

## Dom des Terres Falmel Cinsault 2007 Vin de Pays d'Oc

20 Sep 2008 by Jancis Robinson

From £6.75 and \$11.75

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Cinsault is a southern French grape that deserves much more airtime, so congratulations to Berry Bros for showcasing this extremely comely example made in the vineyards of St-Chinian (see below) by Yves Falmel, who has demonstrated a certain tendresse for and facility with this delightfully fruity grape.

Cinsault is most commonly encountered in South Africa. In fact, having been known there originally as Hermitage, it is one of the parents, along with Pinot Noir, of the Cape's signature grape Pinotage (geddit?). In South Africa it is often dismissed as a suitable ingredient for rosé, but it can yield lovely, early maturing reds too. (Remember the time when winemakers thought Grenache was good for nothing other than pink wines?)

These particular grapes were grown on the famous schists of St-Chinian and in fact this wine tastes just as much of schist – all minerals and a dry finish reminiscent of sucking a stone – as it does of the cherry fruit of Cinsault. Either way, it provides much more interest and authenticity than the average wine selling at around £6-7 or \$10-13. And the price of £6.75 a bottle or just £6.05 if a dozen bottles are bought includes Berry Bros' margin!

This is doubtless due to the fact that these Cinsault vines are more than 40 years old, so the resulting fruit has bags of character, and the wine is not filtered or fined so has not lost any of its personality getting from vat to bottle. Obviously, at this price, this is an unoaked wine, but a four-week maceration has resulted in no shortage of varietal character. I loved its perfume, its fruity, soft, charming start, and enjoyed the juicy crunch on the finish. This is a simple wine, but delightfully so, designed for drinking over the next six to eight months.

In the UK Berry Bros seem to be the sole importer, and while winesearcher.com cites only one US retailer at the time of writing, the wines of Terres Falmel are imported into the States by United Estates Wine Imports - (614) 543 1427 - run by Connie and Patrick Allen. And to judge from today's news headlines, Americans may soon be searching out bargains just as keenly as the Brits.

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