

August 10, 2008
Long Island Vines

Eight Rosés of Merit

By [HOWARD G. GOLDBERG](#)

Rosés, *déclassé* for years, are wildly popular today, and East End versions play easily into this international trend.

A recent tasting of eight local dry rosés, all from the fine 2007 harvest, was rewarding. Scent and flavor aside, their eye-catching pink, salmon, coral, near-red and almost-orange hues seem to mimic lipstick shades.

Wölffer Estate's berrylike rosé — a sophisticated *mélange* of [merlot](#), cabernet franc, [cabernet sauvignon](#) and [chardonnay](#) grapes — outshined its rivals, combining smoothness, subtlety and depth. At \$15, it's a steal. This rosé from Sagaponack could hold its own in a Michelin-starred restaurant on the Mediterranean.

A close second, from Southold, was Corey Creek's Domaines CC (\$18), a svelte cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc and merlot blend full of fruitiness and brio. Drink it slowly and its harmony and power grow on you.

Channing Daughters, in Bridgehampton, is inspired by the food-oriented whites of Friuli-Venezia Giulia in northeastern Italy. This stylistic tilt translates into Tre Rosati, its set of three rosés, each \$17. The hefty, assertive cabernet sauvignon rosato was my No. 3 favorite, with the generous, piquant merlot rosato, delivering a long aftertaste, close behind. The viscous cabernet franc rosato, virtually a white wine, was notably delicate.

Martha Clara's full-bodied merlot rosé (\$11.99), from Riverhead, seems alternately sweet and dry. The rosé (\$14.99) from Macari, in Mattituck, has verve and a surprising complexity that opens up as the wine stays on your palate. You may detect flavors resembling a sprinkling of herbs.

The superdry Shinn rosé (\$16), from Mattituck, slightly redolent of strawberries and raspberries, resembles what those in the wine trade call a chillable red. Serve it nearly warm, with meat.

If drunk icy — a temptation in high summer — rosés are wasted. Coldness foils their delicate flavors and harmonies; a slight chilling emphasizes their virtues.