

Martinelle 2007 C□tes du Ventoux

28 Mar 2010 by Jancis Robinson

From £9.95, \$17.50, 31 Swiss francs

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Here's a cracker, a wine that puts many more expensive bottles in the shade. It's basically a Côtes du Rhône-Villages that just happens to come from an enclave classified as Côtes du Ventoux near the village of Barroux. It certainly has all the richness of a fine southern Rhône: warm, rich and thoroughly welcoming – and really quite a lot of complexity for the money. This is the sort of wine that makes you wonder whether other French wines, especially the more expensive ones, shouldn't just pack up now... It has a very sweet finish – very much influenced by the ripeness of the vintage – but there is no excess heat nor excessively dry tannins. There's quite enough juice, yet enough structure too to convince the taster that this wine will still be going strong in three of even four years' time. The finish is delightfully spicy. The label says 14.5% alcohol but all seems to be in balance.

The wine is made, entirely in cement vats, by Corinna Kruse, who has recently added land in the Beaumes-de-Venise appellation to her holdings. Total production of her Côtes du Ventoux is 40,000 bottles and the blend is 70% Grenache, 20% Syrah, 10% Cinsault with an average vine age of 25 years grown on limestone clay slopes and terraces at 300 m facing south-east and east.

You can read more background both on www.martinelle.com (in the winemaker's native German) and on the relevant page of www.vinetrail.co.uk (UK importers Vine Trail are currently selling this at £9.95). This really is lovely stuff and could already be enjoyed enormously. Not a bad wine to bring to the attention of the Bordelais as they consider the pricing of their 2009 vintage...

You can find a list of Martinelle's importers around the world here

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