

2017 Maurer Kadarka Nagy-Krisztus

Sremska, Serbia

The Maurer family has been producing wine for four generations. It was during the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the 19th century that they moved from Salzburg to the southern part of the Kingdom of Hungary. They now farm 16 acres of land, including 6 acres in the Serbian wine region of Szabadka directly south of the Hungarian-Serbian border, and 10 acres in the Fruška Gora mountain district in Syrmia, Serbia, located 40 miles away from Belgrade and bordered by the Danube River to the north.

VINEYARDS

The vineyards are planted with old local varieties such as Mézes Fehér, Bakator, Szerémi Zöld. In the Szabadka wine region, vines are more than a hundred years old. The oldest Kadarka was planted in 1880 and is one of the oldest in the world. These vines are typically cultivated by horse and man power. The other part of the estate is in the historic region of Szerémség (Syrmia). Some ninety million years ago, the Fruška Gora mountain in Syrmia was an island in the Pannonian sea. The slopes of this old formation made up of volcanic and sedimentary rocks have been covered with vineyards, orchards and forests for about 3000 years. Today, this is an almost intact natural environment with an outstandingly rich ecosystem. The climate is sub-mediterranean and continental with a beneficial influence of the nearby Danube. One vineyard planted with Riesling is just 160 feet from the river. Maurer is the only winery producing natural wine in the region but fortunately, there is an increasing number of followers. The best lots have been replanted with the old native grape varieties such as Szerémi zöld (Syrmia Green), Bakator, Mézes fehér (Honey Whiter), Kövidinka (Ston Siller), Furmint, Riesling, Sárgamuskotály (Muskateller), Kadarka and Kékfrankos (Blaufränkisch). The winery also grows international varieties including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir.



WINE MAKING

All fermentations are spontaneous (primary and secondary) without the use of any additives apart from SO2 at bottling for select some wines. Maurer basically has two tiers: Rege and Maurer. The Rege wines have low SO2 (30-50ppm) and are unfiltered (Kövidinka, Corvina, Kadarka). The Maurer line is zero compromise with zero additions of any kind (Kadarka 1880, Kadarka Nagy Krisztus, Bakatororange, Fodor Olaszrizling). His barrel regiment is all used (mostly Hungarian oak) and only racked once to tank for bottling.

NOTES & PAIRINGS

The Nagy Krisztus, literally "big Christ," is another face of Kadarka from the Fruška Gora (closer to the Danube, volcanic) versus the 1880 which is planted in sand much more inland. Maurer considers this site a Grand Cru. The thin top soil allows healthy vines to dig into the volcanic bedrock and in turn have higher acidity and ageability. There's that herbaceous/medicinal quality that hints at the 1880, but the fruit is darker, there's more structure, and there's no denying the higher acidity. Oszkár calls the Nagy Krisztus "a free wine," and served it with goose fat whipped potatoes and roasted duck. One of the highlights from our last trip.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

PRODUCER: Maurer
APPELLATION: Sremska
VINTAGE: 2017
GRAPE COMPOSITION: 100% Kadarka
CLIMATE: Mild and temperate
SOILS: Sand
MACERATION & AGING: Fermented in open vat and aged in big old oak casks for 12 months
ALCOHOL: 13%
RESIDUAL SUGAR: 0.51 g/l
ACIDITY: 6.25 g/l



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