

BOTASEA

2008 *Rosso Biondino*

Rosato, Santa Barbara County

It is gratifying to us that pink wines have made such resurgence here in the States. The days of sweet, cloying blush wines have been replaced with classic, traditional, seriously made rosés just perfect for the long days of summer. Chrystal Clifton, co-owner of Palmina has always been a fan of a dry, crisp and flavorful Rosato, and unveiled her first pink wine in 2002. That wine, called Botasea di Palmina, usually is sold out *before* those lazy, patio days of summer!

In an effort to keep herself and her friends “in the pink”, in 2008 Chrystal experimented with another style of Rosato. “*Rosso Biondino*” is a very small bottling of a Rosato that is “as crisp as a white, but as serious as a red wine.” Yet, the wine is still casual, fruitful and easy-going. The name translates to the “Red Blonde”, Chrystal’s way of letting you know that this is a fun individual yet serious, flirty and a bit sexy. This come-hither wine has an air of mystique and intelligence built into its good looks!

Experimentation in the cellar led to the final product, with percentages of not only the serious reds (Dolcetto and Nebbiolo), but touches of whites as well. The power of the blend, the knowledge of using white grape skins (Arneis and Tocai Friulano) to add floral aromas, crispness and fruit flavors, and neutral barrel fermentation for texture resulted in a dark pink hued beauty. Bottled just five months after completion of fermentation, the wine is fresh and lively, vivacious and refreshing.

Like any intelligent and beautiful red-blond, this wine is complex. An enticing and bright deep rose color is surrounded by paler and translucent shell pink at the edge of the glass. Layers of floral aromas are interspersed with more masculine notes of pipe tobacco, and then a hint of raspberry and cardamom spice. A first sip reminds of that first watermelon of the season, red plum skin and red currant. The palate is refreshed with the lilting acidity of the wine, and then rewarded with cherry pie nuances that mingle with mineral notes, fresh garden herbs and a nice hit of rose hip tea tannins.

And with any luck...this wine will take us through the summer and into autumn and winter, as it pairs nicely with a wide range of grilled, smoked, curried, spiced and savory foods!

