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TORRE DEI BEATI

Matt Kramer – “THE OREGONIAN” Newspaper – June 29, 2003

Montepulciano d’Abruzzo Rosé “Cerasuolo” 2002, Torre Dei Beati

Finding a truly characterful rosé is one of wine’s tougher tasks. Many are pink, but few are palatable. And don’t let anybody tell you that pink wines are for sissies. A great rosé is memorable stuff.

This is a great rosé. And an unusual one too. This darkish pink wine is made entirely from the montepulciano grape variety grown (somewhat confusingly) in the Italian district called Montepulciano d’Abruzzo, a mountainous zone on Italy’s east coast bordering the Adriatic Sea.

The term *cerasuolo* (pronounced chei-rah-SWOH-loh) is used generically in Italy to signal a pink wine, typically somewhat dark-hued.

Torre dei Beati is a new winery created by a young couple, both of them restaurant wine stewards who were given a 30-year-old vineyard as a wedding present by the bride’s father.

Unlike many rosés, this wine is made differently than most. It is a blend of two batches of montepulciano juice. The first batch is from grapes selected for their higher acidity. This gives the rosé structure.

The second batch is obtained from a “saignée” (literally, bleeding) taken from the juice intended for their red Montepulciano d’Abruzzo wine. This juice gives the rosé its fruitiness, as well as intensifies the color. This blend is then fermented into wine at a cool temperature and quickly bottled. It does not see any oak and does not go through a secondary or malolactic fermentation, which helps preserve a bright acidity.

Redolent of dark cherries with a lip-smacking earthiness, this is a rosé like no other. If you’re a rosé fan (count me in!), then you’ll want to seek out this one, at \$11.95 a bottle.

(NOTE FROM PREMIUM BRANDS, INC. – Matt Kramer is a resident of Oregon and part-time contributor to the Oregonian newspaper. You may know him better as (in our opinion) one of the best columnists of the Wine Spectator publication.)