

Planeta 2006 Cerasuolo di Vittoria, IGT Sicilia

20 May 2008 by JR

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This week's wine is not only deliciously easy to like and thoroughly unlike any other wine I have tasted, it also teaches us a lot about relative pricing – or, rather, good www.winesearcher.com does. Today this wonderfully easy wine price finder cites 67 retailers of **Planeta 2006 Cerasuolo di Vittoria, IGT Sicilia** around the world. In Germany and Italy it can be found for as little as 8.24 euros, the equivalent of about £5, a bottle. In the US, where it is especially easy to find, prices start at \$15.97 (about £8) a bottle and even in Switzerland, not the most competitive market, it can be found for about the same price as in the US. In the UK, [winesearcher](http://www.winesearcher.com) can find a dozen retailers – far more than for most of our wines of the week – with prices mainly around £10.50, as at The VineKing, to £10.95, as at Noel Young. But for some strange reason the upmarket UK supermarket chain Waitrose is asking £13.99 for it.

I asked Waitrose, who sell this wine online and in just 14 branches, why they seemed so expensive and here is buyer Andrew Shaw's reply: "We have incurred a recent substantial increase in cost price which has compacted the exchange rate and duty issues. I can only presume we have moved before the market and, as you say the likes of the Vinetrail [VineKing - JR] under-cutting us (at £10.50 plus 10% case discount). We do have a very good trading relationship with [Planeta's UK importers] Enotria and have since referred it back to them to see if there is anything we can do to remain competitive. Hope this helps explain the price disparity." This wine was first made in 2001 but nowadays seems to be available in friendly quantities, even if not always at friendly prices.

Anyway, enough about the price. How about the wine? Cerasuolo di Vittoria is a distinctive wine made in south eastern Sicily, not far from those wonderful baroque towns Ragusa and Noto, from the local Nero d'Avola, arguably Sicily's best-known red wine grape, and the lower-acid Frappato. This 2006 from the Planetas, the innovative wine family who are actually based way to the west of the Cerasuolo DOCG zone, contains 40% Frappato and comes from the sandy Dorilli vineyard, underlaid with tufa apparently, which helps to regulate the water supply. You might think that this far south the harvest would be in mid August but the grapes for this wine, grown at no great altitude (unlike those of [Etna](#), about which I wrote recently) were not picked until 30 Sep. Very high levels of tartaric acid can be a problem in some Nero d'Avola but all of this 13.4% alcohol wine went through the second, softening malolactic fermentation.

This is a soft, unwooded wine bursting with easy fruit that is designed to be drunk relatively young. I found a streak of something sweet and spicy that reminded me of cappuccino in the wine, which is presumably some effect of the soil. It is most unusual and could not be easier to like, or find. This is one of those relatively rare red wines that could be enjoyed enormously without food. In fact it could happily be served with fish dishes too delicate for tannic, oak reds. Great summer drinking with enormous character. On Planeta's excellent [web page](#) devoted to this wine, they suggest it can be served lightly chilled in warm weather – just the sort of wine we hope we will need this summer.

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