Tom□s Cusin□, Vilosell 2004 Costers del Segre

29 May 2006 by JR

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This is a truly great buy – delicious wine, not expensive, relatively easy to find (distributed by the redoubtable Eric Solomon of European Cellars in the US) and it comes in a really attractive bottle. What more could you possibly ask for?

Tomàs Cusiné, Vilosell 2004 Costers del Segre is made by the man who for 20 years was the driving force behind the first-rate Catalan labels Castell del Remei and Cervoles on his family's own vineyards being extensively planted at 700 to 750 metres above the Mediterranean. It has a healthy deep crimson colour and is fresh and appetising with excellent oak management (nine months in new French, since you ask). There is some minerality but not the tight chewiness on the finish demonstrated by its sister wine Geol described below. I thought it an excellent buy at the £8.50 a bottle asked by Indigo Wine (who sell a minimum of 12 assorted bottles) while in the UK Vinoking (who have a new shop in Reigate), Bedale's in Borough in London SE1 and Thameside Wines in Putney all stock it by the single bottle. I see from our friends winesearcher.com that it's possible to find it in the US for just over $11 and in Spain for under 9 euros. What value!

This is not one of those big, beefy, sweet, alcoholic Spanish reds – useful as they are for barbecues and the like. It shows in the glass that it's made in the far north east corner of Spain, near Lerida in Raimat country, with rather less obvious warmth.

I don't mean to denigrate **Tomàs Cusiné, Geol 2004 Costers del Segre** (£11.50 chez Indigo) however. Its more obvious oak might well appeal more to some palates and it is clearly made to be cellared. (As usual I am a cheap date and preferred the less expensive, more forward wine.) I wrote of it, 'pretty sumptous and well made. Even if not the most obviously Spanish wine in the world, it is certainly obviously Catalan. Sweet and juicy.'

Vilosell is made from 50% Tempranillo, 26% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 9% Grenache, 5% Syrah while Geol is 65% Merlot, 27% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Carignan.

This is definitely a producer to watch.

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