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This is the month when parties and celebrations fill the calendar – the time when wine drinkers open their favourite wines to share with friends and family. We take a closer look at Indian wines, for there is no better time to buy Indian. International and Indian wine experts have been commenting on the improving quality of premium Indian wines: whether red, white, rosé, sparkling or sweet, Indian offerings are increasingly making their presence felt at international competitions. There is a fair variety to choose from now, and here are some noteworthy ones.

Sparkling celebrations

This season is when sparkling wines are popped open at celebrations, and India has something for every taste. If you like a dry, textured bubbly then Fratelli Brut NV, a dry sparkling wine in a new avatar, made by Champagne's traditional method has had its fans since its early launch as Fratelli's Gran Cuvée; a bold step by late Italian winemaker Piero Masi for a country known for its sweet tooth. Another well-wrought vintage sparkling is the Chenin Blanc based La Réserve Brut Royale 2022 from Grover Vineyards that is barrel-fermented and aged for 30 months.

Those looking for bubbles with a sweeter zing might find the Fratelli Noi NV, and its rosé sibling in their pretty floral bottles, appealing. Made of indigenous grapes, the sweetness is balanced with a freshness that makes it a popular aperitif for all levels of sparkling wine drinkers.

White, so right

Are you a white wine lover? Then it is worth hunting out the KRSMA Estates Sauvignon Blanc 2024, the only white wine in the highly-lauded boutique KRSMA Estate's portfolio. It remains a favourite of experts and newbies



A mood shot from the Sette range; wine by Aurva; and offerings from Vallonne Vineyards. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Party time for Indian wine

From sparkling wines to premium reds, here is what to pair with your 2025 holiday meal

alike with its mouth-watering freshness and delicate herbaceous aromas. For a lower-priced option, the award-winning Grover Art Collection Sauvignon Blanc 2025 is a perfect crowd pleaser.

Something a little more serious? The Source Chenin Blanc Reserve 2025 by Sula Vineyards is made from estate-grown grapes and barrel-aged, its pear, citrus and honey notes soft, yet offers some complexity for those looking for more. Ditto the limited-production premium JNOON white 2023 by Fratelli, an oak-aged blend of 85%

Chardonnay with Sauvignon Blanc.

Nashik-based Vallonne Vineyards was the first Indian winery to garner applause for its high-quality estate-bottled Riesling. Now the 2025 vintage is out with its fresh green apple, apricot, citrus,

delicious acidity and lingering finish, making it a favourite of the wine cognoscenti.

Think pink

India has woken up to the rosé boom that took off from Provence and swept the world, and now has its own range of unique rosés to offer. Sula's The Source rosé 2025 is often regarded as closest to the Provence model, pale pink, light and Grenache-based that has

won awards for its clean, delicate profile. Another brunch favourite is the Fratelli MS Master Selection rosé 2024. This time, the unusual choice of the Sangiovese grape gives the wine texture along with fruitiness. Another unusual rosé is Vallonne's Cabernet Sauvignon-based rosé 2025, a one-of-its-kind pink that offers structure balanced with freshness and some tannins, making it an interesting pairing with Indian food.

Red, red wine

India continues to show its love for red wine, and this is reflected in the attention Indian producers are giving their premium reds: picking vineyard sites with care for optimal ripening, and choosing sustainable viticulture wherever possible.

Fratelli's JNOON red 2022, made in

collaboration with French celebrity vintner Jean-Charles Boisset echoes a Bordeaux blend, the wine blends cabernet sauvignon with merlot, cabernet franc, and marselan, making it an age-worthy, balanced wine that is proudly showcased at Indian fine-dining restaurants, its dark berry notes with vanilla, smoke and tobacco points to a wine that is approachable now, yet can age gracefully. Fratelli's flagship Sangiovese-dominated wine blended with cabernet sauvignon and merlot, Sette 2024 is less expensive yet showcases its premium profile with extended oak ageing. KRSMA Estates once again scores top marks with its flagship Cabernet Sauvignon 2021, a wine of power and tannic structure made to echo the best from Napa Valley.

Try something new

The Aurva Shiraz 2021 ('the earth' in Sanskrit) a still wine from sparkling wine producer Chandon India, has caught people's attention since its launch. It is aged in French oak for 10-14 months to show elegant dark and red fruit, sweet spice, and generous tannins.

For those who enjoy a hint of sweetness, Sula's The Source Moscato 2025 offers honeyed notes of peach, apricot with a hint of citrus and a tiny zing of bubbles. Made according to the traditional Asti method of Italy, it has won a slew of medals and is in high demand.

Vallonne has been winning hearts and wallets with its premium Cabernet Sauvignon, Anokhee 2021 made only in the best years. Aged for three years, two of them in French oak, it can age for a decade or more, says the winemaker. Ripe blackberries and rich spices, full bodied and rounded on the palate, it is worth seeking out. Seeking something out of the ordinary? Vallonne also make India's first Vin de passerillage, where the grapes are dried for three months to concentrate flavours and produce lusciously sweet wines – a Chenin Blanc 2024 and Syrah 2024.

