

Destined for the mix: The Cinsault grape



Of all the Rhone varietals, [Cinsault](#) is one of the rarer ones here in the US. It often disappears in [Rhone Blends](#) never to be tasted as an individual wine again. But its bouquet is unmistakable. So when a pure Cinsault shows up, it's an excellent opportunity to experiment.

You can find a Cinsault for about \$20 at Phoenix area [AJs](#) (notably the Chandler store). It's from what some people refer to as a "cult wine" source, Turley. Why? If you look at Turley's [website](#) it's

obvious that there is a waiting list. This usually means that what does appear on the shelves has been purchased by a limited distribution arrangement. And AJs just happens to be on their list.

Another reason to check out this wine is just to experience its refined character for a reasonable price. **Note:** Most of Turley's wines go from \$50 to well into the \$100's. As a general rule, no matter what a "Turley's" is selling for, you nearly always assured an interesting tasting experience. They just aren't blah wines.

This Cinsault "El Porrón" comes out of the glass immediately with a bouquet of earthy violets and toasty red fruit that reminds of rhubarb. But a grassy tar background shows a sophistication way beyond this one's price range. However, its light body with a "clingy" acidic finish of white pepper highlights this wine's reputation as a "blender". But as a wine tasting lesson to be learned, it's marvelous.

But it's not over. Let it sit in the glass awhile and come back to it. Notice the changes and see if you agree that it becomes a little "toasty" on the bouquet. These changes the glass are also the mark of a good wine and winemaker.

Now, if you're game, there is something else you can do with this wine, mix it up. If you have an everyday Syrah (Shiraz) that you like, try mixing some of the Cinsault with it. No biggie here because winemakers do it all the time. Start with about 4 ounces of Syrah and add one ounce of Cinsault.

Notice if the bouquet of the blend is better than the original then note the body of the mix. Did it fill in some of the “holes” that are in the Cinsault’s mouth feel? If you like, then you agree with one of the oldest techniques in winemaking, a good blend is better than the sum of its parts!

Chill in the fridge to about 65 degrees.