of the luckiest things we did.

On their vineyard: Every vineyard has its own microclimate. We have a lot of wind—good at preventing diseases, and very

acidic soil, which actually works to our advantage.

On the screw cap: It's easier in the cellar (no cork taint), it's tamper resistant, and you never need to have a corkscrew.

On keeping their dream of a family-owned winery alive: Ryan has a day job in Traverse City, I run the business, and we both run the vineyard. We were doing 10 wines, including fruit wines, and sort of lost our focus. I love being in the vineyard and was bare-

ly out there. So this summer we've pared back to five wines.

The Gill's Pier Wines: Cabernet Franc-Merlot (gold winner at Indy International Wine Competition), Riesling, Just Unleashed (table red), Whitewater (a semi-sweet blend), Royce (Auxerrois, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc). GILL'S PIER VINEYARD & WINERY IS AT 5620 N. MANITOU TRAIL (M-22), 3 MILES NORTH OF LELAND, 231-256-7003, GILLSPIER.COM

Emily Betz Tyra is associate editor of *Traverse*. Which Northern Michigan wine do you adore? Tell me at ETYRA@TRAVERSEMAGAZINE.COM.