

Cap de Barbaria 2005 Vi de la Terra de Formentera

24 Jun 2008 by JR

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Now here's a very unusual wine – not cheap but really delicious and distinctive in my view. Spanish wine writer José Peñín first alerted me to this very distinguished red last summer and I added a lone, enthusiastic [tasting note](#) on it to our [tasting notes database](#) of about 22,500 notes currently, but which is about to zoom up to closer to 25,000 as we add all of the last two months' tally. Now I see that fortunately it is available in the US, the UK and France as well as in Spain so that I can spread word of it more widely.

This is a surprisingly delicate wine made right by the coast of the Mediterranean island of Formentera. Only 8,000 bottles have been made on the vineyards attached to the tiny eponymous [hotei](#) by the lighthouse on this tiny island off Ibiza in the Spanish Balearic Islands. This hand-crafted (and beautifully packaged) blend of Cabernet and Merlot planted in 1999 with ungrafted 40- to 50- year- old Monastrell and local Fogoneu is very exciting. After a rich, sunbaked start, it goes all transparent. Beautifully balanced and already approachable it has a quintessentially marine Mediterranean quality with a certain dry- grown stoniness but also a lightness of touch and very impressive persistence. Only 13% alcohol, this is a very sophisticated wine that clearly comes from somewhere special. Presumably without the constant cooling winds off the sea here, varieties such as Monastrell grown somewhere as hot and dry as this would taste quite different - and much less interesting. This is definitely a producer to watch.

Fastidious Eric Solomon of European Cellars clearly thinks so and is importing it into the US (see below for stockists). In the UK, importer Chris Quin writes to me thus about **Cap de Barbaria 2005 Vi de la Terra de Formentera** and another, rather bigger, tougher Spanish wine **Alcor 2005 Catalunya** (www.grauvell.cat) whose 2004 was nominated as a [Sibaritas Wine of the Year](#):

"We are fully committed to making these wines available to the general public and will happily sell in any quantity from one unit upwards. The bottle prices are £29.50 for the Cap and £19.50 for the Alcor – both including VAT. Delivery would be an additional £8.25 for bottles and £15 per 6x75cl.

"Our website www.sourcewines.com will be live in the next week so, so for the moment orders should be sent to

Source Wines
1a London Road
Marlborough
Wiltshire SN8 1PH

Tel 01672 519390
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"I want as many people as possible to be able to taste wines like this – from London restaurants to jaded party animals from Ibiza even through to HRH Prince William, who was spotted drinking the Cap on his private yacht last year. Our allocation is approx 100 6 packs of each so there should be enough to go round!!"

Cap de Barbaria's own attractive website www.capdebarbaria.com also cites importers in Italy and Switzerland.

US stockists: The Wine Library (Springfield, NJ), K&L Wines (CA), Bin Ends (Braintree, MA), Marty's (Newton, MA), Curtis Liquors (Weymouth, MA). It is also available in several restaurants in the US, including the following in MA: Amada (Philadelphia), Grill 23 (Boston) and Taberna de Haro (Brookline).

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