

A sunny weekend had set the scene beautifully. Across the land, wine lovers rekindled their love affair with rosé wines as they fired up the barbecue and banished memories of a long, wet winter. Spring had most certainly sprung.

The following Tuesday, at The Providores restaurant in central London, six independent merchants shared anecdotes about the weekend's sales. Nobody, it seemed, was as up to speed with Rosé d'Anjou as they felt they ought to be. The question was: what role might this classically off-dry style of wine play in an already busy rosé fixture?

The eight Rosé d'Anjou wines, all from 2013, were tasted in isolation before lunch, roughly in order of residual sugar content. Alban Ligner, UK area manager for Caves de la Loire, joined us. "Because the quality is improving, more and more French people want to buy Rosé d'Anjou. It's getting more and more famous," he said.

Sugar levels can range from 8g per litre to 28g, he explained, though he personally favours the middle ground of 18g.

**Paola Tich:** I've only had a shop for a year and what's surprised me is I'm attracting people who would never normally go into a wine shop, and they do want slightly sweeter wines, so this does

## Our guests

Sam Brown, Vino Vero, Leigh-on-Sea

Anita Mannion, Leamington Wine Company

Mark Moorhouse, Dalling & Co, King's Langley

Steve Parker, The Cheese & Wine Company, Hampton

Ted Sandbach, Oxford Wine Company

Paola Tich, Park & Bridge, Acton



*The smorgasbord of flavours at The Providores offered plenty of scope to pair wine and food*

# Rosé d'Anjou: fruity wines hit sweet spot

What role can this classic Loire Valley wine play in a specialist range? We invited six independents to lunch to find out just that

fit in quite well.

We've also got quite a lot of bring-your-own curry houses opening and I see something like this fitting in really well. I've been surprised by the amount of people who've actually asked for a sweeter-style wine.

**Ted Sandbach:** I think a lot of people think they like dry wines, but when push comes to shove they actually like a bit more sugar in it than they're prepared to admit.

**Sam Brown:** We've only been going 10 months and we find the same. We do have people coming in wanting a slightly sweeter style of rosé, and we don't have any at the moment at all. So something

like Rosé d'Anjou would fit in. Often people don't like to think they like sweetness in wine, and say "I like a dry wine". You give them something and don't tell them that it has residual sugar in it and suddenly: "oh, it's delicious!"

**Steve Parker:** You're absolutely right: as long as you don't call it "sweet" and just say "I think you'll like this style of wine".

**Mark Moorhouse:** Are your customers asking for fruity, or for sweet?

**Paola Tich:** It's a mixture. I would say 80% confuse it. Also, if you want to engage with younger drinkers, sweet is often the way to get them in. It's also a

*Continues on page 20* ►