

Inama, Vin Soave 2006 Soave Classico

28 Apr 2008 by JR

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I recently tasted about 60 of the wines UK retailers Majestic are currently most proud of and this was one of six wines that really stood out for me. (Purple pagers can read my tasting notes, scores and drinking dates on all 60 of these wines at [Majestic – what to buy and what to avoid.](#)) The beauty of this particular wine of the week is how relatively easy it is to find. Winesearcher lists 75 stockists around the world at the time of writing and it is particularly well distributed in the US.

It is also, as usual, very much cheaper in the US than the UK. Stone Vine & Sun list it at £8.95 a bottle while Majestic's regular price is a whopping £12.49 a bottle (well over twice as much as the basic price in the US* and Italy), which comes down to £9.99 if two bottles of any Italian wines are bought. This can only partly be explained by exchange rates surely?

Inama is a family business in San Bonifacio in the Veneto dating from the 1950s, when its founder Giuseppe Inama began slowly acquiring some great vineyards in the Classico heartland of the Soave and now has, in Stefano Inama, a cosmopolitan outlook on life thanks to his experience in California. Today they have about 25 ha in Soave Classico, including some land in the Foscario and Du Lot vineyards, the latter of which won a *tre bicchiere* award for its 2005 vintage. I have admired their sweet wines for many a long year but their dry wines just seem to get better and better with 2006 seeming especially successful for their main product, **Inama, Vin Soave 2006 Soave Classico**. I am told that they have deliberately tweaked the style to make it a bit more aromatic. The nose is certainly vibrantly lemony but what really distinguishes it from more ordinary Soaves is its whoosh of real, ripe fruit concentration on the mid palate yet with no sacrifice of either delicacy or refreshment value. This is seriously good wine by any standard – white burgundy has to be very good to offer more. Pieropan's style is tighter and tauter, but then his wines are considerably more expensive. The 30 year-old Garganega vines are grown on poor, basalt soils and are picked by hand (increasingly uncommon alas – as I saw even in the heart of the Rheingau last weekend) before destalking, cold settling and malolactic fermentation. Despite all the body and flavour, the wine is only 12.5%.

The single-vineyard bottlings **Inama, Vigneti di Foscario 2005 Soave Classico** and **Inama, Vigneto du Lot 2005 Soave Classico** are both 13.5% and are even more intense – they probably deserve a special occasion, retailing at around £14 and £17.50 respectively. I can see why Du Lot won its top prize because it is extremely luscious, broad and characterful although the Foscario from the top of the hill is probably more subtle, with a slight bitter almond character on the nose and such concentration it tastes as though it had been oaked. Sauvignon Blanc is a long-standing Inama speciality which, predictably, fails to move me as much as the indigenous Garganega although the sweet **Inama, Vulcaia Apres 2004 IGT Veneto** is divine – as it should be at £14.50 a half bottle. I just love these sweet whites from the Veneto when they are done well, as this half bottle of tarte tatin juice certainly is – super refreshing with a neat, dry finish.

The Inamas have recently expanded into red wine production, in the Colli Berici in Vicenza to the west. Here their holdings include Carmenere vines that were brought back to northern Italy in the mid 19th century by migrant workers who had travelled as far as Bordeaux in search of work. (Carmenere is an historic Bordeaux vine variety that is now much easier to find in Chile than Bordeaux.) **Inama, Bradisimo 2003 IGT Veneto Rosso** with its 25% Carmenere supplementing 65% Cabernet and 10% Merlot is just a bit too tight for me to enjoy at present though is certainly fascinating historically.

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The UK Importer WineWhisperers of Oxford claim that the following UK merchants also stock it.

- Averbs
- Bacchus Fine Wines
- Blend
- EH Booth
- Bowland Forest

- CCM Wines
- Caviste
- Clarion Wines
- Coe Vintners
- Connolly's
- Daylesford Organic
- Duncan Murray
- Genesis Wines
- Inverarity Vaults
- Les Caves de Pyrene
- Playford Ros
- Uncorked
- Willoughby's

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Robinson, Jancis of California sends the following explanation of the difference in prices between the US and the UK:

I noticed your recent piece on Inama Soave. Our PR firm handles the media relations for all of the brands in the Dalla Terra Winery Direct portfolio in the US (all family-owned Italian estates.) You mentioned in your piece that you found the Vin Soave to be much less expensive in the US. This is because of Dalla Terra's business model--winery direct. Rather than act as a traditional importer, [Dalla Terra](#) acts as an agent and skips the national importer tier in the United States' three-tier distribution system. We've found the result in the consumer prices to be about 25% less.