Warre's, Bottle Aged LBV 2001 port

14 Dec 2012 by Jancis Robinson

From £24.99 and £16.99 (until midnight on Monday)

Find this wine

Tomorrow I'll be publishing the dry white wines that make up my Top 100+. They were pretty difficult to whittle down to just 25 to fit into the space allowed by *The Financial Times*, but it is the final instalment, the strong and sweet wine collection to be published a week tomorrow, that was most challenging to squeeze down to 25. This is because fortified and sweet wines are so unfashionable that they tend to be ridiculously underpriced - especially in British supermarkets, which are notorious for driving a hard bargain.

As pointed out on our Members' forum, Waitrose in the UK, which has long had one of the best wine collections of the big British retailers, is currently offering everyone a code that will take 15% off all wines bought online from Waitrose Wine Direct until midnight on Monday. And those who have signed up for their myWaitrose loyalty scheme are being offered a total discount of 25%, bringing the price of **Warre's, Bottle Aged LBV 2001 port** down to £14.99, almost laughably little for a wine that tastes remarkably like a vintage port.

LBV, standing for Late Bottled Vintage, is a term applied to two sorts of wines, but this is the superior one (see our guide to port in our free Instant expert section). While vintage port has to be from a specially 'declared' year, is bottled before it is three years old and is designed for very extended ageing in bottle, a Late Bottled Vintage port is aged for rather longer in barrel before being bottled as a more evolved wine at four to six years old. The more commercial examples are filtered and fined so that they won't throw a sediment in bottle and tend to be basically superior ruby ports. But this wine is one of the superior sort that are treated much more like a vintage port - neither filtered nor fined - so that after all the complex interactions between the polyphenols still in the wine, a sediment is formed and the wine tastes like an accelerated vintage port.

This 20 per center was bottled in 2005 and has since developed vintage-port-like character. 2001 was an excellent vintage in the Douro Valley but it followed hard on the heels of 2000, which was widely declared as a vintage so has been left to express its distinction in a series of great single quinta ports from one superior wine farm such as Taylor's Quinta de Vargellas (£25 Majestic) or Graham's Quinta dos Malvedos (£26.37 Sainsbury's).

The Warre's Bottle Aged LBV is a blend of Touriga Nacional, Touriga Franca, Tinta Roriz and Tinta Barroca and contains quite a portion of wine from grapes that were trodden by foot in the old granite lagares at Warre's Quinta da Cavadinha. It's already delightfully rich and satisfying with strong Douro characteristics of liquorice and schist - although its strongest characteristic might be said to be the value it offers for a wine I scored 17.5 out of 20. There's no hurry to drink this. In fact you might even consider stocking up on it for many a future year.

In the UK it seems to be available only from Waitrose, where its regular price of £19.99 in 209 stores seems a steal to me (think how much you'd have to pay for a decent 2001 red Bordeaux). It is even easier to find, from just $24.99, in the US.

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