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LUXURYWINE

How to Drink Red Wine During the Hot, Hot Summer

By [Rachel King](#) | August 10, 2019



Not to be a summer Scrooge, but not everyone is into rosé. And some oenophiles don't have a taste for white wine either. And while red wine is a more universally beloved and appreciated (and higher-grossing) category, it's not always ideal for hot and humid temperatures.

Labor Day might seem just around the corner, but hotter climates are expected to linger for many parts of North America and Europe until at least early October. That gives wine lovers plenty of time to develop an

appreciation for a certain style of serving that has [gained ground](#) over the past few summers: chilled reds.

"At the right temperature, serious red wines, such as a good Bordeaux, can be enjoyable and refreshing," says Mary Ewing-Mulligan, a certified [Master of Wine](#) and president of the [International Wine Center](#).

Ice-cold white, [rosé](#), and [sparkling wines](#) are often regarded as the default wine options during the summer months. (Let's not talk about putting ice cubes in wine, although mixing it up as a [spritz](#) as a [lower ABV](#) cocktail is a welcome discussion.) But many casual (and intermediate) wine drinkers might not realize that red wines can be just as refreshing when served at the proper temperature.

"The general tendency in our country is to serve red wines at too warm a temperature, and frankly the situation is worsening," Ewing-Mulligan says. "At too warm a temperature, red wines taste clumsy, blousy, and heavy. This is a year-round situation that's particularly evident in wines purchased by the glass, and it's all the more an issue in the summertime."

Year-round, Ewing-Mulligan advises serving a structured red wine—such as red Bordeaux—at 62 to 63 degrees Fahrenheit. But in the summer, she suggests dropping the temperature down to 60 degrees for a more pleasant experience. This means that the bottle should feel cool to your touch, but not actually cold. At that temperature, Ewing-Mulligan says, the wine will "show its proper structure and its aromas and flavors should be fresh rather than heavy."

If you really want your red wine chilled, you can place it in a refrigerator up to 30 minutes before serving, bringing it down closer to a cellar temperature around 55 degrees Fahrenheit.

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Suggested Reds for Summer

2015 Les Cadrans de Lassègue, Saint-Émilion: At 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc, the 2015 vintage is a bouquet brimming with pomegranates, fresh rose petals, and lilacs. There are also some savory elements here, with mint aromas mixed with a dried sweetness. With a ruby core, silky texture, a balanced fruit palate, and finely integrated tannins, this is the perfect wine to enjoy right away. [SRP: \\$35.](#)



*Lassègue Saint-Émilion Grand Cru
CHÂTEAU LASSÈGUE*

2011 Lassègue Saint-Émilion Grand Cru: This polished ruby-hued wine offers aromas of fresh violet, sage, and mint with soft notes of rose and wild strawberry. Velvety in texture with silky tannins and a long finish, the chateau's vigneron (winemaker) and his family serves the Lassègue vintage with grilled or baked cod or halibut, often in a red sauce. It's also perfect for barbecues, especially when paired with sautéed mushrooms with garlic and vegetable gratins. [SRP: \\$65.](#)



*Vérité 2015 La Joie
VÉRITÉ*

Vérité 2015 La Joie, Sonoma County: Go big and then go home after drinking this structured but enveloping splurge this summer. A blend predominantly made with 75% Cabernet Sauvignon but also 14% Merlot, 7% Cabernet Franc, and 4% Petit Verdot, the 2015 La Joie is an ode to Old and New World wines alike. Expect an earth-driven bouquet of mint, sage, and lavender aromas with notes of ripe fruit—black currant and cherries, damson plum—before a brooding finish with grippy, well-integrated tannins. Developed individually by micro-cru in Vérité's Sonoma County vineyards, the wine should mature gracefully. [SRP: \\$410.](#)